

S for S departs for Thailand to co-ordinate rescue of six Hong Kong residents detained in Southeast Asia (with photos)

The Secretary for Security, Mr Tang Ping-keung, departed for Thailand earlier to participate in the co-ordination and rescue operation for six Hong Kong residents who were lured to Myanmar to engage in illegal work. Mr Tang returned to Hong Kong today (March 7), while the six residents, to be accompanied by members of the Security Bureau's dedicated task force, will return to Hong Kong tonight.

The dedicated task force, comprising members from the Security Bureau, the Hong Kong Police Force and the Immigration Department, departed for Thailand earlier to participate in the rescue operation for the six Hong Kong residents who were detained in Myanmar. Upon arrival in Bangkok, the members of the dedicated task force proceeded to the Mae Sot area near the border between Thailand and Myanmar to participate in the joint rescue operation involving various parties. Mr Tang also departed for Thailand yesterday (March 6) to co-ordinate the rescue operation together with senior officials from the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Justice, and the Police of Thailand.

The six Hong Kong residents, comprising three men and three women aged between 29 and 44, were detained in Myanmar for periods ranging from five to seven months. They were sent to Mae Sot, Thailand, at midnight by the military of Myanmar after being rescued. With the assistance of Thai authorities and personnel from the Chinese Embassy in the Kingdom of Thailand and the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Chiang Mai, the dedicated task force escorted the six residents to depart from Mae Sot and arrived in Bangkok this afternoon.

Mr Tang expressed gratitude to all units involved in the joint operation, including the Ministry of Public Security of the People's Republic of China, frontline personnel at the Thai-Myanmar border; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, especially the Chinese Embassy in the Kingdom of Thailand and the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Chiang Mai; the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Defence, the Police and the military of Thailand; as well as the relevant Myanmar authorities, the Security Bureau's dedicated task force and the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Bangkok.

Mr Tang had a video meeting with the six Hong Kong residents earlier and was pleased to learn that they were safe and in good condition. They expressed gratitude to those who helped in the rescue and looked forward to returning to Hong Kong to reunite with their families later today.

The dedicated task force will continue to actively follow up on the remaining three request-for-assistance cases of individuals who have yet to return to Hong Kong and will strive to facilitate their return as soon as possible.

