

# Violent protests seriously undermine the rule of law

Starting from June this year, a large number of public events were held at various locations in Hong Kong. Although most of them were conducted in a generally orderly manner, a large group of radical protestors violently charged the Police cordon line and attacked Police officers shortly after the public events concluded, turning the scenes into very chaotic and dangerous situation. Violent protests seriously undermine the rule of law. The Police, with the mission of upholding the law of Hong Kong, would definitely stand at the forefront to maintain public safety and order.

Same as in the past, Police officers facilitated the participants in expressing their views during the public procession in Sha Tin yesterday (July 14) afternoon. However, upon arrival at Yuen Wo Road, participants refused to follow the pre-agreed route and started blocking the roads in the vicinity of Sha Tin Rural Committee Road and Yuen Wo Road.

Afterwards, a large group of people unlawfully assembled along Sha Tin Rural Committee Road, Yuen Wo Road and Wang Pok Street. Equipment including helmets and goggles was distributed premeditatedly among protestors in a short period of time. Some protestors pried up bricks from pavements, stocked up considerable number of iron poles and other offensive weapons, demolished the railings nearby, and blocked the roads by railings and other miscellaneous objects.

Meanwhile, a group of violent protestors deliberately attacked Police officers and charged Police cordon lines with different materials including traffic cones and unknown powder. At around 7.50pm, in order to swiftly prevent the situation from deteriorating, Police repeatedly urged the protestors to leave as soon as possible. Other members of the public not involved in the protest were also advised to pay attention to personal safety and not to take part in any illegal act. At around 8.30pm, Police further warned the protestors to leave immediately or else force would be used. Police dispersal action at around 9pm followed, intending to make the protesters leave in the direction of Sha Tin Railway Station as soon as possible.

After most of the protesters left, some violent protestors hurled bricks, umbrellas and helmets at the Police on the platform of shopping arcades near Wang Pok Street and its vicinity, posing serious threats to the safety of Police officers and members of the public. Police officers entered the arcades and their platforms to stop their violent behaviour. While Police officers entered the arcades, the officers were repeatedly and actively attacked by protestors and miscellaneous objects were continuously thrown from height. Police thus deployed appropriate force to arrest violent protesters.

The dispersal action concluded at around 12am today (July 15). During

the operation, Police arrested 47 persons, including 29 men and 18 women, for offences including unlawful assembly, assaulting police officers, obstructing police officers and possession of offensive weapon. Among the 13 police officers sent to hospital for treatment, five officers are still admitted.

The aim of Police enforcement is to maintain law and order and uphold the rule of law. Police will conduct active investigation into the recent violent acts and take enforcement actions to bring those responsible to justice.