

Police conducting dispersal operation in Wong Tai Sin

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following message as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

While some Police officers were trying to leave by Police vehicles amid a violent clash in Wong Tai Sin, some radical protestors surrounded them and hurled miscellaneous objects at the officers and vehicles.

After repeated but futile warnings, Police are now using tear gas to disperse the violent protestors. Police appeal to everyone at the scene to leave immediately and not to charge Police cordon lines.

Police also appeal to the residents in the area to stay tuned to the latest situation and if necessary, stay indoors and keep their windows closed.

Rumours on Territory-wide Identity Card Replacement Exercise clarified

In respect of rumours on the Internet that the current Territory-wide Identity Card Replacement Exercise ("Replacement Exercise") was not necessary, a Government spokesman today (August 3) seriously dismissed the rumours and urged the public to have their smart identity cards replaced in accordance with the replacement schedule.

According to the Immigration Department, the Replacement Exercise launched at the end of last year is mainly due to the fact that it has been over 10 years since the issue of the smart identity card of the previous generation in 2003, and the card materials have been getting old. Coupling with the expiry of the 10-year maintenance of the smart identity card system, the system supplier has declined to continue to provide maintenance and repair services. To ensure the effective use of different functions of the smart identity card by the public, it is necessary to introduce the new generation smart identity card and implement the one-off four-year Replacement Exercise for all smart identity card holders. After discussions at the Legislative Council and upon the Government's assurance of addition of

multi-level safeguards in the new smart identity card, the Legislative Council approved a commitment in May 2015 to implement the current Replacement Exercise.

Access to chip data must be initiated by the cardholder through taking out his/her smart identity card and placing it onto an authorised optical card reader. The reading process is conducted with the combination of optical card reader and wireless transmission technology. Before communication and data reading, the identity of the chip and the optical card reader must be defined and mutually authenticated. All communication and data transmission would be encrypted throughout the whole process; and could not be conducted if the distance between the chip and the optical card reader is more than two centimetres.

Meanwhile, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer reiterated that the smart lampposts do not carry any facial recognition function and cannot detect or read information of identity cards. In addition, the Government had said earlier that it would not implement the Mainland's social credit system in Hong Kong.

Protestors blocked entrances of the Cross-Harbour Tunnel again

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following message as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

Some protestors blocked the entrances of the Cross-Harbour Tunnel again, causing serious obstruction to the traffic and emergency services.

Police warn the protestors to stop blocking the roads and other illegal acts. Members of the public should stay tuned to the latest traffic arrangement.

Wong Tai Sin Police Station Report Room service suspended

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following message as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

The report room services of Wong Tai Sin Police Station are now temporarily suspended. Police appeal to members of the public not to obstruct the emergency vehicles access so as to avoid affecting the emergency services provided to the public. In case of emergency, please call 999.

Interpretation of principle of political neutrality of civil service

On the interpretation of the principle of political neutrality of the civil service by some people at the public meeting at Chater Garden last night (August 2), a spokesman for the Government reiterated that according to the Civil Service Code, civil servants shall uphold the principle of political neutrality, meaning that civil servants shall serve the Chief Executive and the Government of the day with total loyalty and to the best of their ability, no matter what their own political beliefs are. When civil servants express their views, they should ensure that their views would not give rise to any conflict of interest with their official duties, or might not be seen to compromise the important principle of maintaining impartiality and political neutrality when discharging their duties. Civil servants shall at all times ensure that their behaviour would not impede their performance of official duties in a fair and professional manner.

The spokesman stressed that Government officials' explanation of political neutrality to the public has all along been consistent.

In response to a question by a Legislative Council member in the Legislative Council on June 9, 2004, the then Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Joseph Wong, said "The principle of political neutrality that civil servants should uphold comprises the following key elements: (1) the civil service's political neutrality is built on its allegiance to the Government; (2) it is every civil servant's duty to be loyal to the Chief Executive and the principal officials of the day; (3) it is the role of civil servants to evaluate the implications of policy options and to tender clear and honest advice in the process of policy formulation; (4) once a decision has been taken by the Administration, civil servants should support and implement the decision fully and faithfully irrespective of their personal preferences and should not make known their own views in public; and (5) civil servants should assist the principal officials in explaining policy decisions and in gaining support of the Legislative Council and the public."

At a motion debate on Maintaining the Political Neutrality of the Civil

Service at the Legislative Council meeting on November 28, 2007, the then Secretary for the Civil Service, Miss Denise Yue, also stated that, "The most fundamental principle for the political neutrality of the Civil Service is that civil servants should assist the Chief Executive and the politically appointed officials of the day in formulating policies, implementing decisions taken and administering the public services under their charge • whatever their political assertion • with full loyalty. This is also the constitutional obligation of the Civil Service."

At a motion debate in the Legislative Council meeting on June 5 this year, the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Joshua Law, also said that "The political neutrality of the civil service means that civil servants shall serve the Chief Executive and the Government of the day with total loyalty and to the best of their ability, no matter what their own political beliefs are. They shall not allow their own personal political affiliation or beliefs to determine or influence the discharge of their official duties and responsibilities. They shall implement decisions and administer the public services under their charge in a just and fair manner."

The spokesman urged all members of the public to stay united and work together at this difficult moment to uphold the core values of the civil service so as to enable civil servants to continue to discharge their duties impartially.