

CE's letter to Hong Kong citizens

Following is the letter to Hong Kong citizens by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, published in newspapers today (May 29):

Fellow Citizens,

Hong Kong, the home we all treasure, is defined by the "Lion Rock spirit" by which we join hands to pursue our dreams while putting aside our differences. Since our return to the Motherland, Hong Kong has been a Special Administrative Region directly under the Central People's Government, enjoying a high degree of autonomy and unique advantages under "One Country, Two Systems".

Over the past year, the Hong Kong community has been traumatised. Violence by rioters has escalated, with illegal firearms and explosives posing a terrorist threat. The opposition forces and organisations advocating "Hong Kong independence" and "self-determination" have blatantly challenged the authority of the Central Authorities and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government, pleaded for interference in Hong Kong's affairs by external forces and even begged for sanctions against Hong Kong and thus disregarding the interests of Hong Kong people and our country. Meanwhile, external forces have intensified their interference in Hong Kong's internal affairs, passed laws relating to Hong Kong and flagrantly glorified the illegal acts of radicals, all of which seriously jeopardise our nation's sovereignty, security and development interests. Hong Kong has become a gaping hole in national security, and our city's prosperity and stability are at risk.

Regrettably, the current legal system and enforcement mechanisms for Hong Kong to safeguard national security are inadequate or even "defenceless". Despite returning to the Motherland for 23 years, Hong Kong has yet to enact laws to curb acts that threaten national security in accordance with Article 23 of the Basic Law. In view of the current political and social situation, it is difficult for the Executive and Legislative authorities of the HKSAR to complete on its own legislation to safeguard national security in the foreseeable future. The decision now by the National People's Congress to establish and improve the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the HKSAR to safeguard national security from the state level in accordance with the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the Basic Law is an exercise of the authority and duty of the Central Authorities. It also demonstrates the commitment of the Central Authorities to fully and accurately implement "One Country, Two Systems" as well as their care for Hong Kong people. There is both the need and the urgency for legislation, the constitutionality, lawfulness and reasonableness of which are beyond doubt.

The objective of the legislation is to prevent, curb and sanction secession, the subversion of state power, the organisation and carrying out of terrorist activities that seriously endanger national security, and

interference by foreign and external forces in the affairs of the HKSAR. It will only target an extremely small minority of illegal and criminal acts and activities, while the life and property, basic rights and freedoms of the overwhelming majority of citizens will be protected. Citizens will continue to enjoy the freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of demonstration, of procession, and to enter or leave Hong Kong in accordance with the law. All relevant law enforcement will be conducted strictly in accordance with the law as well as statutory powers and procedures.

Fellow citizens, every country has its own laws to safeguard national security for the long-term security of their country and the stability of people's lives. The legislation by the Central Authorities for the HKSAR to safeguard national security aims to enable Hong Kong society to find a way out of the impasse, restore stability as soon as possible and resume development of the economy and livelihoods.

I appeal for your full understanding and staunch support for the Decision passed by the National People's Congress.

Carrie Lam
Chief Executive
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

HKSARG strongly objects to Hong Kong Policy Act Report released by US State Department

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (May 28) expressed strong opposition to sweeping remarks contained in the so-called report by the US State Department under the United States – Hong Kong Policy Act (the report).

"These remarks misrepresented the constitutional relationship between the HKSAR and the Central Authorities, smeared the implementation of 'One Country, Two Systems' in Hong Kong and interfered in the internal affairs of the HKSAR," a Government spokesman said.

Hong Kong is an inalienable part of the People's Republic of China (PRC). It is a local administrative region which shall enjoy a high degree of autonomy and come directly under the Central People's Government. The National People's Congress (NPC) of the PRC is the highest organ of state power and by virtue of the PRC Constitution, notably Articles 31 and 62, has the authority to establish special administrative region and to promulgate by law the systems to be practised in the special administrative region.

"Throughout the past 23 years, the Central Authorities and the HKSAR Government are conducting Hong Kong's internal affairs in accordance with the Constitution and the Basic Law, and in full accord with the 'One Country, Two Systems' principle. We regret the unfounded allegations in the report about erosion of HKSAR's high degree of autonomy and the legitimate rights and freedoms enjoyed by the people of Hong Kong."

