

[Key statistics on service demand of A&E Departments and occupancy rates in public hospitals](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

During the winter surge, the Hospital Authority is closely monitoring the service demand of Accident and Emergency Departments and the occupancy rates in public hospitals. Key service statistics are being issued daily for public information. Details are in the appended table.

[Government condemns acts advocating HK independence and desecrating national flag](#)

In response to some rally participants' acts of waving flags and making speeches advocating Hong Kong independence, as well as removing the national flag from the flagpole and placing it on the ground today (December 22), a spokesman for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government strongly condemns such acts, adding that those who break the law would face criminal liability.

The spokesman said that the constitutional and legal status of the HKSAR is very clear. Article 1 of the Basic Law points out that the HKSAR is an inalienable part of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Article 12 of the Basic Law states that the HKSAR shall be a local administrative region of the PRC, which shall enjoy a high degree of autonomy and come directly under the Central People's Government. "One country, two systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and a high degree of autonomy are the established basic policies of the PRC regarding Hong Kong.

"Advocating Hong Kong independence is inconsistent with the constitutional and legal status of the HKSAR as stipulated in the Basic Law and is not conducive to the overall and long-term interest of Hong Kong society. It is also contrary to the established basic policies of the PRC regarding Hong Kong."

The spokesman stressed that the national flag is the symbol and sign of the country. According to the National Flag and National Emblem Ordinance, a person who desecrates the national flag or national emblem by publicly and wilfully burning, mutilating, scrawling on, defiling or trampling on it

commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of \$50,000 and to imprisonment for 3 years.

HKSAR Government objects Taiwan authorities' unfounded remarks regarding legal assistance between HK and Taiwan

In response to media enquiries, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (December 22) made the following response:

The HKSAR Government expresses strong opposition to the Taiwan authorities' repeated unfounded claims regarding legal assistance between Hong Kong and Taiwan. With clear understanding that Hong Kong has no law to provide legal assistance and surrender fugitive offenders to Taiwan, the Taiwan authorities are still repeatedly making irresponsible and slanderous remarks about Hong Kong, to which the HKSAR Government expresses its objection and discontent.

With a view to combating crimes, the HKSAR Government has already provided materials to the Taiwan authorities within the confines of its system. We urge the Taiwan authorities not to put politics before the rule of law and use cases of Chan tong-kai and the suspect Lam as excuses to jeopardise the rule of law. Taiwan authorities' remarks are tantamount to requesting the HKSAR Government to violate its own laws. Hong Kong cannot agree with the Taiwan authorities' exercising the rule of law with political considerations. This is in violation with Hong Kong's spirit of the rule of law.

Missing girl in Kwun Tong located

A girl who went missing in Kwun Tong has been located.

Lee Pui-ying, aged 15, went missing after she was last seen in Yau Lai Estate on September 6 night. Her family made a report to Police on September 9.

The girl returned to her residence this afternoon (December 22). She sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

Police dispersal at Edinburgh Place

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following message as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

At around 5pm today (December 22), Police arrested a person near Edinburgh Place, Central where a public meeting was being held. During the arrest, protestors hurled miscellaneous objects at and assaulted police officers with intent to help the arrestee escape. In face of the serious threat to the safety of everyone at scene and public order, Police officers are deploying minimum necessary force to disperse the protestors.

Police strongly condemn the violent acts. Police appeal to members of the public to leave immediately and avoid travelling to the area.