

# Court of First Instance delivers verdict on conspiracy to commit subversion case

The Court of First Instance of the High Court today (May 30) delivered a verdict on 16 defendants who had pleaded not guilty in a conspiracy to commit subversion case. Apart from two defendants, against whom the evidence was insufficient for the court to be sure of their participation in the conspiracy, the remaining 14 defendants were convicted. The Department of Justice (DoJ) has immediately informed the court of its intention to make an appeal in respect of the defendants who were not convicted.

The reasons for verdict pointed out that by March and April 2020, the ultimate aim and purpose of the so-called "Project 35+" had been very clear and made known to the public, which was to undermine, destroy or overthrow the existing political system and structure of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) established under the Basic Law and the "one country, two systems" principle. The persons concerned conspired to indiscriminately vote down the Government's budget and public expenditure proposals after securing a majority in the Legislative Council (LegCo) through the so-called "primary election", in order to compel the HKSAR Government to accede to the so-called "Five Demands Not One Less" and force the Chief Executive to dissolve the LegCo and ultimately resign, thus rendering the Government unable to introduce any new policies or implement existing policies on benefitting people's livelihood. The power and authority of both the Chief Executive and the HKSAR Government would be greatly undermined, which would necessarily amount to a serious interference in, disruption or undermining of the performance of duties and functions in accordance with the law by the body of power of the HKSAR, subverting the State power.

During the trial, evidence adduced in the court revealed that the persons concerned put forward the "10 Steps to mutual destruction" which would bring Hong Kong society to a standstill through large-scale street riots and other means at the same time. Coupled with international political and economic sanctions, "mutual destruction" would be achieved, causing suffering to members of the public.

The Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, said, "The verdict showed that the court confirmed the occurrence of the offence of conspiracy to commit subversion, which aimed at undermining, destroying or overthrowing the existing political system and structure of the HKSAR established under the Basic Law and the 'one country, two systems' principle. A total of 47 persons were charged in the case. Apart from the two defendants, against whom the evidence was found insufficient for the court to be sure of their participation in the conspiracy offence, the rest of the 45 defendants were convicted, showing the scale and the seriousness of the criminal scheme. With

regard to the verdict on the two defendants, the DoJ has already informed the court of its intention to appeal. It is the duty of the HKSAR to safeguard national security and we will fight resolutely against acts and activities endangering national security. In this regard, the HKSAR Government will ensure that laws are observed and strictly enforced, and will do our utmost to prevent, suppress and impose punishment for acts and activities endangering national security to fulfil this justified responsibility."

A spokesman for the HKSAR Government said, "During the trial, external forces blatantly smeared the Judiciary, the DoJ and the law enforcement department, and even created pressure through intimidatory political means and misleading remarks, in an attempt to interfere with the fair trial. This flagrant trample on the rule of law is a despicable attempt, which the HKSAR Government strongly condemns."

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## **Hong Kong Customs launches Xiaohongshu official account (with photos)**

â€‹Hong Kong Customs today (May 30) officially launched an account on Xiaohongshu called "Hong Kong Customs" ([bit.ly/3V01gEV](https://bit.ly/3V01gEV)). Through the Xiaohongshu platform, Hong Kong Customs aims to share its multifaceted work and latest information with Hong Kong and Mainland residents in the form of creative short videos, photos and text illustrations to strengthen its communication and liaison with people in Hong Kong, Mainland China and other regions.

Following the launch of its YouTube channel, Facebook page, Instagram account, Douyin and WeChat official accounts, the Customs' Xiaohongshu official account is the sixth official social media platform launched to further expand the reach of the latest information disseminated by Customs, and share it with people from all walks of life on more online platforms in a faster and more direct way to deepen their understanding of Customs' work, and at the same time enable Mainland travellers planning to visit Hong Kong to obtain more valuable Customs information.

As a prelude to the launch, a promotional video featuring the Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Ms Louise Ho, has been produced and uploaded to Customs' Xiaohongshu official account ([bit.ly/3V01gEV](https://bit.ly/3V01gEV)).

Members of the public are welcome to view, follow and share the information of Hong Kong Customs' Xiaohongshu official account ([bit.ly/3V01gEV](https://bit.ly/3V01gEV)) through hyperlinks or QR codes.



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## [Trade consultation on Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry 2.0 \(with photos\)](#)

The Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, today (May 30) consulted the Tourism Strategy Committee on the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry 2.0 (Blueprint 2.0). Members of the Committee actively put forward various suggestions at the meeting.

The Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau launched the trade consultation for Blueprint 2.0 in April 17 and has since held over 10 consultation sessions with the travel trade, related organisations and stakeholders for collecting views on Blueprint 2.0. The Secretary also met with Legislative Council Members last week to listen to their views on Blueprint 2.0.

The trade consultation will end on June 14. Stakeholders are welcomed to provide written comments on Blueprint 2.0 to the Tourism Commission on or before June 14 by email ([tourismblueprint@cstb.gov.hk](mailto:tourismblueprint@cstb.gov.hk)), fax (3848 4127) or post (11/F, Harbour East, 218 Electric Road, Fortress Hill, Hong Kong).



## Government posts notices of land resumption and acquisition for Second Phase development of Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Area

The Lands Department (LandsD) today (May 30) posted resumption notices and acquisition notices in accordance with relevant ordinances to resume about 176 hectares of land for the implementation of the Second Phase development of the Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Area (HSK/HT NDA).

Section 4 of the Lands Resumption Ordinance (Chapter 124), section 4 of the Land Acquisition (Possessory Title) Ordinance (Chapter 130), section 14 of the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance (Chapter 370) and section 14 of Chapter 370 as applied by section 26 of the Water Pollution Control (Sewerage) Regulation (Chapter 358, Subsidiary Legislation AL) will be invoked.

A total of 2 548 private lots with an area of about 176 hectares will be resumed, and the land being occupied by 27 graves and 23 urns with an area of government land of about 1 460 square metres will be acquired. The said land will revert to or vest in the Government upon the expiry of a period of three months from the date of affixing the notices (i.e. August 31, 2024). The Government will release ex-gratia land compensation to the relevant land owners after land reversion.

The abovementioned land reversion date is the date of vesting of the ownership of the land in the Government. It is not the departure deadline of the affected households and business undertakings. According to the information obtained earlier from the freezing survey, there are a total of 1 693 households and 364 business undertakings within the Second Phase development of the HSK/HT NDA. According to the project schedule, they are

scheduled to depart in batches from the fourth quarter of 2024 to the third quarter of 2025. The LandsD sent notification letters to the affected households and business undertakings in November 2022 informing them of the scheduled departure dates and the compensation and rehousing arrangements for their reference and early preparation for departure. The LandsD and its appointed Compensation and Rehousing Service Team will maintain communication with the affected households and business undertakings, and provide updated information as necessary, including the posting of notices three months before the departure deadlines of the affected households and business undertakings in relevant areas in accordance with the applicable procedures.

The Government is handling the compensation and rehousing matters of the affected persons at full stream, and will endeavour to arrange rehousing for or release compensation to eligible persons before the clearance commences. As of May 29, 2024, the LandsD has engaged all the households who have to depart as the first batch (274 households), amongst them, 85 households are eligible for rehousing or ex-gratia cash compensation, 147 households have their cases being processed or are yet to submit necessary information, and 42 households are not eligible based on available information (the main reasons for ineligibility include households having moved into the development area after the freezing survey, living in unauthorised structures, or owning a domestic property in Hong Kong). The LandsD will continue to contact the affected persons, so as to follow up on their rehousing and compensation matters.

The HSK/HT NDA is one of the new development area projects in the Northern Metropolis, which will supply land for residential, industrial, commercial and other developments. The construction works for the First Phase development commenced in July 2020. The construction works for the Second Phase development (including site clearance and formation, roads, drainage, sewerage and water supply systems, and river revitalisation works) will commence progressively this year.

Upon full development, the HSK/HT NDA will provide about 66 700 additional housing units accommodating a new population of about 184 000. In addition, the industrial and commercial land in the NDA will create about 6.4 million sq m of gross floor area, providing about 150 000 employment opportunities.

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## **Commission on Children convenes 21st meeting**

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, today (May 30) chaired the 21st meeting of the Commission on Children.

At the meeting, members were updated by government representatives on the latest developments and the skeleton document of the Mandated Reporter Guide under the mandatory reporting regime for suspected child abuse cases. The Guide is being formulated by the professional consultative panels formed by representatives of the social welfare, education and healthcare sectors based on the case scenarios, questions and views collected from the relevant sectors. It aims to facilitate early identification, reporting and intervention of child abuse cases by mandated reporters to achieve the policy objective of child protection.

In addition, members were briefed by the Child Fatality Review Panel on its sixth report. The report covers child death cases that took place within the period between 2019 and 2021 and reported to the Coroner's Court. It has been uploaded to the website of the Social Welfare Department ([www.swd.gov.hk](http://www.swd.gov.hk)). Members offered views on the recommendations regarding preventive strategies, etc in the report in the hope of preventing avoidable child fatalities.