Just as it is in any other country, including the United States, legislating on national security is within the purview of the Central Authorities. The Decision passed by the NPC today (May 28) on establishing and improving the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the HKSAR to safeguard national security (the Decision) is within the power and authority of the NPC. By preventing, curbing and sanctioning acts of secession, subverting state power and organising and carrying out terrorist activities, as well as activities interfering with the HKSAR's internal affairs by foreign or external forces, the national security legislation to be enacted by the NPC Standing Committee in accordance with the Decision will restore stability in Hong Kong, better protect the legitimate rights and freedoms of Hong Kong people and contribute to HKSAR's long term prosperity.

"No reasonable person can deny that Hong Kong has been besieged by escalating violence since June last year. The emergence of incidents involving explosives and firearms has posed risks of terrorism, seriously jeopardising public safety. In addition, organisations advocating 'Hong Kong independence' and 'self-determination', allegedly supported by foreign or external forces, have incited protesters, especially young people, to challenge the authority of the Central Authorities and the HKSAR Government. These are the facts on the ground."

In response to media enquiries about the "special status" or differential treatment under US law or sanctions to be applied to Hong Kong, the Government spokesman pointed out that Hong Kong's "separate customs territory" status is enshrined in the Basic Law and we shall continue to pursue the policy of free trade. As a separate member of the World Trade Organization, we expect to be fairly treated by our trading partners.

"The threat of sanctions to achieve the purpose of interfering with the policy of another place is a violation of international law and international practice. Practically, in Hong Kong-US relationship, any sanctions are a double-edged sword that will not only harm the interests of Hong Kong but also significantly those of the US.

"In the past decade, the US' trade surplus with Hong Kong has been the biggest among all its trading partners, with merchandise trade surplus totaling US\$297 billion from 2009 to 2018. In 2019, that surplus had come down from US\$31.4 billion in the preceding year to US\$26.4 billion as a result of the US-China trade tensions. Should any sanctions be contemplated in other areas like services and investment, the interests of the 1 300 US corporations based in Hong Kong might further be affected."

"The HKSAR Government hopes that the US Government would adopt a pragmatic attitude, and would, bearing in mind US' own interests in Hong

Kong, refrain from interfering with the internal affairs of our nation and Hong Kong, and maintain her economic and trade policy towards Hong Kong."

Security Bureau Task Force to follow up Report of Independent Police Complaints Council held its first meeting (with photo)

The Task Force of Security Bureau held its first meeting today (May 28) to follow up various recommendations set out in the Thematic Study Report of the Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC). The work plan of the Task Force was laid down at the meeting.

The Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, who supervises the Task Force, presided over the first meeting. Participants included representatives of the Security Bureau and the Police. The Deputy Commissioner of Police (Management), Mr Kwok Yam-shu also attended the meeting.

IPCC made a total of 52 recommendations in the Thematic Study Report. Mr Lee considered that the Police should accord priority to dealing with recommendations in a number of areas, including dissemination of information to the public, arrangements for reporters in large-scale public order events, co-ordination among the Police themselves and with other departments, temporary detention facilities and police officers' identification.

At the meeting, Mr Lee set out a clear direction on the work of the Task Force. Due to the wide scope of the 52 recommendations, the Task Force will categorise the 52 recommendations into five areas, and set up five sub-groups under the Task Force to focus on following up the work of the respective concerned area. The five areas are – enhancing release of public information and review of media relations; review of guidelines on the use of force; improvement of arrangements for temporary holding areas; enhancement of police operational deployment and strategies; and strengthening of the Police's internal management, co-ordination and training.

Mr Lee required the five sub-groups to assess the complexity and urgency of relevant issues with a view to determining the review and follow-up arrangements, reporting back and commencing the related work. Those items that are relatively less complex should be implemented as soon as possible. Examples include: following earlier indication by the Police that they have ceased using the San Uk Ling Holding Centre to detain persons arrested at public order events, they should submit to the Task Force a clear policy for implementing such arrangement within the coming month; review and improvement of the protocols for organising press conferences with other departments or

institutions as soon as possible; and improvement of manpower deployment, equipment and other arrangements at detention facilities for handling large-scale operations. The Task Force will consider inviting other departments and institutions to participate in the discussion and research of relevant issues, having regard to the need of specific items.

