

Law and order situation in 2020

Overall law and order situation in Hong Kong

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1. Overall situation

The overall number of crimes reported in 2020 was 63,232 cases, representing an increase of 4,007 cases (+6.8%) when compared with 59,225 cases in 2019. Violent crimes dropped by 299 cases (-3.1%) from 9,690 cases to 9,391 cases. The detection rates for overall crimes rose slightly in 2020 by 0.7% from 37.1% to 37.8%.

The overall crimes registered an increase of 4,007 cases, mainly due to the rise of over 7,000 deception cases. In addition, blackmail and crime types that were detected by Police's proactive actions, including serious drug, serious gambling and organised vice offences, recorded relatively significant increases ranging from about 20% to 55%. The rise was mainly attributable to the fact that the violence and law-breaking situation arising from the "anti-extradition amendment bill" related incidents have eased since last year, Police have deployed resources flexibly and mounted intelligence-led operations to combat the above offences proactively.

Though the number of crimes in 2020, as compared with 2019, has increased by 6.8%, a drop of 4% was recorded for the overall crimes when comparing the figures of the first and second half of 2020. A substantial drop of about 60% was recorded for robbery. A drop of about 20% was noted for burglary. The types of crimes in relation to the "anti-extradition amendment bill" incidents (arson, criminal damage, offences against public order, etc.) also registered decreases ranging from about 10% to 70%, indicating that the law and order situation has gradually resumed stable.

The law and order situation in Hong Kong saw substantial improvement. In addition to Police's strict law enforcement, the deterrent effect of Court sentences for riots and violence cases and public's rejection towards illegal acts, The Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("National Security Law") which was promulgated on June 30 last year also facilitated the restoration and maintenance of social order.

2. Deception

Deception cases registered a significant increase in 2020, up by 89.3% (+7,337 cases) from 8,216 to 15,553 cases. The jump was mainly driven by the upsurge of cases in e-shopping fraud (+2 folds, from 2,194 to 6,678 cases), telephone deception (+84.1%, from 648 to 1,193 cases) and romance scams (+52.4%, from 594 to 905 cases).

Online mask scams emerged as a new form of e-shopping fraud with the outbreak of the epidemic in the past year. A total of 2,538 cases of mask

scams were recorded with losses amounting to \$74 million, accounting for over 56% of the overall increase in e-shopping frauds.

The huge amount of losses involved in telephone deception cases (+2.8 folds or \$424.8 million) remained a cause for concern. The prevalent modus operandi used by the scammers were "Pretend Officials" and "Guess Who".

The Force will continue to step up publicity and education initiatives, especially the online campaigns for those staying home to fight the virus so as to raise their awareness of fraud and cyber pitfalls. In fact, owing to the efforts of the "Anti-Scam Helpline" of the Anti-Deception Co-ordination Centre, the Force managed to stop the victims of more than 300 scams from sending funds to fraudsters in 2020 and successfully intercepted over \$3 billion before the money reached scammers.

3. Robbery and burglary

There were 264 cases of robbery, a rise of 26% when compared with 2019. Among these, 165 cases were detected. The detection rate was 63%, registering a significant upsurge when compared with 37% in 2019. For burglary, 2,095 cases were recorded, representing a decrease of 12%. Police detected a total of over 580 cases and arrested over 450 persons. The detection rate was about 28%, representing a rise of 10 percentage points. Police will continue to mount intelligence-led operations and deploy resources flexibly to step up patrol to further combat street crimes.

4. Sexual offences

As regards to sexual offences, a total of 64 rape cases were recorded, a rise of 28% compared with 2019. The detection rate was 92%. There was only one case involving strangers and it has been detected. The remaining 63 cases (98.4%) were committed by acquaintances. There were 18 cases involving victims aged under 16, registering a rise of over 30% compared with 2019. A total of 682 indecent assaults were recorded, representing a drop of about 30% (-300 cases). The detection rate was about 76%. Approximately 24% of the cases involved victims aged under 16.

There were 31 cases in which victims were sexually assaulted, involving rape and indecent assault, by suspects met through the Internet, registering an increase of nearly 15%. Police will continue to pay attention to the trend of sexual offences and collaborate with relevant stakeholders for targeted publicity and public education.

5. Homicide

In 2020, 22 cases of homicide were recorded, a slight decrease of two cases (-8.3%) when compared with 24 cases in 2019. Among the 22 cases, nine of the cases involved domestic or family violence while three of the cases were triad-related.

