

PRESS STATEMENT

20 October 2019

**MTR Condemns Rioters for Setting Fires to Stations
Endangering the Safety of Passengers and Staff**

Ignited objects were hurled into and fires were set to the entrances/exits of a number of MTR stations in Kowloon and station facilities were vandalised today (20 October 2019). To ensure the safety of passengers and staff, a number of MTR stations had to be temporarily closed and Tsuen Wan Line service was adjusted. The MTR Corporation strongly condemns the unlawful acts of the rioters, and has reported the cases to the police. The Corporation reserves the right to take legal action against the people responsible for such vandalism.

In view of the public procession near the Hong Kong West Kowloon Station today, the MTR Corporation carried out a detailed risk assessment prior to the procession. Following discussion with relevant government departments, for the safety of passengers and staff, crowd control measures were implemented at the Hong Kong West Kowloon Station for the whole day today with entry and exit at designated entrance/exit only. Austin and Tsim Sha Tsui stations were also temporarily closed starting from 12 noon.

The Corporation has been closely monitoring the situation during the public procession to maintain safe and smooth railway service as far as practicable. However, starting from around 3pm, fires were set at the entrances/exits of a number of stations along Nathan Road with station facilities damaged. Contingency measures were implemented immediately to protect the safety of passengers and staff:

- At around 3:10pm, a petrol bomb was hurled into Entrance/Exit A of Yau Ma Tei Station. The station had to be closed with trains not stopping at this station.
- At around 3:20pm, fires were set at Entrances/Exits C1, C2, C4 and D of Mong Kok Station and passengers had to be evacuated from the station. The operations of Prince Edward Station were subsequently disrupted posing risks to Jordan Station as well, and these three stations had to be closed.
- At around 5:10pm, fire was set at Entrance/Exit B of Lai Chi Kok Station, resulting in the closure of the station. Moreover, extensive damages were made to facilities in the concourse of Cheung Sha Wan Station including entry/exit gates and the glass panels at the station's entrances/exits were smashed. The fire hose reel at the station was also operated, splashing water in the premise. Cheung Sha Wan Station was closed as a result.

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- As a number of stations on Tsuen Wan Line were closed because of the public procession, following a detailed risk assessment and taking into account the need to ensure the safety of passengers and staff as well as the circumstances pertinent to train operations, Tsuen Wan Line service was only maintained between Tsuen Wan and Lai King stations starting from 5:15pm.

Fires were set at the entrances/exits of Prince Edward and Tsim Sha Tsui stations after they were closed. Glass panels and temporary protective hoardings at many other entrances/exits of Tsuen Wan Line stations were also vandalised and defaced. Apart from these, stations of other rail lines also suffered damages. These include Austin Station, which was already closed at the time, where a gate at an entrance/exit was damaged, the door of a lift was forced open with items hurled into the lift shaft and CCTV cameras were vandalised. At Nam Cheong Station, multiple ticket issuing machines and entry/exit gates were damaged with glass panels of the Customer Service Centre defaced with graffiti. At East Tsim Sha Tsui Station, an entrance/exit was damaged and fire protection equipment was operated.

In addition, external objects were thrown on the tracks between Mong Kok East and Hung Hom stations on the East Rail Line at around 4:40pm, threatening the safety of train operation and disrupting both the southbound and northbound service. Train service gradually resumed at around 4:50pm after MTR staff entered the tracks to clear the objects and safety was ensured.

The Corporation expresses its deepest indignation and strongly condemns the rioters for repeatedly hurling ignited objects, setting fires and maliciously damaging railway facilities. These unlawful acts not only disrupt the railway service but also threaten the safety of passengers and our staff. During these days, MTR maintenance staff have been carrying out repair works during the non-traffic hours to maintain our service for the public. However, a number of stations in MTR network were again vandalised today and our maintenance staff will inspect and assess the extent of damages after service hours end tonight and try to repair the damaged facilities. Operations safety risks will be further assessed. The train service for tomorrow may be affected and the arrangement of early closure of railway lines may be maintained for a period of time. In the event that train or station service has to be adjusted tomorrow (21 October), the Corporation will disseminate the relevant information via the MTR website, MTR Mobile, station and in-train announcements as well as the media.

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Photo captions:

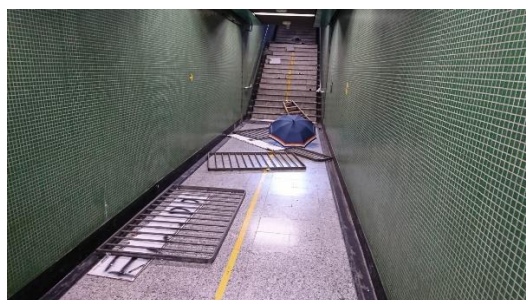
Mong Kok Station



Lai Chi Kok Station



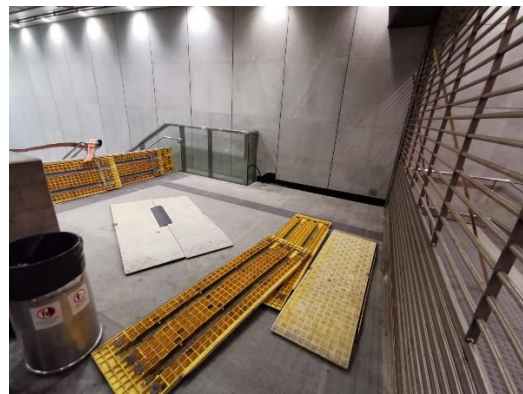
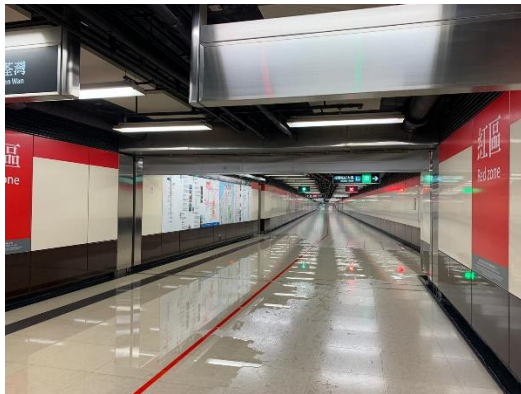
Jordon Station



Tsim Sha Tsui Station



East Tsim Sha Tsui Station



Austin Station



Nam Cheong Station



A section of track between Hung Hom and Mong Kok East stations on the East Rail Line

