

SCED speaks on anti-parallel trading protest in Yuen Long and Individual Visit Scheme

Following is the transcript of remarks made by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Gregory So, to the media on the anti-parallel trading protest in Yuen Long yesterday (March 1) and the Individual Visit Scheme after attending a radio programme today (March 2):

Reporter: Mr So, I ask about Yuen Long as well, the third protest and the most serious response so far. How soon before the Mainland authority and Hong Kong will take some concrete actions because at the moment it looks like tension and relations are just getting worse and worse?

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development: I believe that the incident is caused by a small group of really radical people expressing the view in a very radical way. I think Hong Kong is a very tolerant society. We pride ourselves in the freedom of expression and freedom of speech. Any legal way of expressing views will be supported by the people of Hong Kong and I think we should do it in a rational and logical way, debating the issue. But any drastic action causing disruption to our market and livelihood of the people I think we are all against. And therefore I would appeal to these people that they should really express their views in a way that would not cause this sort of disruption.

Now with respect to the Individual Visit Scheme, we have in the past been liaising with the relevant Mainland authority to express the views of Hong Kong. The Chief Executive will be embarking on the official visit to Beijing this week and he will be conveying to the relevant authority the views of Hong Kong people.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

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