

National Anthem Ordinance comes into effect today

The National Anthem Ordinance (NAO) has been published in the Gazette and comes into effect today (June 12).

The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress added the Law of the People's Republic of China on National Anthem (National Anthem Law) to Annex III to the Basic Law on November 4, 2017. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has fulfilled its constitutional responsibility to implement the National Anthem Law locally in accordance with Article 18 of the Basic Law.

A Government spokesman said, "The core legislative principle of the NAO is to promote respect for the national anthem, which is the symbol and sign of the country, and provide guidance on the standard, etiquette, and occasions for playing and singing of the national anthem. The NAO prohibits and imposes penalties to the misuse of the national anthem or the lyrics or score of the national anthem, and public and intentional acts with an intent to insult the national anthem. There is no cause for concern of breaching the law inadvertently if one does not misuse the national anthem or the lyrics or score of the national anthem, nor has any public and intentional act with an intent to insult the national anthem."

The spokesman also said, "The HKSAR Government will strengthen the publicity and educational efforts of the national anthem, and has set up a dedicated webpage (www.cmab.gov.hk/en/issues/national_anthem.htm) to inform the public about the content of the NAO and provide the standard scores and official recordings of the national anthem for occasions on which the national anthem must be played and sung. The Government will also launch promotional videos on social media platforms, government websites and electronic media. Apart from the above, the Education Bureau will update its learning and teaching materials to educate students on the history and spirit of the national anthem and the etiquette for playing and singing the national anthem."