

## Police appeal to the public not to take part in, advertise or publicise any unauthorised assemblies

An organiser filed a notification to hold a public meeting and a public procession on Hong Kong Island tomorrow (July 1). Considering public safety, public order, people's rights and freedom, and the serious health risks brought by the ongoing pandemic to the society, Police has reasonable grounds to believe that the holding of the event will pose considerable threats to the public health and lives and therefore issued a letter of objection to the organiser. On June 29, the Appeal Board on Public Meetings and Processions upheld Police's decision after hearing.

It must be reiterated that participating in an unauthorised assembly risks committing offences under the Public Order Ordinance, and on conviction, shall be liable to a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment while advertising or publicising an unauthorised assembly shall be liable to a maximum penalty of 12 months' imprisonment. The Court's recent rulings on cases of unauthorised assembly show that participating in an unauthorised assembly, whether involving violence or not, breaks the law. Besides, participating in public gatherings may also breach the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G) regarding prohibited group gatherings.

Police arrested two men yesterday for possessing explosives, firearms and ammunition, suspecting them in relation to certain posts on social media about inciting hatred and threatening to use violence to achieve extreme purposes. This shows that Hong Kong is still facing public safety risks. Police appeal to members of the public to refrain from participating in, advertising or publicising any unauthorised assemblies and prohibited gatherings. Police will deploy adequate manpower in relevant locations on the day and take resolute action to enforce the law, including making arrests. If any suspicious person or object is spotted, please report to Police as soon as possible.