

Remarks by S for S at media session after Fight Crime Committee meeting (with video)

Following are the remarks by the Secretary for Security, Mr Tang Ping-keung, at a media session after the Fight Crime Committee meeting today (May 30):

Reporter: To tackle the emerging use of "space oil drug", the police have been using the rapid test kits. And also in February, the drug's main ingredient was classified as a dangerous drug. So I wonder if this tougher measure has resulted in a decline in "space oil drug"-related crimes in the first four months of the year. I believe you mentioned 315 people have been arrested for such crimes since the ingredient was classified as a dangerous drug. Do you think such arrests just show a tip of the iceberg? Do you see a further need for the Force to bolster their enforcement efforts? Thank you.

Secretary for Security: Thank you for your question. First of all, despite there is a slight decrease in the overall serious drug cases, which is about one per cent, the cases involving etomidate increased by more than 10 times in the first quarter of this year compared with the ones last year.

Since etomidate starting to be classified as a (dangerous) drug on February 14, we have arrested a total of 315 people, including 30 per cent of them involving in drug trafficking.

In order to tackle this problem, I think first of all, we have utilised the Etomidate Rapid Test Kits, which the police have adopted, so far resulting in the arrests of 49 people. And we are focusing on intelligence-based (investigations) to tackle the import and the manufacturing of "space oil drug".

And we also placed emphasis on the prevention and education aspect. For example, in the curriculum of schools, we have put in the harmful effects caused by "space oil drug". And we also have 61 interactive drama sessions in different schools, and a publicity vehicle that will go to different hotspots of young people so as to publicise the cost (of abusing "space oil drug") and the damage that can be done by "space oil drug".

We also work with a lot of NGOs to increase rehabilitation services and to (carry out) research on how to tackle the problem. And in order to even fine-tune the legislation, we are going to list all the analogues of etomidate as dangerous drugs. We hope, with those measures in place, the situation will continue to improve. Thank you.

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