6. Illegal immigrants

In 2020, Police and other law enforcement departments arrested 828

Mainland illegal immigrants and 1,121 non-ethnic Chinese illegal immigrants, with a rise of nearly two folds and 30% respectively when compared with 2019. Of these, the number of Mainland illegal immigrants soared, probably owing to the imposition of immigration control measures during the epidemic, driving them to enter Hong Kong illegally for illegal work or prostitution activities.

7. Youth crime

Youth crime involving offenders aged 10 to 20 saw a decrease of 281 arrests (-6.6%) from 4,268 to 3,987 arrests in 2020. Despite the fall, the number of youth arrested for offences related to robbery, drugs and triads nearly doubled. During recent operations, Police noticed that young people were recruited by criminal syndicates for illegal debt collection. In addition, a spate of atrocious cases of youth bullying took place in 2020 which involved serious violence and grievous bodily harm.

Apart from law enforcement measures, Police also took active steps to help young people under the Police Superintendent's Discretion Scheme, where rehabilitation opportunities were offered to arrestees under 18 years of age who confessed to their crime, showed remorse and played no part in any serious offences. Police will also continue to pursue inter-departmental and multi-agency collaboration in developing and strengthening law-abiding awareness among young people to keep them on the straight and narrow.

8. Enforcement on National Security Law

As at February 1, 2021, Police arrested a total of 97 persons for suspected "secession", "subversion", "terrorist activities", "collusion with a foreign country or with external elements" and "providing pecuniary or other financial assistance or property for the commission by other persons of the offence of secession"; some suspected of "uttering any seditious words", "fraud", "money laundering", etc. Of these, eight persons have been prosecuted.

The fight against the epidemic

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Police have made use of the Major Incident Investigation and Disaster Support System (MIIDSS "supercomputer"), with 40 officers dedicated to provide assistance in analysing about 10,000 cases; and crime officers were deployed to conduct field investigations for more than 1,000 cases, with a view to tracing transmission sources, analysing transmission hotspots and super spreader.

Police also seconded 50 officers in assisting the Department of Health for investigation and prosecution against offenders, and 40 officers working in the newly established cases tracing office to carry out contact tracing work of confirmed cases.

Moreover, Police regularly deployed officers to different entry points and quarantine centres. Police also assisted with the implementation of the

quarantine order; conducted spot checks and tracked down offenders who had violated compulsory quarantine orders; conducted compulsory testing for designated premises; carried out inspection and enforcement action in respect of “no-gathering order”, “mask order” and subject premises.

At present, the epidemic across the globe and Hong Kong is still fluctuating, Police members will stand steadfast at their posts and dedicate themselves in preventing and stopping the epidemic through concerted efforts with various government departments.

Commissioner's Operational Priorities 2021

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The Commissioner's Operational Priorities 2021 include:

- safeguarding national security
- combating violent crimes
- combating triads, syndicated and organised crimes
- combating dangerous drugs
- combating quick cash crimes
- enhancing cyber security and combating technology crimes
- enhancing public safety
- enhancing counter-terrorism

Work focuses in 2021

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Firstly, to advance the work on safeguarding national security. Police will proactively collect and analyse intelligence concerning national security to combat any acts endangering national security, through taking resolute action to enforce the law by arresting the offenders to protect Hong Kong citizens' safety and interests.

Secondly, to focus on fighting crime and preventing crime. This year, Police will focus on dealing with issues of law and order situation and livelihood conditions of public concerns. Apart from conducting intelligence-led operations and stepping up patrols, Police strive to work closely with the community and make good use of technology to combat cybercrime, fraud, violence, vice, gambling activities, drug-related offences, burglary, robbery, etc. Effective traffic enforcement will also be in place.

Thirdly, to enhance community engagement. Police will adopt a proactive and extensive public relations strategy, readily clarifying and rebutting fake information, and continuously increasing transparency in parallel so that the public would better understand police work and discern facts from fallacy.

Police will adopt a positive approach to strengthen communication with the public proactively, in particular young people, and collaborate with different community sectors and stakeholders to open up communication channels, seizing the opportunity for community engagement and school-

outreaching to foster police-community relations and earn public trust and support.

Fourthly, to spare no effort in assisting government's anti-epidemic work. Police will continue its efforts on quarantine work, spot checks on persons under quarantine at home and conducting "no-gathering order" related enforcement operations. When required, Police will deploy more resources and are determined to fight against the epidemic with the Hong Kong community.