Mr Lee indicated at the meeting that the Task Force would regularly submit work progress report to the Chief Executive. The first progress report is initially planned for submission to the Chief Executive in August, followed by quarterly reporting. The Police must also report to and discuss with IPCC its follow up actions in accordance with the mechanism under the IPCC Ordinance. The meeting and work arrangements of the Task Force will tie in with the Police's progress reports to IPCC.

IPCC published the Thematic Study Report on May 15, putting forward 52 recommendations for improving the Police practices and procedures. The Chief Executive has requested the Secretary for Security to establish a task force and personally supervise the task force to study the report and follow up its recommendations, as well as to communicate with relevant departments and organisations.



[Pok Oi Hospital announces temporary suspension of negative pressure system in isolation room](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Pok Oi Hospital (POH) made the following announcement today (May 28) concerning the temporary suspension of negative pressure system in an isolation room:

At around 5.10pm yesterday (May 27), staff from a medical and geriatric Ward noticed that the red light went on as an alarm for the negative pressure

system of an isolation room inside the ward. On-site technicians from the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) was informed immediately. Inspection revealed that the suspension of ventilation and negative pressure system of that isolation room was due to the accidental pressing of the emergency stop button by the EMSD contractor during regular maintenance on the roof top that afternoon. The system resumed normal at 5.25pm after rebooting.

According to the record of the ward, a patient was admitted to that isolation room at 4.55pm for taking nasal specimen for COVID-19 testing. By that time the alarm light was green showing that the room was at normal negative pressure level. The nurse completed the specimen taking within 10 minutes and left the room.

The patient stayed in the isolation room until the test result was confirmed negative later that night. As the patient was not suffering from infectious disease and medical staff and patients outside the isolation room had put on appropriate personal protective equipment, the POH assessed that the incident did not pose any risk of infection.

The POH is very concerned about the incident and has urged the EMSD to review the monitoring and alert mechanism and to perform thorough checking to the system to ensure its proper functioning. The incident has been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office via the Advance Incident Reporting System.

CFS proactively follows up on suspected food poisoning cases involving sandwiches

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (May 28) that it has been proactively following up on the suspected food poisoning outbreak involving sandwiches produced in Hong Kong with the Environmental Hygiene Branch (EHB) of the FEHD, including inspecting retail outlets and tracing the distribution of the affected product. All the premises concerned had stopped sale of the affected product according to the CFS' advice. Moreover, two sandwich samples taken from the Tsuen Wan retail outlet of the sandwich concerned were found to contain a pathogen, Salmonella. The CFS is following up on the case.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "Upon notification of the incident by the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health on May 21, the CFS immediately sent staff to the retail outlets and the food factory of the affected product to follow up. A press release was also issued on the same

day to urge the public not to consume the sandwiches concerned, and ask the trade to stop using or selling the product concerned immediately. So far, the CFS, according to the information provided by the manufacturer, has investigated a total of 12 premises (including the food factory) that sold the product, and all of them had stopped sale of the affected product according to the CFS' advice. The CFS has also provided health education on food safety and hygiene to the person-in-charge and staff concerned, and requested them to carry out a thorough cleaning and disinfection.

"Moreover, the manufacturer was suspected of operating an unlicensed food factory. Prosecution had been instituted against the person-in-charge of the premises by the FEHD earlier. The CFS had instructed the food premises to stop production of the product. Checks conducted by the EHB revealed that the food premises concerned has suspended business since May 21."

The spokesman pointed out that so far all the reported cases had the sandwiches bought before investigation as well as preventive and control measures instituted by the CFS.

The spokesman urged the public again not to consume the product concerned, regardless of batches and flavours. The trade should also stop using or selling the affected product immediately if still in possession.

According to Section 54 of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap 132), all food for sale in Hong Kong, whether locally produced or imported, should be fit for human consumption. An offender is subject to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months upon conviction.

"Salmonella infection may cause fever and gastrointestinal upset such as vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhoea. The effects on infants, young children, the elderly and patients with a weak immune system can be more severe and sometimes may even lead to death," the spokesman said.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action. Investigation is ongoing.