

Rebuttal of New York Times reporting

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government on August 23 strongly disapproves and rejects the biased reporting of a New York Times article titled "A History Museum Shows How China Wants to Remake Hong Kong" which carries false and misleading narratives against the National Security Exhibition Gallery of the HKSAR.

A spokesperson of the HKSAR Government said, "The National Security Exhibition Gallery is the first thematic gallery in the HKSAR dedicated to systematic promotion of national security education. The Gallery aims at enhancing visitors' appreciation of the positive significance of national security, deepening citizens' general knowledge and understanding of national security related concepts and issues. Developed around the core of a holistic approach to national security, the Gallery serves to promote patriotism and affection for our country. Messages are conveyed to encourage all citizens to take part in safeguarding national security, and to elevate their sense of responsibility and ownership. The prevailing situation about security and social stability in Hong Kong, and Hong Kong leveraging its unique advantages of being backed by the Motherland and connected to the world, are emphasised.

"The HKSAR is an inalienable part of the People's Republic of China. It is a local administrative region that enjoys a high degree of autonomy under 'one country, two systems' and comes directly under the Central People's Government. The HKSAR steadfastly safeguards national sovereignty, security and development interests, and fully and faithfully lives up to this top priority of the 'one country, two systems' principle. The HKSAR Government resolutely, fully and faithfully implements the Hong Kong National Security Law and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance so as to address, combat, deter and prevent, in accordance with the law, acts and activities endangering national security. At the same time, it will safeguard the rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong people in accordance with the law.

"In accordance with international law and international practice based on the Charter of the United Nations, safeguarding national security is an inherent right of all sovereign states. Many common law jurisdictions, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada, have enacted multiple pieces of legislation and implemented measures to safeguard national security."

The spokesperson for the HKSAR Government stressed, "The article of the New York Times has completely ignored the large-scale and incessant riots that occurred in 2019 and the very fact of the failed attempt to stage the Hong Kong version of 'colour-revolution', which have continuously devastated society, livelihood and economy of Hong Kong. It has also deliberately neglected the fact that the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law has enabled the livelihood and economic activities of the Hong Kong community, and the business environment as well, to return to normalcy. The New York Times has demonstrated hypocrisy with double standards.

"The Gallery features six zones to bring out the context and significance of national security. The contents of the Gallery are authoritative, objective and authentic in nature, accompanied with data, videos, photographs and summaries of real cases etc., underscoring the importance of the need for the HKSAR to strengthen the work of safeguarding national security under the threats posed to national security by external forces. The untruthful reporting of the New York Times article about the Gallery is completely out of order and twisting the facts.

"Since the Gallery opened to the public on August 7, visitors are coming in droves, the number of which has already surpassed 10 000 by the fourth day. Lots of the visitors consider the contents of the Gallery to be comprehensive, with detailed information and coupled with video-playing, narratives, interactive games and 3D devices, they cater for visitors of all age groups.

"Since the opening of the Gallery, it has been receiving very positive reviews. It is effective in enhancing the citizens' awareness of the significance of safeguarding national security and the exhibition has achieved what the Gallery is meant for. The Gallery will continue to actively promote the education of all citizens joining hands to safeguard national security and encourage them to support the HKSAR to fully and faithfully implement the principle of 'one country, two systems' with a view to maintaining long-term prosperity and stability in Hong Kong.

"Safeguarding national security is the constitutional responsibility of the HKSAR and raising the awareness of Hong Kong residents of national security and of the obligation to abide by the law is the unshirkable responsibility of the HKSAR Government. Any attempts by foreign or external forces to smear the positive significance of the Gallery will only expose their own weakness and be doomed to fail. The HKSAR Government will continue to resolutely discharge its duty to ensure the steadfast and successful implementation of the 'one country, two systems'."