[Hong Kong Customs detects mixed mode criminal case of dangerous drugs and illicit cigarettes \(with photos\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (February 1) detected a mixed mode criminal case involving dangerous drugs and illicit cigarettes in Pat Heung. About 13 kilograms of suspected cannabis buds, about 170 grams of solutions containing suspected tetrahydro-cannabinol (THC) and about 660 000 suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$4.7 million and a duty potential of about \$1.3 million were seized. This is a less common case in recent years in light of the large seizure amounts of suspected dangerous drugs and illicit cigarettes seized at the same time during the operation.

Customs officers yesterday seized the batch of suspected dangerous drugs, illicit cigarettes and a batch of drug packaging paraphernalia inside two containers and a light goods vehicle (LGV) at a scrapyard in Pat Heung. A 56-year-old man suspected to be in connection with the case was arrested and the LGV has also been detained.

Customs believes that a suspected dangerous drugs and illicit cigarettes storehouse was raided during the operation. Investigation is ongoing.

Cannabis and THC (a major cannabinoid present in cannabis plants) are dangerous drugs controlled under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance (Cap. 134). All products that contain cannabis or THC are also controlled under Cap. 134.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in dangerous drugs, or illicitly importing to and exporting from Hong Kong, procuring, supplying, manufacturing or dealing in or with dangerous drugs, constitutes a criminal offence. The maximum penalty is life imprisonment and a fine of \$5 million. Illicitly possessing or smoking, inhaling, ingesting or injecting dangerous drugs is subject to a maximum penalty of imprisonment for seven years and a fine of \$1 million.

Under the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance, anyone involved in dealing with, possession of, selling or buying illicit cigarettes commits an offence.

The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$1 million and imprisonment for two years.

Customs will continue to enhance enforcement against drug trafficking and illicit cigarette activities through intelligence analysis.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking or illicit cigarette activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



[Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases and Princess Margaret Hospital deceased patient](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 9am today (February 2), 75 COVID-19 confirmed patients were discharged from hospital in the last 24 hours. So far, a total of 9 549 patients with confirmed or probable infection have been discharged.

At present, there are 672 negative pressure rooms in public hospitals with 1 231 negative pressure beds activated. A total of 723 confirmed patients are currently hospitalised in 23 public hospitals and a community treatment facility, among which 30 patients are in critical condition, 31 are in serious condition and the remaining 662 patients are in stable condition. In addition, a 78-year-old male patient (case number: 5409) with chronic diseases and confirmed with COVID-19 infection succumbed in Princess Margaret Hospital at 5.19pm today. Including this patient, 179 COVID-19 confirmed patients have passed away in public hospitals so far.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

Details of the above-mentioned patients are as follows:

Patient condition	Case numbers
Discharged	5990, 8342, 8869, 9129, 9420, 9493, 9538, 9546, 9564, 9569, 9579, 9609, 9618, 9689, 9693, 9702, 9707, 9711, 9725, 9726, 9727, 9729, 9751, 9758, 9765, 9771, 9775, 9781, 9784, 9798, 9831, 9848, 9849, 9891, 9914, 9927, 9932, 9937, 9948, 9976, 9978, 9988, 9992, 10019, 10049, 10052, 10061, 10076, 10096, 10107, 10110, 10127, 10132, 10133, 10140, 10144, 10145, 10161, 10165, 10182, 10205, 10223, 10243, 10245, 10257, 10266, 10275, 10280, 10313, 10408, 10410, 10426, 10434, 10439, 10469
Critical	1989, 3496, 5735, 6125, 6444, 6547, 6607, 6754, 6794, 7021, 7172, 8018, 8078, 8126, 8221, 8323, 8900, 9049, 9135, 9267, 9438, 9612, 9852, 9907, 9959, 10196, 10238, 10358, 10367, 10417
Serious	6232, 6386, 7076, 7305, 7468, 7653, 9040, 9045, 9055, 9166, 9284, 9502, 9550, 9662, 9694, 9733, 9734, 9766, 9793, 9858, 9867, 9880, 9905, 9998, 10001, 10002, 10023, 10083, 10134, 10241, 10341

[FEHD raids fresh provision shop for selling frozen meat as fresh meat \(with photo\)](#)

In a blitz operation today (February 2), the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) raided a fresh provision shop (FPS) at Maritime Market, Tsing Yi, for the suspected selling of frozen meat as fresh meat.

