

## **DSJ commences visit to Beijing**

The Deputy Secretary for Justice, Mr Cheung Kwok-kwan, called on various authorities and organisations in Beijing on June 13, and met with the senior officials of the ministries and authorities to exchange views on various issues including the construction of rule of law in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), and nurturing foreign-related legal talent.

In the morning, Mr Cheung met with Deputy Director of the Legislative Affairs Commission of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPCSC) Mr Wang Ruihe to introduce to him the Department of Justice's (DoJ) work on promoting the rule of law education including the Constitution, the Basic Law, and the legal mechanism for safeguarding national security, and have in-depth exchanges on matters including the taking forward of the extension of the measures of allowing Hong Kong-invested enterprises to adopt Hong Kong law and to choose Hong Kong as the seat of arbitration to the nine Mainland cities of the GBA. Also joining the meeting were representatives from the working units of the Legislative Affairs Commission of the NPCSC and the Committee for the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the NPCSC.

He then called on the Director of the Hong Kong and Macao Work Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, Mr Xia Baolong, to brief him on the latest developments of the DoJ's work on various fronts including establishing the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy, developing Hong Kong as a centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region, and promoting the construction of rule of law in the GBA.

Mr Xia fully recognised the important role played by the DoJ of the HKSAR Government in fully and faithfully implementing the "one country, two systems" principle, steadfastly safeguarding national security, enhancing the rule of law in Hong Kong, and protecting the promotion of the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. He remarked that Hong Kong is one of the regions with the highest level of rule of law in the world. The Central Authorities firmly supports Hong Kong to maintain the common law system, to improve the judicial system and legal system of the HKSAR, to establish itself as a centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region and to develop into a regional intellectual property trading centre, fully leveraging on the strengths of the rule of law to promote the high-quality development of Hong Kong's economy and contribute to the building of China into a great country and the advancing the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Mr Xia stressed that the golden reputation of Hong Kong's rule of law is built and maintained by all members of the judicial and legal sectors in Hong Kong, including judges at different levels of courts. The HKSAR judges at different levels of courts have all along played an important role in upholding the rule of law in Hong Kong, upholding fairness and justice and

safeguarding national security without fear or favour, self-interest or deceit. Their determination to safeguard the fundamental interests of the country and Hong Kong, "one country, two systems" as well as the rule of law in Hong Kong should be fully recognised. The Central Authorities will firmly defend the dignity of rule of law and the judges in Hong Kong, unwaveringly support Hong Kong courts to exercise judicial power independently according to the law, and steadfastly safeguard the lawful rights of Hong Kong judges and judicial officers. They have complete confidence that Hong Kong judicial and legal sectors will stand united, adhere to the principle of the rule of law, and stay committed to their duties, contributing to promoting Hong Kong's development from stability to greater prosperity.

Mr Cheung was very grateful for Mr Xia's recognition and support. He said that the DoJ would continue to fully, faithfully, and resolutely implement the policy of "one country, two systems", to spare no efforts in promoting and consolidating Hong Kong's status as a centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region through the implementation of various strategic measures, leveraging on Hong Kong's strengths to serve the country's needs.

In the afternoon, Mr Cheung visited the Supreme People's Court (SPC) and met with its Executive Vice-president, Mr Deng Xiuming, and discussed issues such as enhancing the arrangement for service of judicial documents between the two places. Mr Cheung and the Director General of the Research Office of the SPC, Mr Zhou Jiahai, signed a memorandum of understanding on establishing a standing interface platform on judicial and legal co-operation in the GBA as a high-level, regular and institutionalised official channel for communication and interface platform for both sides. The establishment of this platform is also an important measure under the DoJ's Action Plan on the Construction of Rule of Law in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area for strengthening the interface of communication mechanism between the Mainland and Hong Kong. Mr Cheung said he hoped this platform would facilitate the work of both sides on promoting the mutual legal assistance in various civil and commercial matters of the two places, and on the interfaces of mechanisms and regulatory frameworks in the GBA.

Accompanied by Deputy Director General of the Research Office of the SPC Ms Si Yanli, he also visited the Smart Court Laboratory to learn more about the latest development of the SPC in promoting the in-depth integration of modern technology with the work of the courts.

