

Government response to protests in Yau Tsim Mong District

In response to the protests in Yau Tsim Mong District yesterday (August 3), a Government spokesman said the following:

Despite that a Letter of No Objection has been issued for the public procession in Tai Kok Tsui following discussion between the Police and the organiser, some protesters deviated from the approved route soon after the procession had started and blocked a number of thoroughfares in Yau Tsim Mong District, including the entrance of the Cross-Harbour Tunnel at one point, seriously affecting the traffic, commercial activities and people's daily living in the vicinity. We express regret over such behaviours which are illegal and disregard the public order and the needs of other members of the public. Indeed, illegal behaviours and road blockage involved in recent protests, held in the name of expression of aspirations, are getting worse and way beyond the boundary of freedom of expression in a civilised society.

Violent behaviours recurred during the protests. Some radical protesters violently charged police stations, vandalised vehicles, set fire in various places, etc. In addition, protesters were suspected to have deliberately damaged the national flag, breaching the National Flag and National Emblem Ordinance. The Government strongly condemns the radical protesters who disregarded the law and order, blatantly breached the public peace, and even challenged the national sovereignty. The police will strictly enforce the law. Violent protesters who breached the law should also be brought to justice.

Police conducting dispersal operation in Wong Tai Sin

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following message as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

While some Police officers were trying to leave by Police vehicles amid a violent clash in Wong Tai Sin, some radical protestors surrounded them and hurled miscellaneous objects at the officers and vehicles.

After repeated but futile warnings, Police are now using tear gas to disperse the violent protestors. Police appeal to everyone at the scene to leave immediately and not to charge Police cordon lines.

Police also appeal to the residents in the area to stay tuned to the latest situation and if necessary, stay indoors and keep their windows closed.

Rumours on Territory-wide Identity Card Replacement Exercise clarified

In respect of rumours on the Internet that the current Territory-wide Identity Card Replacement Exercise ("Replacement Exercise") was not necessary, a Government spokesman today (August 3) seriously dismissed the rumours and urged the public to have their smart identity cards replaced in accordance with the replacement schedule.

According to the Immigration Department, the Replacement Exercise launched at the end of last year is mainly due to the fact that it has been over 10 years since the issue of the smart identity card of the previous generation in 2003, and the card materials have been getting old. Coupling with the expiry of the 10-year maintenance of the smart identity card system, the system supplier has declined to continue to provide maintenance and repair services. To ensure the effective use of different functions of the smart identity card by the public, it is necessary to introduce the new generation smart identity card and implement the one-off four-year Replacement Exercise for all smart identity card holders. After discussions at the Legislative Council and upon the Government's assurance of addition of multi-level safeguards in the new smart identity card, the Legislative Council approved a commitment in May 2015 to implement the current Replacement Exercise.

Access to chip data must be initiated by the cardholder through taking out his/her smart identity card and placing it onto an authorised optical card reader. The reading process is conducted with the combination of optical card reader and wireless transmission technology. Before communication and data reading, the identity of the chip and the optical card reader must be defined and mutually authenticated. All communication and data transmission would be encrypted throughout the whole process; and could not be conducted if the distance between the chip and the optical card reader is more than two centimetres.

Meanwhile, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer reiterated that the smart lampposts do not carry any facial recognition function and cannot detect or read information of identity cards. In addition, the Government had said earlier that it would not implement the Mainland's social credit system in Hong Kong.

Protestors blocked entrances of the Cross-Harbour Tunnel again

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following message as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

Some protestors blocked the entrances of the Cross-Harbour Tunnel again, causing serious obstruction to the traffic and emergency services.

Police warn the protestors to stop blocking the roads and other illegal acts. Members of the public should stay tuned to the latest traffic arrangement.

Wong Tai Sin Police Station Report Room service suspended

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following message as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

The report room services of Wong Tai Sin Police Station are now temporarily suspended. Police appeal to members of the public not to obstruct the emergency vehicles access so as to avoid affecting the emergency services provided to the public. In case of emergency, please call 999.