



司法機構政務處

Judiciary Administration

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24 September 2018

Mr Lemuel WOO
Clerk to the Panel on
Administration of Justice and Legal Services
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mr WOO,

Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services

**Letter from Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan relating to the Judiciary's
handling of the carrying of Kirpans**

Thank you for your letter of 2 May 2018 regarding Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan's letter on the above subject. Having consulted within the Judiciary, I would like to provide the information as follows.

First, in the administration of justice, the Judiciary has all along been attaching great importance to court security matters and the safety of the Judges and Judicial Officers ("JJOs"), Judiciary staff, court users and the public. This is necessary for ensuring a safe and secure environment to all court users without fear of their personal safety when they are conducting businesses in court premises.

According to the published house rules of the Judiciary on the maintenance of order and security on court premises, no one entering or remaining on court premises shall possess any items prohibited by law, or any items that may pose a danger to the people or property at court premises, such as any arms or objects generally not allowed to be carried under the law,

including but not limited to offensive weapons as defined in the Public Order Ordinance (Cap. 245). A knife is normally regarded as an offensive weapon and is prohibited from being carried into court premises.

In March 2018, two men carried curved knives into one of the court buildings. The incident was reported to the Police and the knives were later confirmed to be kirpans. A kirpan is one of the five articles of faith of Sikhism carried by Sikhs at all time.

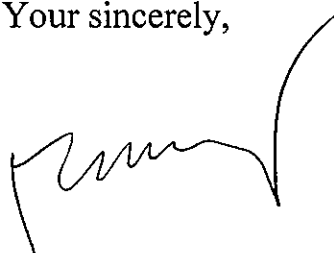
Taking into account all relevant factors, including balancing the concerns of different parties regarding security risks and respect for the religious customs of specific groups in the community, as well as practices in overseas jurisdictions, the Judiciary has introduced the following arrangement allowing the carrying of kirpans by Sikhs in Judiciary premises including courtrooms, subject to the following conditions –

- (a) the kirpan is carried for religious purpose;
- (b) the kirpan will be sheathed and concealed at all times; and
- (c) the permission will be withdrawn if the kirpan is unsheathed or otherwise used for other purposes.

This new arrangement has proven to be working smoothly so far. The Judiciary will closely monitor the situation and review the matter from time to time.

I should be grateful if you could relay the above information to the Hon Cheung Kwok-Kwan.

Your sincerely,



(Mrs Erika HUI)
for Judiciary Administrator

c.c. Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP (Chairman)