

Tripartite joint operation “THUNDERBOLT 2023” against triads and organised crimes

Hong Kong Police arrested 6 400 persons and seized cash, dangerous drugs and illicit goods relating to illegal activities worth about \$410 million in total during a tripartite joint anti-crime operation, codenamed “THUNDERBOLT 2023”, mounted by police authorities of Hong Kong, Guangdong and Macao from June 12 to September 21.

The police authorities of Hong Kong, Guangdong, and Macao have been sparing no effort to combat triad activities and organised crimes, especially cross-boundary syndicates. The intelligence-led joint enforcement operation “THUNDERBOLT 2023” aimed at combating illegal activities of triad societies and organised crime syndicates, neutralising cross-boundary crimes, and interdicting the criminals’ source of income.

During the operation, Hong Kong Police joined forces with other government departments, including the Immigration Department, the Customs and Excise Department, the Fire Services Department, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, to conduct searches at about 3 100 locations, neutralising numerous illegal premises, such as gambling dens, vice establishments, unlicensed bars, and loan-sharks companies. Over 83 000 police officers have been mobilised.

Throughout the operation, a total of 6 400 persons, including 4 115 men and 2 285 women, aged between 10 and 85, were arrested. Among them, 849 were Mainlanders and 471 were non-ethnic Chinese. They were arrested for triad-related or organised crimes, such as wounding, criminal damage, blackmail, possession of offensive weapons, claiming to be a member of a triad society, operating illegal gambling establishments, operating vice establishments, control over persons for prostitution, trafficking in dangerous drugs, assisting unauthorised entrant to remain in Hong Kong, lending money at excess interest rate, obtaining property by deception, and dealing with property known or reasonably believed to represent proceeds of an indictable offence (commonly known as “money laundering”).

Hong Kong Police also seized numerous illegal items including gambling tools, offensive weapons, cash totaling \$12 million suspected to be proceeds of crime, and dangerous drugs worth over \$350 million, including cannabis, ketamine, cocaine, methamphetamine and heroin.

Hong Kong Police would continue to maintain close liaison and exchange intelligence with the police authorities of the Mainland and Macao with a view to combating illegal activities of triad societies and organised crime syndicates, neutralising cross-boundary crimes, and interdicting the criminals’ source of income.