During the operation, FEHD officers marked and sealed about 130 kilograms of suspected frozen beef in the FPS for further investigation. The investigation against the FPS for suspected violation of the Food Business Regulation is still ongoing. Prosecution will be taken out if sufficient evidence is collected. In addition, FEHD officers have issued a verbal warning to the FPS for non-compliance of a relevant licensing condition.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "Anyone selling frozen meat without permission commits an offence and is liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and

six months' imprisonment on conviction. The department will continue to closely monitor the sale of fresh meat at the retail level and take stringent enforcement action to safeguard food safety and public health. Moreover, if a FPS is found in breach of a licensing condition for the sale of frozen meat as fresh meat, the department will consider cancellation of the relevant FPS's licence."

EDB conducts school questionnaire survey on optimising senior secondary core subjects

The Education Bureau (EDB) today (February 2) issued a circular memorandum to all secondary schools to provide details about a one-month school questionnaire survey with the aim of understanding schools' suggestions and views on the proposals to optimise the curricula and assessments of the four senior secondary (SS) core subjects. School briefing sessions will also be arranged to explain to school leaders and front-line teachers the optimising proposals and listen to their views.

A spokesman for the EDB said, "In tandem with the recommendations on creating space for students and catering for learner diversity set out in the review report with the theme 'Optimise the curriculum for the future, Foster whole-person development and diverse talents' of the Task Force on Review of School Curriculum, the committees on the four SS core subjects under the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) have formulated proposals to optimise the curricula and assessments of the subjects, thereby creating space for students, catering for their diverse learning needs as well as fostering their whole-person development and diverse talents."

The spokesman pointed out that as the natures of the four SS core subjects are different, the proposal for each core subject would be different while upholding the curriculum integrity of the subject. For Chinese Language, the proposal is more about streamlining the teaching of the compulsory part and elective parts and reducing the number of papers in the public assessment to avoid excessive drilling. For English Language, space would be created via integrating the teaching of the elective part into the compulsory part to reduce overlapping in teaching. For Mathematics, the curriculum comprises the "Foundation Topics" and "Non-foundation Topics". Students could opt for studying the Foundation Topics together with only part of the Non-foundation Topics. They would be able to score as high as Level 4 in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination should they perform well in the Foundation Topics. As regards Liberal Studies, while the subject will be given a new name, various enhancement measures will be in

place and the weight of its curriculum content will be reduced by half.

He said, "About 250 hours (notional) will be released from optimising the four SS core subjects. This is, however, not prescriptive nor an across-the-board hard indicator. Upon the full implementation of the measures to optimise the four SS core subjects, schools would be able to cater for the diverse learning needs of students through curriculum planning at the school level with due regard to the differentiated needs of students within their own school contexts. The lesson time released will enable students to take an additional elective subject in Key Learning Areas (KLAs) or Applied Learning (ApL), engage in more in-depth study of subjects, study the Extended Part (Module 1/Module 2) (M1/M2) in parallel with the Compulsory Part of Mathematics, participate more actively in Other Learning Experiences (OLE)/life-wide learning activities, or engage in other personal pursuits to cater for the different interests, abilities and aspirations of students.

The views of the school sector collected from the one-month school questionnaire survey will be put to the committees on the four SS core subjects under the CDC and the HKEAA for consideration. If eventually accepted, the proposals can be implemented at Secondary Four in the 2021/22 school year at the earliest to benefit students as soon as possible. Meanwhile, the EDB will strengthen the related support measures, including teacher training and learning and teaching resources, so that teachers can make appropriate preparations.

The spokesman added that the Task Force conducted the review of the primary and secondary curricula for nearly three years, including consulting extensively different stakeholder groups in society for reaching a consensus. The recommendations on creating space for students and catering for learner diversity were generally welcomed by the school sector. For the benefit of students, the EDB appeals to various sectors in society to join forces and work together to bring the recommendations to fruition and broaden students' learning experiences.

Details of the review report of the Task Force can be viewed on the EDB's website: www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/renewal/taskforce_cur.html.

For details of the school questionnaire survey and school briefing sessions, schools may refer to EDBCM No. 20/2021 (applications.edb.gov.hk/circular/upload/EDBCM/EDBCM21020E.pdf).