

HAB's statement on use of District Council members' ward offices as polling stations for a so-called "referendum" of class boycotts and general strikes

The Home Affairs Bureau today (June 19) made the following statement on the use of District Council (DC) members' ward offices as the polling stations for a so-called "referendum" of class boycotts and general strikes.

The Home Affairs Bureau noted that the so-called "referendum" about carrying out class boycotts and general strikes against the legislation of national security law will be held on June 20 and there are reports stating that some ward offices of the DC members will be used as polling stations on that day.

The Government reiterated that national security is a matter under the purview of the Central Authorities. Safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests is the constitutional requirement of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), the duty of the HKSAR Government, and is also in the interest of all Hong Kong residents. The legislation of national security law in Hong Kong will not weaken but instead strengthen "one country, two systems" and help maintain the safety and stability of our community so as to make Hong Kong a safer and more stable city.

The Government clearly stated that the Basic Law and the Hong Kong's legal system do not provide for any "referendum" mechanism. Conducting any form of a so-called "referendum" will have no constitutional basis or legal effect.

According to sections 1 to 3 of General Standards of the Code of Conduct for Members of a District Council or Its Committees: a DC member shall not do anything which may compromise or impair his or her integrity, impartiality, objectivity or his or her ability to perform his or her duties; a DC member shall conduct himself or herself in such a way as not to place himself or herself in a position which may be contrary to the generally assumed standard of conduct expected of a DC member; and a DC member shall ensure that his or her conduct must not be such as to bring the DC into disrepute.

Furthermore, paragraph 23 of the Guidelines on the Remuneration Package for Members of the District Councils of the HKSAR stipulates that a DC member must ensure that the ward office operated with the support of the Operating Expenses Reimbursement and other accountable allowances/expenses reimbursements for DC members is used for the discharge of DC duties. Should the ward office be used for discharging duties not related to the DC, e.g.

using the ward office as the polling station of the abovementioned event, the related expenses will not be reimbursed.