

Inter-departmental counter-terrorism exercise "TIGERPACE" smoothly concluded

The Inter-departmental Counter Terrorism Unit (ICTU) coordinated a counter-terrorism (CT) exercise codenamed "TIGERPACE" at the Hong Kong West Kowloon Station today (November 19).

About 300 officers from ICTU's member departments participated in the exercise, including the Customs and Excise Department, the Correctional Services Department, the Fire Services Department, the Government Flying Service, the Hong Kong Police Force and the Immigration Department. Besides, the Government Laboratory and the MTR Corporation also provided full support and assistance to the exercise.

Police Senior Superintendent of the ICTU, Mr Leung Wai-ki, told the media that although public order had basically been restored in the past year, the series of violent incidents happened around July 1 this year, including the lone-wolf domestic terrorist attack in Causeway Bay and the crackdown on the radical group "Returning Valiant", illustrated that some local radicals had not abandoned their extremist pursuit. They attempted to continue their extremist activities clandestinely and might seek to stage attacks on significant or sensitive days when opportunity arises.

In response to the threat of domestic terrorism over the past two years, ICTU has been strengthening its CT efforts, with stress on intelligence exchange, personnel training, exercises as well as public education and publicity.

Through this exercise, ICTU aimed to test and enhance departments' capabilities in dealing with terrorism-related intelligence and responding to different forms of terrorist attacks, as well as to demonstrate the importance of concerted efforts and coordination by all stakeholders on CT work.

ICTU also took this opportunity to promote the CT message of "Spot and Report" among the general public. Drawing from foreign countries' experiences in stopping terrorist attacks, in particular self-radicalised lone-wolf attacks, tragedy could often be avoided if the local communities could timely provide useful information to the law enforcement agencies. When members of the public come across suspicious person or incident, or any suspected terrorist activities in their daily life and work, they should immediately report the case through available means.

Mr Leung emphasized that no extremist activity should be tolerated or glorified regardless of its form. CT is a matter of "principle" and duty of all.

ICTU will continue to step up public education and publicity work, call on the assistance of the whole community to counter terrorism and ensure the safety of Hong Kong.