

Government response to protests in Kowloon

In response to the protests in Kowloon today (August 24), a Government spokesman said the following:

Despite that a Letter of No Objection was issued for the public procession in Kowloon East following discussion between the Police and the organiser, some protesters deviated from the approved route during the procession and set up barricades on a number of roads in Kowloon East and in Sham Shui Po, paralysing traffic and affecting the emergency services. The violent protesters also vandalised public property, committed arson, hurled suspected petrol bombs and attacked police officers with bricks, jeopardising the safety of members of the public and police officers.

A number of smart lampposts were deliberately damaged by protesters. The Government has repeatedly clarified that the smart lampposts do not carry any facial recognition function and would not infringe upon personal privacy. The smart lampposts are introduced to collect city data such as traffic and air quality data to facilitate smart city development through open data and the upcoming 5G technology. However, irrational protesters disregarded the facts and blatantly damaged the smart lampposts.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government strongly condemns the vandalistic and violent acts of the protesters. The police will strictly follow up on all the illegal acts. The HKSAR Government appeals to the protesters to stop the violence so that order can be restored in society as soon as possible.