Mr Cheung also took the opportunity to visit the Peking University Law School for a meeting with the Dean of Law School, Professor Guo Li, to explore the strengthening of co-operation on nurturing foreign-related legal talent for the country. He also visited the Peking University Law School Law Library.

In addition, after his arrival on June 12, Mr Cheung met with the Director General of the Department of Policies and Regulations of the General Administration of Sport of China, Mr Chu Bo, to enhance understanding of the work of the China Commission of Arbitration for Sport, and explore co-operation opportunities between the two places on promoting sports dispute

resolution. He then called on Vice Chairman of China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, Mr Yu Jianlong, to discuss various topics, including enhancing co-operation and talents nurturing between the two places in commercial mediation.

Mr Cheung will continue his visit to Beijing on June 14.

---

## **HKSAR Government strongly disapproves of and rejects annual report of European Commission**

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) today (June 13) strongly disapproved of and rejected the unfounded and biased content targeting the HKSAR's safeguarding of national security, human rights, etc, in the so-called annual report on Hong Kong issued by the European Commission and the High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

A spokesman for the HKSAR Government stressed, "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 legal basis for implementing 'one country, two systems' comprises the Constitution and the Basic Law, which provide constitutional guarantee for fundamental rights and freedoms, including the right to equality before the law, and is buttressed by the rule of law and independent judicial power.

"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 will resolutely, fully and faithfully implement the Hong Kong National Security Law (NSL) 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. Its overarching goal is to ensure the steadfast and successful implementation of 'one country, two systems'. The HKSAR Government strongly urges the EU to discern facts from fallacies, respect the international law and basic norms governing international relations, and immediately stop interfering in Hong Kong matters, which are purely China's internal affairs."

Safeguarding National Security

The spokesman for the HKSAR Government said, "Since the implementation

of the NSL in June 2020, the EU has ignored the large-scale and incessant riots that occurred in 2019 and devastated society, livelihood and economy of Hong Kong. Instead, it attacked the HKSAR in safeguarding national security dutifully, faithfully and in accordance with the law through the so-called annual report. The EU has also deliberately neglected the fact that the NSL has enabled the livelihood and economic activities of the Hong Kong community, and as well the business environment, to return to normalcy. The EU has demonstrated hypocrisy with double standards.

"In fact, the successful implementation of the laws relevant to safeguarding national security in the HKSAR has brought about a safe and stable environment conducive to investment and business development. Early this year, a survey conducted by a major foreign chamber of commerce reflected that nearly 80 per cent of its members interviewed had confidence in the rule of law in Hong Kong, and nearly 70 per cent of them also indicated that the operation of their enterprises had not been affected by the relevant laws.

"The HKSAR law enforcement agencies have been taking law enforcement actions based on evidence and strictly in accordance with the law in respect of the acts of the persons or entities concerned, which have nothing to do with their political stance, background or occupation. The prosecution has the burden to prove beyond reasonable doubt that the defendant had the actus reus and mens rea of an offence before the defendant may be convicted by the court. The laws and work relevant to safeguarding national security in the HKSAR will not affect normal business operations and worldwide exchanges of local institutions, organisations and individuals. Law-abiding persons (including personnel, organisations and enterprises from the EU and its member states) will not engage in acts and activities endangering our national security and will not unwittingly violate the law.

"The NSL, the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance and the offences related to seditious intention under the then Crimes Ordinance expressly protect expression of opinions or even criticisms against Government policies. What are prohibited are merely statements with seditious intention to incite hatred against or the overthrowing of the constitutional order of the country or the HKSAR, or the institutions thereunder. Such objective, constructive and lawful expressions of opinions are plainly distinguishable from the unlawful acts of dissemination of extremism and hate speech which no country and no place in the world would tolerate.

"Extraterritorial effect for the offences endangering national security under the NSL fully aligns with the principles of international law, international practice and common practice adopted in various countries and regions. It is both necessary and legitimate, and is also in line with those of other countries and regions around the world. It can be seen that the national security laws of various countries, including the member states of the EU, also have extraterritorial effect under the 'personality principle' and the 'protective principle'.

