

# Transcript of remarks by SHYA at media session

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs, Miss Alice Mak, at a media session after attending the flag raising ceremony in celebration of the 74th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China at Kowloon Masjid and Islamic Centre by Hong Kong Muslims today (October 17):

Reporter: Why was the decision made now to put a Chinese flag at the mosque? Was it a decision made by the Islamic board of trustees or was it a decision implemented on them by the Beijing or Hong Kong Government?

Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs: This is the intention and initiative of the Islamic community in Hong Kong and we can see from this flag raising ceremony that other than organising a flag raising ceremony, they have also organised flag raising teams in the Islamic schools. They also help us nurture the new generation which embraces the national pride and honour, so I think this is a good sign to show inclusiveness in our community. Every member of the community has their own way to show respect and share the honour and pride of our nation.

Reporter: Obviously the Beijing Government has come up with quite a lot of scrutiny for the way it treats Muslim especially Uyghur Muslims in the Xinjiang region. And obviously a lot of the Hong Kong Muslims community could be quite offended when they see the Chinese flag outside the mosque, so I don't quite understand why that would be and are you worried that it could cause a divide in the community?

Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs: Please stop listening to any rumours that are trying to damage the relationship between our country and religions. Those are rumours and ungrounded rumours. We can see from the building of the flag raising platform and also their act of organising the flag raising ceremony and flag raising teams. We can see that this is the inclusiveness and mutual respect in our community among different religions and this is very crucial to the harmony of our community. Thank you.

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