

# Police strongly condemn radical and violent acts

Police severely condemn the violent acts of radical protestors at the violent incidents happened at various locations in east and west Kowloon from yesterday night (August 3) to the small hours today (August 4).

There were public events in Mong Kong district yesterday afternoon. At about 4pm, a large group of protestors deviated from Police's agreed public procession route, blocking Nathan Road while marching towards Tsim Sha Tsui. Some protestors removed the roadside fences and set road blocks at various major crossroads, causing serious traffic obstruction. The report room service of police stations in Yau Ma Tei, Tsim Sha Tsui, Mong Kok, as well as the Police Reporting Centre in MTR Hung Hom Station was suspended, affecting Police's provision of emergency services to the public.

When the protestors arrived at Tsim Sha Tsui, they went to Hung Hom via Salisbury Road. They used water barriers, fences and other miscellaneous objects to block both traffic lanes of the toll plaza of Cross-Harbour Tunnel in Hung Hom, leading to complete closure of both ways of the tunnel tubes, causing serious traffic obstruction.

After that, a large group of protesters assembled in Tsim Sha Tsui illegally again. Some radical protestors started to surround Tsim Sha Tsui Police Station, vandalising the facilities outside and setting fire at various locations. Furthermore, some protestors hurled bricks and hard objects into the Station by some large catapults, damaging over 20 vehicles inside and causing serious threats to the safety of people at scene.

With multiple arsons and criminal damages reported, thoroughfares extensively blocked, the situation in the vicinity of Nathan Road in Tsim Sha Tsui further deteriorated. Police urged members of the public assembling at scene to leave as soon as possible through on-site broadcast, social media and press releases. Such warnings were repeated but to no avail, Police then took dispersal actions respectively in Tsim Sha Tsui and Mong Kok.

During the dispersal operations, some violent protestors hurled petrol bombs, bricks, glass bottles and large amount of miscellaneous objects at police officers. The protestors also directed high-power laser at the officers, committed arson at various locations and pushed towards the officers a burning rubbish bin. The scene became increasingly chaotic when the protestors violently attacked other people with different views. Therefore, Police had to use appropriate force including the discharge of tear gas to stop the violent acts.

At around the same time, another group of protestors marched towards the direction of Wong Tai Sin via Prince Edward Road East. The report room services of Wong Tai Sin Police Station and Kowloon City Police Station were temporarily suspended. Much tension arose at the standoff between the

protestors and Police officers at a bus station in Wong Tai Sin. When officers were trying to retreat from the scene by Police vehicles, some radical protestors surrounded them and vandalised the vehicles. Also, the protestors hurled miscellaneous objects at the officers and vehicles, and some even used fire extinguishers to attack the officers at scene.

A gang of violent protestors subsequently surrounded Wong Tai Sin Disciplined Services Quarters, hurling fireworks and numerous miscellaneous objects into the quarters, breaking the glass windows of lower-floor residential units, damaging the gates of the car parks and other Government property. The safety of the residents was seriously threatened. In face of the chaotic situation, tear gas was launched to disperse the protestors. Shortly after that, protestors turned to Lung Cheung Road and blocked it with water barriers and miscellaneous objects, causing severe traffic obstruction to the thoroughfare. Protestors also blocked the traffic lanes of the Cross-Harbour Tunnel in Hung Hom again.

During the operation, Police arrested over 20 persons for offences including unlawful assembly and assault etc.

Police strongly condemn the radical protestors who disregarded law and order. Resolute enforcement actions will be taken against all illegal and violent acts. Police are capable and determined to maintain law and order and will not tolerate any violence.

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## Wong Tai Sin Disciplined Services Quarters surrounded by protestors

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

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

A gang of protestors are currently surrounding Wong Tai Sin Disciplined Services Quarters, hurling numerous miscellaneous objects into the building, and damaging the gates of the car parks and other Government properties. Such acts cause serious threats to the safety of innocent residents.

In face of the situation, Police are now using tear gas to disperse the protestors.

Police appeal to everyone at the scene to leave immediately and express strong condemnation against such violent acts.

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## Government response to protests in Yau Tsim Mong District

In response to the protests in Yau Tsim Mong District yesterday (August 3), a Government spokesman said the following:

Despite that a Letter of No Objection has been issued for the public procession in Tai Kok Tsui following discussion between the Police and the organiser, some protesters deviated from the approved route soon after the procession had started and blocked a number of thoroughfares in Yau Tsim Mong District, including the entrance of the Cross-Harbour Tunnel at one point, seriously affecting the traffic, commercial activities and people's daily living in the vicinity. We express regret over such behaviours which are illegal and disregard the public order and the needs of other members of the public. Indeed, illegal behaviours and road blockage involved in recent protests, held in the name of expression of aspirations, are getting worse and way beyond the boundary of freedom of expression in a civilised society.

Violent behaviours recurred during the protests. Some radical protesters violently charged police stations, vandalised vehicles, set fire in various places, etc. In addition, protesters were suspected to have deliberately damaged the national flag, breaching the National Flag and National Emblem Ordinance. The Government strongly condemns the radical protesters who disregarded the law and order, blatantly breached the public peace, and even challenged the national sovereignty. The police will strictly enforce the law. Violent protesters who breached the law should also be brought to justice.

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## Police conducting dispersal operation in Wong Tai Sin

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

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

While some Police officers were trying to leave by Police vehicles amid a violent clash in Wong Tai Sin, some radical protestors surrounded them and

hurled miscellaneous objects at the officers and vehicles.

After repeated but futile warnings, Police are now using tear gas to disperse the violent protestors. Police appeal to everyone at the scene to leave immediately and not to charge Police cordon lines.

Police also appeal to the residents in the area to stay tuned to the latest situation and if necessary, stay indoors and keep their windows closed.

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## **Rumours on Territory-wide Identity Card Replacement Exercise clarified**

In respect of rumours on the Internet that the current Territory-wide Identity Card Replacement Exercise ("Replacement Exercise") was not necessary, a Government spokesman today (August 3) seriously dismissed the rumours and urged the public to have their smart identity cards replaced in accordance with the replacement schedule.

According to the Immigration Department, the Replacement Exercise launched at the end of last year is mainly due to the fact that it has been over 10 years since the issue of the smart identity card of the previous generation in 2003, and the card materials have been getting old. Coupling with the expiry of the 10-year maintenance of the smart identity card system, the system supplier has declined to continue to provide maintenance and repair services. To ensure the effective use of different functions of the smart identity card by the public, it is necessary to introduce the new generation smart identity card and implement the one-off four-year Replacement Exercise for all smart identity card holders. After discussions at the Legislative Council and upon the Government's assurance of addition of multi-level safeguards in the new smart identity card, the Legislative Council approved a commitment in May 2015 to implement the current Replacement Exercise.

Access to chip data must be initiated by the cardholder through taking out his/her smart identity card and placing it onto an authorised optical card reader. The reading process is conducted with the combination of optical card reader and wireless transmission technology. Before communication and data reading, the identity of the chip and the optical card reader must be defined and mutually authenticated. All communication and data transmission would be encrypted throughout the whole process; and could not be conducted if the distance between the chip and the optical card reader is more than two centimetres.

Meanwhile, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer reiterated that the smart lampposts do not carry any facial recognition function and cannot detect or read information of identity cards. In addition, the Government had said earlier that it would not implement the Mainland's social credit system in Hong Kong.