"As the law enforcement department of the HKSAR safeguarding national security, the Police are duty bound to pursue those who have allegedly

committed offences under the NSL outside Hong Kong and the action is fully justified. After fleeing overseas, the people on the wanted list allegedly continued to commit offences under the NSL. Their malicious acts to endanger national security have been seen through by all, and there is no doubt that they have clearly and seriously endangered national security.

"As repeatedly emphasised by the HKSAR Government, the laws safeguarding national security in the HKSAR are precisely for safeguarding national sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity; and ensuring the full and faithful implementation of the principle of 'one country, two systems' under which the people of Hong Kong administer Hong Kong with a high degree of autonomy. It also better safeguards the fundamental rights and freedoms of the residents of the HKSAR and other people, including those doing business, in the city. The EU must immediately act reasonably and sensibly, and stop smearing the laws safeguarding national security in the HKSAR."

#### Safeguarding Due Administration of Justice and Rule of Law

The HKSAR Government spokesman emphasised, "The rule of law in Hong Kong is strong and will not change. The Department of Justice of the HKSAR takes charge of criminal prosecutions, free from any interference by virtue of Article 63 of the Basic Law. All prosecutorial decisions are based on an objective analysis of all admissible evidence and applicable laws.

"The judicial system of the HKSAR is protected by the Basic Law. According to Articles 2, 19 and 85 of the Basic Law, the HKSAR shall be vested with independent judicial power, including that of final adjudication; the courts shall exercise judicial power independently, free from any interference. Everyone charged with a criminal offence has the right to a fair hearing. The courts decide cases strictly in accordance with the evidence and all applicable laws. Cases will never be handled any differently owing to the profession, political beliefs or background of the persons involved. The prosecution has the burden to prove beyond reasonable doubt the commission of an offence before a defendant may be convicted by the court.

"The right to choice of lawyers is protected by the Basic Law, and it is well-established by case law that such a choice means a right to choose lawyers who are available and entitled to practise in Hong Kong, and not overseas lawyers who are not qualified to practise generally in Hong Kong. The amendment to the Legal Practitioners Ordinance (Cap. 159) was introduced by the Government in 2023 with a view to addressing the potential national security risks associated with the participation in national security cases by overseas lawyers who are not qualified to practise generally in Hong Kong, and implementing the interpretation by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of Articles 14 and 47 of the NSL. The relevant interpretation does not directly deal with any specific cases. Rather, it clarifies the meaning of the relevant legal provisions and the basis for application of the NSL. It does not in any way impair the independent judicial power and the power of final adjudication of the HKSAR courts as guaranteed by the Basic Law."

The spokesman added, "As the legal proceedings of Lai Chee-ying's case

and the 'Project 35+' case on conspiracy to commit subversion are still ongoing, it is inappropriate for any person to comment on the details of the case. The HKSAR Government emphasised that all cases are handled strictly on the basis of evidence and in accordance with the law. All defendants receive fair trial strictly in accordance with laws applicable to Hong Kong (including the NSL) and as protected by the Basic Law and the Hong Kong Bill of Rights. Convicted defendants have the right to appeal both conviction and sentence under the law.

## Safeguarding Rights and Freedoms

The HKSAR Government spokesman said, "The HKSAR Government steadfastly safeguards the rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong people as protected under the law. Since Hong Kong's return to the motherland, human rights in the city have always been robustly guaranteed constitutionally by both the Constitution and the Basic Law. The NSL and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance also clearly stipulate that human rights shall be respected and protected in safeguarding national security in the HKSAR, and that the rights and freedoms, including the freedoms of speech, of the press, of publication, of association, of assembly, of procession and of demonstration, that Hong Kong residents enjoy under the Basic Law and the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as applied to Hong Kong, shall be protected in accordance with the law. Nonetheless, just as the case with other places in the world, such rights and freedoms are not absolute. The ICCPR also expressly states that some of them may be subject to restrictions as prescribed by law that are necessary for the protection of national security, public safety, public order or the rights and freedoms of others, etc.

"In fact, since the implementation of the NSL, the media landscape in Hong Kong has remained vibrant. As always, the media can exercise the freedom of the press in accordance with the law. The media continue to enjoy the freedom to comment on and criticise government policies without any restriction, as long as this is not in violation of the law."

