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Remarks by S for S at media session on No. 5 alarm fire in Tai Po

The Secretary for Security, Mr Tang Ping-keung; the Acting Commissioner of Police, Mr Kan Kai-yan; the Director of Fire Services, Mr Andy Yeung; the Deputy Director of Fire Services (Operations), Mr Derek Armstrong Chan; and the Regional Commander of New Territories North, Ms Lam Man-han, met the media today (November 28) on the No. 5 alarm fire in Tai Po. Following are their remarks at the media session:

Reporter: Can you tell us whether there is gonna be any compensation for the residents? A lot of them right now thinking about how they can get... (inaudible). Secondly, can you give us an update on the corruption investigation regarding the construction company?

Secretary for Security: First of all, investigation regarding any corruption allegation or investigations will be done by the ICAC (Independent Commission Against Corruption). Secondly, you talked about compensation. About financial assistance to all the victims and their families, our Government has different schemes to support their families. I also understand that a lot of private organisations are also organising it. As a matter of fact, Secretary Alice Mak (Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs) and Secretary Chris Sun (Secretary for Labour and Welfare) will hold a separate press conference later to elaborate on all the financial assistance and other kinds of assistance that we can offer to the victims and their families.

Reporter: It has been three days after the fire, why isn't there any basic demographic of the deceased or the injured as you already got the information and condition of the people? Why don't you release them to the public?

Secretary for Security: Thank you very much. In fact we are releasing the information right now. As a matter of fact, for the time being, there are 128 deceased individuals that we discovered, including 108 bodies we removed from the scene and four who passed away in the hospital. There are 16 burned bodies that are still inside the building. In fact, our Police, as a special team, they are going to deal with all the missing persons or identities of the deceased. Maybe we can repeat the phone number. You can make a call with the phone number.

Acting Commissioner of Police: We have set up a Casualty Enquiry Unit and a hotline. The hotline number is 1878 999, 1878 999. Thank you.

Reporter: (Inaudible)

Secretary for Security: I think we need time to get all the details. As I said, even some of the deceased we cannot fully identify. At an appropriate time, when we gather all the information, we are happy to release all the information that the public is concerned about. There is nothing the Government is unwilling to release.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the remarks.)

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