

Police's response to public meeting on Hong Kong Island

Police had earlier issued a Letter of No Objection regarding a public meeting held yesterday (August 18) on Hong Kong Island. Although the meeting was generally peaceful, acts of breaching public peace happened afterwards. Police deeply regret such acts.

A large number of protestors rushed to the roads and occupied the carriageways of Causeway Road and Hennessy Road after leaving the public meeting venue. The protestors later proceeded to Western District, Central, Admiralty, Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and Tin Hau, occupying the carriageways and paralysed the traffic in the vicinity. In the evening, a large group of protestors still stayed on the carriageways around Admiralty. Some protestors also shot hard objects at the Central Government Complex with slingshots and aimed laser beams at police officers.

One of the accusations by the public meeting organizer was the abusive use of violence by Police. Police have to point out that over the past two months, violent incidents happened in various large-scale protests. The Police Force has always been exercising restraint, tolerance and patience, striving to maintain public order and protect the safety of members of the public. Only when there were violent acts or illegal behaviours which endangered the safety of people at scene, Police would stop them by proportionate use of force to prevent the incidents from heating up and worsening. Protestors neglected their violent acts and the provocation at Police but criticized Police's use of force was reversing the causality and was unfair to Police.

Police all along respect people's rights and freedom to express views and facilitate all peaceful public events. Police appeal to protestors to remain peaceful, rational and non-violent when participating in public events in order to maintain public safety and public order.