

CE signs National Anthem Ordinance (with photos)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, today (June 11) signed the National Anthem Ordinance passed by the Legislative Council (LegCo) in accordance with Article 48(3) of the Basic Law. The National Anthem Ordinance will come into immediate effect after it is published in the Gazette tomorrow (June 12).

"Like the national flag and the national emblem, the national anthem is the symbol and sign of the nation. As an inalienable part of the People's Republic of China, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) is duty-bound to preserve the dignity of the national anthem through legislation," Mrs Lam said.

"I am pleased that the National Anthem Ordinance will be gazetted and come into effect tomorrow, signifying the fulfilment of the constitutional responsibility of the HKSAR and reflecting the spirit of 'One Country, Two Systems'."

The National Anthem Ordinance provides for the playing and singing, protection and promotion of the national anthem to preserve the dignity of the country, enhance the sense of national identity among citizens and promote patriotism. The offences stipulated in the Ordinance only concern the misuse of the national anthem, or public and intentional acts with an intent to insult the national anthem.

"I hope that members of the public will respect the national anthem of their own volition, hence the promotion of the national anthem is of paramount importance. To let our next generation understand the history and spirit of the national anthem and to observe the etiquette for the playing and singing of the national anthem, the Education Bureau will update its learning and teaching resources and issue directions to schools through circulars to support schools in teaching students," Mrs Lam said.

The Standing Committee of the 12th National People's Congress passed the Law of the People's Republic of China on National Anthem on September 1, 2017, and added the Law to Annex III to the Basic Law on November 4 in the same year. According to Article 18 of the Basic Law, the national laws listed in Annex III to the Basic Law shall be applied locally by way of promulgation or legislation by the HKSAR. Having regard to the common law system practised in Hong Kong, as well as the actual circumstances in Hong Kong, the HKSAR Government decided to implement the National Anthem Law in the HKSAR by local legislation. The National Anthem Bill was introduced into the LegCo for First Reading and Second Reading in January 2019, and was passed by the LegCo on June 4 this year.

