

Police strongly condemn violent and vandalistic acts

Violent protests broke out in multiple districts in Kowloon yesterday (October 20). Police express strong condemnation against rioters.

Despite Police's objection, some people advocated unlawful protests in Tsim Sha Tsui yesterday afternoon. Since around 1.30pm, a large group of protestors blocked carriageways in the vicinity of Tsim Sha Tsui and used miscellaneous objects to obstruct Austin Road and Jordan Road, seriously affecting traffic.

Since around 2.30pm, rioters vandalised shops and public utilities in Mong Kok, Yau Ma Tei, Jordan, Tsim Sha Tsui and Prince Edward. They prized open metal gates of shops including restaurants and banks, and committed vandalistic acts and set fire therein. Such acts completely disregard law.

Furthermore, rioters spray-painted and threw petrol bombs at Mong Kok, Yau Ma Tei and Austin MTR Stations, and vandalised facilities with hard objects.

At around 3.30pm, rioters hurled a large number of petrol bombs at Tsim Sha Tsui Police Station. They also set up road blocks using miscellaneous objects and set them alight in Mong Kok and Yau Ma Tei. The fire at the junction of Waterloo Road and Shanghai Street was fierce. Rioters' setting fire seriously threatened the safety of everyone at scene, posing danger to members of the public in the vicinity as fire might spread to residence nearby.

At around 4pm, Police deployed a Specialised Crowd Management Vehicle to disperse rioters gathered on Nathan Road. As the vehicle approached near the Kowloon Mosque, coloured water used for dispersal accidentally sprayed on the entrance and front gate of the mosque. Following the incident, Police immediately contacted the persons in charge to clarify the situation and to show our concern.

Police have all along maintained a good relationship with the Kowloon Mosque and the Muslim community in Hong Kong. Police respect religious freedom and will strive to protect all places of worship.

During dispersal operations, multiple suspected objects were found in the vicinity of Nathan Road in Mong Kok. Officers of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Bureau deployed at scene safely handled a suspected bomb found at the junction of Tong Mi Road and Lai Chi Kok Road. No one was injured in the incident. For other suspicious objects reported, nothing was found after officers were deployed.

In the dispersal operation yesterday, Police used tear gases, rubber bullets, 40mm react rounds, etc., to stop the illegal acts of the rioters.

Police strongly condemn the rioters' violent and vandalistic acts which completely disregard law and order. Police reiterate that no violent behavior will be tolerated. Police will take resolute enforcement action public order and bring all lawbreakers to justice.