

SED on National Anthem Bill

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, at a media session after officiating at the opening ceremony of a special classroom and the inauguration of the four houses of Alliance Primary School, Whampoa today (January 11):

Reporter: Mr Yeung, once the National Anthem Law is introduced, does that mean it will be compulsory for schools to teach students the national anthem? Will they be penalised for not teaching that? And also, do you think that this will amount to bringing the Mainland authorities or Mainland interference into Hong Kong's education system for bringing this kind of national anthem law into schools?

Secretary for Education: I think it is a local legislation, and what the Bill (National Anthem Bill) says is the Secretary for Education has to give directions to the schools so that students could learn the national anthem at school and also they could learn the history and the necessary attitude when they sing the national anthem. So it is just following the existing local system, the local education system, in terms of learning and teaching. So there is no question of any interference from the Mainland.

Reporter: And will schools be penalised for not teaching the national anthem?

Secretary for Education: Under the law, under the Bill, that part of the Bill does not carry any penalty. But of course, when we make the direction, if there are any problems that the schools face in teaching the national anthem, we will provide professional advice to the schools.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)