## Improved Electoral System and Reform of District Councils

The HKSAR Government spokesman pointed out, "The improved electoral system of the HKSAR puts in place legal safeguards to ensure the full implementation of 'patriots administering Hong Kong'. Keeping political power in the hands of patriots is a political rule commonly adopted around the world. No one country or region in the world will ever allow political power to fall into the hands of forces or individuals who do not love, or even sell out or betray, their own country. In Hong Kong, regardless of one's background, whoever meets the requirements and criteria of patriots can participate in elections in accordance with the law and serve the Hong Kong public by entering into the governance structure of the HKSAR after getting successfully elected.

"The chaos of the earlier term District Councils (DCs) is well known to everyone in Hong Kong and abhorred. To put DCs back on the right track, the

reform was therefore necessary and imperative. Reforming DCs is an important part of improving district governance. Having a variety of methods for the formation of DCs enables persons who love the country, have an affection for Hong Kong and are dedicated to serving their districts to participate in the work of DCs through a variety of channels, thereby reflecting public opinion more comprehensively and accurately.

"The 2023 DC Ordinary Election held on December 10, 2023 was the first large-scale territory-wide election under the improved district governance structure and the reformed DCs. The election is of great significance in terms of returning the DCs to their rightful positioning under Article 97 of the Basic Law as advisory and service bodies that are not organs of political power, and fully implementing the principle of 'patriots administering Hong Kong'. This was a high-quality election conducted in a fair, just, clean, safe and orderly manner, demonstrating fully an election culture of excellence and the superiority of the reformed DCs."

### Maintaining Long-term Prosperity and Stability

The HKSAR Government spokesman stressed, "Since the return of Hong Kong to the motherland, the HKSAR Government has been fully, faithfully and resolutely implementing the principles of 'one country, two systems', 'Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong' and a high degree of autonomy in accordance with the Constitution and the Basic Law to ensure the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. Hong Kong has entered a new stage of advancing from stability to prosperity. Under 'one country, two systems', Hong Kong has the distinctive advantage of enjoying strong support of the motherland and being closely connected to the world. With the unparalleled connectivity to the Mainland and the rest of the world, the prospects of Hong Kong's development are promising.

"As the centre of economic gravity in the world is shifting eastward, the Mainland, along with other fast-growing economies in the region, will be a major engine of global economic growth and a source of ample economic opportunities. Hong Kong will continue to play its unique role as a 'super-connector' and 'super value-adder', with a view to reaping the enormous benefits of this trend and seizing the abundant development opportunities ahead. With the motherland's strong support, and the wide room for development brought about by national strategies including the National 14th Five-Year Plan, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area development and the high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative, Hong Kong will be presented with unlimited business opportunities."

The spokesman reiterated, "Any attempt by foreign countries or external forces to undermine Hong Kong's prosperity and stability by slandering the city's situation will only expose their own weakness and faulty arguments and be doomed to fail. The HKSAR Government will continue to discharge its duty, in adherence to the principle of the rule of law, to steadfastly ensure the successful implementation of the principles of 'one country, two systems', 'Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong' and a high degree of autonomy. It will continue to create strong impetus for growth at full steam, forge a better integration of a capable government and an efficient market, and

proactively compete for enterprises and talent to strengthen the city's competitiveness. It will take the city's economic development to new heights, better serving Hong Kong citizens and fostering the city's development."

---

## [London ETO and InvestHK host London Tech Week Hong Kong Drinks Reception \(with photos\)](#)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (London ETO) co-organised a drinks reception with Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) in London, the United Kingdom (UK), on June 12 (London time), for participants of the London Tech Week to promote business opportunities in Hong Kong.

In his welcome remarks at the reception, the Director-General of the London ETO, Mr Gilford Law, highlighted that Hong Kong is one of Asia's most vibrant tech hubs and one of the world's freest economies. He also promoted the unique advantages of Hong Kong including the free movement of capital, the simple and low tax system, excellent infrastructure, and its strategic gateway position connecting with Mainland China and the rest of Asia.

