

Security Bureau strongly disapproves of and firmly rejects slanders on Safeguarding National Security Ordinance by UK Foreign Secretary

The Security Bureau today (March 20) strongly disapproved of and firmly rejected the untruthful and biased remarks made by the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom (UK), Mr David Cameron, about the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance which was passed unanimously by the Legislative Council (LegCo) yesterday (March 19).

The Secretary for Security, Mr Tang Ping-keung, said, "Mr Cameron once again made untruthful and unreasonable remarks about the Ordinance. They are sheer political smears and despicable political manoeuvres. As a matter of fact, during the public consultation of the Basic Law Article 23 legislation, 98.6 per cent of the submissions of opinions showed support and gave positive comments, reflecting a strong consensus in society for the legislation, and it is also the aspiration of the people. Furthermore, the relevant Bills Committee convened 25 meetings and used nearly 50 hours to scrutinise the Ordinance (representing 30 per cent longer than that of the lengthiest scrutiny by the bills committees in 2023), during which nearly 1 000 questions and comments were raised by the members, resulting in 91 amendments, with most of them being originated from comments by lawmakers. Some clauses were even deliberated for over an hour, reflecting that the Ordinance was thoroughly discussed at the LegCo and the scrutiny was completed in a conscientious and prudent manner. It was not 'rushed through the legislative process' as claimed groundlessly by Mr Cameron.

"The definition of offences in the Ordinance is clearer than those in the National Security Act 2023 of the UK. For example, the Ordinance clearly stipulates the seven categories of 'state secrets'. The relevant information will constitute a 'state secret' only if the condition that 'disclosure of the information without lawful authority would likely endanger national security' is met. On the contrary, the 'protected information' in relevant UK laws does not concern any specific fields. As long as the improper disclosure of information will likely prejudice the national security or interests of the UK, such information may likely be regarded as 'state secrets'. Disregarding the ambiguity in the laws of his own country, Mr Cameron made unreasonable criticisms against the Ordinance, showing his hypocrisy and double standards. His disregard for facts and gross interference in the matters of Hong Kong were seen very clearly by the general public. The people of Hong Kong will not be deceived.

"The Ordinance only targets an extremely small minority of people who endanger national security, with the aim to protect the lives, property, freedoms and rights of the people of Hong Kong. The Ordinance also stipulates that the rights and freedoms which HKSAR residents enjoy under the Basic Law,

and the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as applied to HKSAR shall be protected in accordance with the law. Following the enactment of the legislation, the rights and freedoms enjoyed by members of the public will be better protected.

"As a matter of fact, after the Ordinance was passed by the LegCo unanimously, members of the public and various sectors of the community including the commercial sector and major chambers of commerce, the legal sector (including the Law Society of Hong Kong), real estate association, the youth sector, other professional sectors and political parties welcomed and voiced support for the legislation. All those raising opposing comments were external forces, as the legislation will increase their cost of and difficulty in endangering our national security. The Ordinance is a piece of legislation to defend against external forces that endanger our national security, acting like a sturdier door and a more effective door lock to defend our home. Only invaders who want to intrude into our home to plunder and loot will object to Hong Kong's legislation to safeguard the country. It is incumbent on us to tear off the mask of these external forces so that the public can see their true colours.

"The core essence of the Sino-British Joint Declaration is about China's resumption of the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong. It did not authorise the UK to interfere in Hong Kong's affairs after its return to the motherland. The UK has no sovereignty, jurisdiction or right of supervision over Hong Kong after its return to the motherland. The UK should immediately stop interfering in Hong Kong affairs which are internal affairs of China," Mr Tang reiterated.

Temporary closure of Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum

â€‹The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (March 20) that the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum (7 Castle Road, Mid-Levels, Central) will be closed temporarily from May 1, 2024 for upgrading the permanent exhibition galleries to enhance the design and presentation, as well as for maintenance and renovation works. It is expected to re-open in the second quarter of 2025.

Members of the public are urged to grasp the opportunity to visit the "Hong Kong in Dr Sun Yat-sen's Time" permanent exhibition (till April 30) and the "Learning through play: Old textbooks, toys and games" special exhibition (till March 31) at the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum.

â€‹For enquiries, please call 2367 6373.

[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected cannabis buds worth about \\$4 million at airport \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (March 19) detected a drug trafficking case involving baggage concealment at Hong Kong International Airport. About 20 kilograms of suspected cannabis buds with an estimated market value of about \$4 million were seized.

A 24-year-old male passenger arrived in Hong Kong from Bangkok, Thailand, yesterday. During Customs clearance, Customs officers found 40 bags of suspected cannabis buds, with a total weight of about 20kg, inside his check-in suitcases. The male passenger was subsequently arrested.

The arrested man has been charged with one count of trafficking in a dangerous drug. The case will be brought up at the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (March 21).

Following the resumption of normal travel and exchanges with the Mainland and other parts of the world, the number of visitors to Hong Kong has also been increasing steadily. Customs will continue to apply a risk assessment approach and focus on selecting passengers from high-risk regions for clearance to combat transnational drug trafficking activities.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

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



Caritas Medical Centre appeals to public for missing patient

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesman for Caritas Medical Centre (CMC) made the following appeal today (March 20) regarding a patient leaving the hospital without prior notification:

A 71-year-old male patient was found leaving the Medicine and Geriatric ward without prior notification at around 2.20pm today while awaiting discharge. CMC is very concerned about the incident. Hospital security guards were mobilised to search the patient at the hospital and the vicinity immediately but in vain. The hospital reported to the Police immediately.

The patient is about 1.6 meters tall, with black short hair and normal body build. He wore a dark grey top and dark trousers while leaving the hospital.

The hospital appeals to the public to contact Cheung Sha Wan Police Station at 3661 1644 or call 999 if they know the whereabouts of the patient.

Immigration Department appoints Youth Ambassadors in Guangzhou (with photos)

The Director of Immigration, Mr Benson Kwok, officiated at the appointment ceremony for the Immigration Department (ImmD) Youth Ambassadors Programme today (March 20) held at the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). He appointed eight young people from Hong Kong who were studying and living in Guangdong as ImmD Youth Ambassadors.

The eight Youth Ambassadors will receive diversified training provided by the ImmD during the one-year term, including visits, workshops, exchange programmes, trial work placement days and internships. They will also have the opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of the operations of the HKSAR Government and the business scope of the ImmD. The ImmD expects that the Programme will enable Youth Ambassadors to broaden their horizons and lay a solid foundation for their future work in various positions within society.

Mr Kwok said at the appointment ceremony that these Youth Ambassadors serve as an important bridge between the ImmD and Hong Kong people on the Mainland. He said he hopes that through the Programme, Youth Ambassadors can learn and enhance their understanding of the ImmD's policies and work, inspiring them to serve Hong Kong, contribute to the country, and strengthen their patriotism. Mr Kwok emphasised that young people are the future of the country and an important force for the mutual development of the Mainland and Hong Kong. He expects them to actively spread positive energy, tell Hong Kong's good stories, and contribute their youthful power to the prosperity and stability of the Mainland and Hong Kong.

