

Territory-wide flag-selling activity cancelled

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) has been informed by the Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong Social Service that the territory-wide flag-selling activity in public places scheduled to be held today (May 16) has been cancelled, a spokesman for the SWD said.

For enquiries, please contact Ms Wong of the organisation at 2331 2877.

Police's response to Thematic Study Report released by IPCC

In response to the Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC)'s Thematic Study Report on the "Public Order Events arising from the Fugitive Offenders Bill since June 2019 and the Police Actions in Response" ("the report") announced today (May 15), a Police spokesperson gave the following response:

Police acknowledge and accept the IPCC's report, and are grateful for the precious time and effort the IPCC Chairman and members have contributed in conducting a comprehensive review within a short period of time and offered various constructive improvement measures on police handling of large-scale public order events.

Police will seriously examine the IPCC's report and will participate in and fully collaborate with the taskforce steered by Secretary for Security with a view to studying in detail and following up on the 52 recommendations proposed in the report.

Security Bureau's response to thematic study report by Independent Police Complaints Council

The Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC) published today (May

15) the "Thematic Study Report on the Public Order Events arising from the Fugitive Offenders Bill since June 2019 and the Police Actions in Response" (the Thematic Study Report).

The Thematic Study Report sets out the IPCC's detailed review to gain a broad picture of the large-scale public order events (POEs) and the corresponding Police actions since June 2019, as well as 52 recommendations in improving Police practices and procedures made in accordance with Section 8(1)(c) of the Independent Police Complaints Council Ordinance (IPCC Ordinance)(Cap. 604).

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. The Security Bureau is now making preparations to convene a task force meeting as soon as practicable with a view to developing a work plan and identifying the priority items in respect of the 52 recommendations put forward by the IPCC. Members of the task force shall include representatives from the Police and other departments and organisations relevant to the review items.

The spokesman of the Security Bureau said, "The Government expresses gratitude to the IPCC Chairman, Mr Anthony Neoh, SC, and all members of the IPCC for their time and efforts in preparing this report. Different versions, statements and allegations of social incidents and issues covered in the report have been circulating across the society. The IPCC's report seeks to provide a complete picture of the incidents through rigorously reviewing a tremendous amount of information and cross-checking information obtained from different sources. We believe that the report can help ascertain the facts. At the same time, the report has proposed a series of improvement measures which should be helpful to the Police to better handle future POEs and further enhance their law enforcement efforts."

The task force, to be led by the Secretary for Security, will carefully study and effectively follow up the 52 recommendations made by the IPCC, report regularly to the Chief Executive, and consider making public the progress made when appropriate to enhance transparency. The Police will also report to and discuss with the IPCC in accordance with the mechanism under the IPCC Ordinance.

The IPCC is a statutory independent organisation comprising non-official members from a wide spectrum of society. In addition to the Chairman, Mr Neoh, who is a Senior Counsel, seven of the incumbent members are from the legal sector, two from the medical sector, two are accountants, one is an engineer, one is a surveyor, and other members are from the education, banking, finance, transport, commercial, public services and philanthropic sectors. With their rich experience in community and public services, members directly monitor the Police's investigation of complaints in an in-depth and objective manner. Every year, the IPCC also makes recommendations to the Police in respect of deficiencies identified in Police practices or procedures. All recommendations have been responded to and are followed up

proactively by the Police.

Transcript of remarks by CE at media session

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session this evening (May 15):

Reporter: Mrs Lam, you said that you've asked the Security Bureau to set up a task force to follow up on the recommendations made by the IPCC, so does that mean that you accept that the Police have failed to carry out their duties properly during the handling of the protests, at least in some occasions? And would you say that this is your political solution to the current social unrest, and do you think that this will be enough to help ease social tensions and people's grievances against the Police? And secondly, will you continue to try and invite other experts to set up the independent review committee that you promised earlier and to look into the causes of the social unrest? If not, why not?

Chief Executive: Well, first of all, both Secretary for Security and myself attach a lot of importance to this report and to each and every of the 52 recommendations made by IPCC. That's why, broadly speaking, I accept all these recommendations and have asked Secretary for Security to personally chair a task force to look at how each and every of the recommendations should be followed through. I have explained at length the role of the Police Force, and they are there to enforce the law – they have no other purposes, they are not involved in the politics. But if anybody breaches the law, it is the duty of the police officers to enforce the law. Throughout this almost one year of social unrest, that is the primary duty of the Hong Kong Police Force. But, of course, in the course of carrying out duties, given the very complicated and difficult circumstances, there were situations that could be handled better. There were deficiencies in communications, in staff deployment and in other things as pointed out by the IPCC in its thematic report. That is where we should find room for improvement.

As far as social tension, I think it will continue, because, one, Hong Kong is a very free society, secondly, we are still faced with a lot of confrontations, either in the Legislative Council or in the District Councils. I am not naive to think that the publication of the report or my response to the report, even accepting all the recommendations for implementation, will put an end to this social unrest. But at least we will make every attempt to follow through the recommendations and also the several areas of work that I have outlined.

Coming back to the establishment of the independent review committee, I

tried not to be very explicit in my introductory remarks, but the reason, as I understand it, the reason why rather distinguished members of the community who had originally agreed to take up the task of either being a chairman or the member of this independent review committee subsequently pulled out on personal reasons, I guess, was the fear of intimidation, was the fear of doxxing on the Internet, and the fear of their relatives, their friends or their businesses being affected. This is one of the very sad things that we have seen in this almost one year of social unrest, that people tend to use force against people who have a different political stance or a different opinion, or simply because those people are supporting the role of the Hong Kong SAR Government or the Police Force. Thank you.

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

Meetings of Legislative Council and its Committees

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

Details of the meetings of the Legislative Council (LegCo) and its Committees to be held in the LegCo Complex during the week from May 18 to 22 are available in the meeting schedule attached.

The information in the meeting schedule is subject to change. Please refer to the "LegCo Calendar" on the LegCo Website (www.legco.gov.hk) for the latest details of meetings.

Members of the public can watch or listen to the meetings via the "Webcast" system on the LegCo Website. To observe the proceedings of the meetings at the LegCo Complex, members of the public may call 3919 3399 during office hours to reserve seats.