

# Department of Justice releases “Prosecutions Hong Kong 2019”

The Department of Justice (DoJ) today (December 31) published the "Prosecutions Hong Kong 2019" online ([www.doj.gov.hk/en/publications/yrreviewpd2019.html](http://www.doj.gov.hk/en/publications/yrreviewpd2019.html)), which gives a review of the DoJ's prosecution work of last year.

The DoJ always attaches great importance to the discharge of its constitutional duty in criminal prosecutions, free from any interference. Prosecutorial decisions should be based on an objective assessment of all admissible evidence and applicable laws, made strictly in accordance with the Prosecution Code.

The Director's Overview of the "Prosecutions Hong Kong 2019" refutes allegations that the prosecution had been delinquent in prosecuting cases related to public order events. Responding to criticisms on the time taken for listing such cases for trials, it is pointed out that the prosecution, at the first hearing, would usually have to apply for an adjournment for further investigations by law enforcement agency. Similarly, most defendants, in exercising their rights, would also apply for time to consider the available evidence, seek proper legal representations and legal advice before taking plea. It is therefore common that there would be a period of time – months usually – in most of these cases before plea could be taken and a further period of time before commencement of trial.

The "Prosecutions Hong Kong 2019" also gives an account of the continued effort of the DoJ in promoting public understanding of the criminal justice system and other tasks completed in 2019.