The Head of Business and Talent Attraction/Investment Promotion of InvestHK London Office, Ms Daisy Ip, also spoke at the reception and highlighted that the number of start-ups in Hong Kong reached a record high of 4 257 last year, and that over 16 per cent of non-local start-up founders are from the UK. She encouraged UK start-ups to consider establishing their footprint in Hong Kong. Ms Ip also promoted the StartmeupHK Festival which is an annual series of events curated by InvestHK comprising conferences, exhibitions, pitching competitions, startup-investor matching, as well as other networking activities.

Over 170 participants from the UK Government, as well as the financial, innovation and technology, and business sectors joined the reception.







---

## CFS strengthens crackdown on inbound persons illegally bringing regulated food into Hong Kong (with photos)

A spokesman for the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) announced today (June 13) that in order to combat inbound persons illegally bringing regulated food into Hong Kong, the CFS has stepped up interception and mounted enforcement actions, and deployed quarantine detector dogs to assist law enforcement officers in carrying out their duties at various land boundary control points, all in an effort to safeguard public health.

During the CFS's operation yesterday (June 12), an inbound person was detected by a quarantine detector dog, suspected of bringing regulated food into Hong Kong. Upon investigation by law enforcement officers, raw meat packaged in foil was found in the personal baggage of the inbound person, without being accompanied by an import licence and an official health certificate issued by the issuing entity of the place of origin. Should there be sufficient evidence, prosecution will be instituted against the person

involved. The investigation is ongoing.

The CFS will continue to maintain close liaison and exchange of intelligence with other enforcement departments, including Hong Kong Customs, and step up enforcement operations at various boundary control points. As of yesterday, the CFS has instituted 715 prosecutions against inbound persons for illegally bringing regulated food into Hong Kong this year.

Under the Import and Export Ordinance (Cap. 60), each consignment of imported meat and poultry is required to apply for an import licence from the FEHD. In addition, pursuant to the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations (Cap. 132AK), each consignment of imported game, meat, poultry and eggs (regulated food), whether for personal use or not, must be accompanied by a health certificate issued by the issuing entity of the place of origin or written permission from the FEHD. Offenders are liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment under Cap. 132AK. Regulated food entering Hong Kong from the Mainland must be accompanied by a health certificate issued by Mainland Customs to prove that the food is from registered processing plants for supplying to Hong Kong recognised by the Mainland regulatory authority.

The CFS reminds members of the public not to defy the law and import regulated food without a recognised health certificate, written permission from the FEHD or import licence. In addition, the CFS will continue strengthening publicity and education at various control points and reminding the public through various channels (e.g. websites, posters, leaflets and social media) that they must abide by the relevant Hong Kong laws when purchasing food across the boundary.



---

## [Hong Kong Customs conducts anti-](#)

# infringement activities inspections (with photo)

In view of the commencement of a number of international sports events since June, Hong Kong Customs from today (June 13) will launch a high-profile seven-day patrol operation and deploy officers to various districts across the territory including Sham Shui Po, Yau Tsim Mong, Wan Chai, Kwun Tong, Tuen Mun, Yuen Long, Tai Po, Sheung Shui, and Islands District to conduct anti-infringement activities inspections. Customs will also take the opportunity to distribute promotional leaflets to stores, bars and restaurants, and explain the relevant legal requirements to the merchants to prevent them from violating the laws unwittingly.

The Divisional Commander of the Intellectual Property Technology Crime Investigation Division of the Intellectual Property Investigation Bureau of Customs, Mr Shek Ka-yin, stated today that Customs, ahead of the approach of different sports events, will maintain close co-operation with copyright owners and combat various forms of infringement activities on all fronts. Customs will continue to remind merchants and the public to respect intellectual property rights through publicity and education efforts in order to protect the benefits of the industry.

Under the Copyright Ordinance, any person who, without the authorisation of the copyright owners, communicates a copyright work to the public for the purpose of, or in the course of any trade or business that consists of communicating works to the public for profit or reward; or communicates the work to the public to such an extent as to affect prejudicially the copyright owners, commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is imprisonment for four years and a fine of \$50,000 in respect of each copyright work.

Members of the public may report any suspected infringing activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)) or online form ([eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002](http://eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002)).

