

HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN HONG KONG:

HONG KONG WATCH BRIEFING ON EVENTS: SEPTEMBER 2022

KEY FIGURES

215 individuals have currently been arrested under the National Security Law.^{1 2}

97% of journalists say the city's press freedom has significantly worsened.³

19,580 net-outflow of Hong Kong residents via the Hong Kong airport in September.⁴

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

POLITICAL PRISONERS: ARRESTS, CHARGES, & TRIALS

In the last month, Beijing continued its crackdown on the pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong, with the following developments:

- Seven individuals, including minors (even one aged 15 at the time of the alleged offence), have been charged for conspiracy of subversion under the National Security Law.
- Sedition charges against Hong Kong combat coaches have been upgraded to subversion charges under the NSL.
- After sentencing five speech therapists for publishing 'seditious' children's books, Hong Kong authorities continued to use the 'overly broad' interpretation of the colonial-era law to arrest and prosecute dissidents.
- The National Security Law case against Tonyee Chow Hang-tung and others ex-leaders of the now disbanded organiser of the Tiananmen Square Massacre vigil continues. The court hears that the group was merely exercising freedom of speech.

¹ This includes the arrests made by the National Security Department of the Hong Kong Police and/or charged with offences under the National Security Law.

² The number summarized information from HKW's own political prisoner database, and from [Tracking the Impact of Hong Kong's National Security Law](#) & [港區國安法案件列表](#)

³ [调查：记者对香港新闻自由信心降至历史最低 \(voachinese.com\)](#)

⁴ [Passenger traffic: Hong Kong Residents, Airport \(webb-site.com\)](#)

- More protesters face imprisonment for participating in the 2019 Anti-ELAB movement. Their charges range from rioting, terrorism, to conspiracy of murdering police officers. Some of the defendants have been detained for 2-3 years.
- The court cites Counter-Terrorism Ordinance for the first time, to prosecute 10 protestors in the 2019 protests.
- The court ordered the approximately 70m HKD (around £8m) deposit of the 612 Humanitarian Relief Fund to be confiscated. Its six trustees, including 90-year-old Cardinal Joseph Zen are charged for failing to get formal approval to group, with a national security investigation under way.
- A harmonica player was arrested for sedition at the Queen's vigil in front of the UK Consulate in Hong Kong.

STATE OF THE RULE OF LAW AND POLICING

- Police officers put out the mourning candles at the vigil for the late Queen Elizabeth II in front of the UK Consulate in Hong Kong and filmed mourners attending the memorial service.
- The Police video-recorded fans at the Hong Kong vs Myanmar friendly match as the Chinese anthem was booed.
- A 63-year-old man was found guilty of rioting and other charges at the 7.21 attack. Non-white shirt individuals also continue to stand in court facing rioting charge.
- The pro-democracy party was contacted about their plans ahead of PRC's National Day. The police deployed over 8,000 officers to 'maintain public order' on that day.
- The Police keeps popularising a Soviet-style informer culture by encouraging citizens to report any suspicions of offences under Hong Kong's draconian National Security Law.
- Jimmy Lai, the democratic media tycoon who is now in jail for multiple charges, appeals against the judgement which refused his request to block police from searching his mobile phones.
- Pastor Garry Pang and his YouTube channel collaborator Chiu Mei-yin appeared at the Court for sedition charges. Chiu's lawyer challenged the constitutionality of the colonial-era sedition law.
- The prosecutor of the 47 Democrats' case told the High Court that it would be "proper" to delay the sentence of the 29 democrats who have pleaded guilty until the trial of the 18 others has concluded.
- The Hong Kong Police set to enter fresh evidence to overturn a previous ruling on officers' failure to display identification during the 2019 protests.
- 4 Doctors were arrested for issuing 20,000 'fake' certificates for COVID-19 vaccine exemptions.
- Hong Kong sees no signs of going back to normality. COVID-19 related restrictions on public gatherings persist with selective enforcement.

A FREE PRESS IN THE CROSS HAIRS

- Ronson Chan, the head of Hong Kong Journalists Association (HKJA), was arrested for obstructing police and public order when live-covering a Long Ping Estate owners' committee

meeting in Mong Kok. Hong Kong Foreign Correspondents' Club (FCC) expressed concern; PRC's Ministry of Foreign Affairs hit back with a strongly worded statement.

- HKJA and Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute (HKPORI) co-published the Press Freedom Index Survey 2021 reporting 97% of journalists see press freedom in decline.
- Ronny Tong's party Path of Democracy has appealed to the government to enact a fake news law as a part of its suggestion for the new Policy Address.

A GREAT PURGE UNDERWAY

- Trade unions must now declare they will not 'endanger national security' to register in Hong Kong.
- Multiple authorities raided the office of a pro-democracy ex-district councillor serving as a community mooncake sales pickup point. The mooncake sales were organised to raise funds for district work and ex-councillor Lam Cheuk-ting's legal expenses.
- University students are now required to pass a national security course in order to graduate, but students say the course failed to answer where the "red lines" are drawn.
- Major dissident universities during the 2019 protests, CUHK and PolyU, held flag-raising ceremonies on campus to boost students' sense of national identity.
- Members of Hong Kong CityU students' union fined HK\$7,000 (approx. £800) for violating the gathering ban while taking group photos before moving out of the union's office.
- The Education and Development Bureau issued a new Primary Education Curriculum Guide (Pilot Version), emphasising national education and national security education.
- The city's major film association issues a statement warning filmmakers to 'think-twice' before entering the Taiwanese Golden Horse Film Festival and Awards.
- Artists Law Kar-Ying and Carina Lau published posts to mourn the late Queen in their social media, and were trolled by mainland Chinese netizens. The former then went on camera to apologise.
- In the shadow of the arrest and trial of Cardinal Zen, the Vatican allegedly plans to move its China office from Hong Kong to Beijing.

STATE SECURITY AND ECONOMY

- The net outflow of Hong Kong residents through the Hong Kong International Airport was 19,580 in September (total 173425 in 2022 so far).
- After counting the actual students reporting to school in the new academic year, subsidised schools are reported to incur a further reduction of: 15 primary one classes and 8 secondary one classes, on top of the planned reduction of 62 primary one classes.
- The Financial Secretary Paul Chan Mo-po estimates the Hong Kong budget to see a HK\$100b deficit in the 2022/2023 financial year, second to the HK\$257b deficit in 2021/2022.
- On 28th Sept, the Hong Kong Monetary Authority bought HK\$1.94 billion as the Hong Kong Dollar continued to hit the weak end of the guaranteed trading band.
- US public company accounting regulator PCAOB has arrived at Hong Kong and is set to inspect auditing records of US-listed, China-based companies. The inspectors are first to inspect PwC and KPMG.

POLITICAL PRISONERS: ARRESTS, CHARGES & TRIALS

Seven young ‘revolutionary’ protesters found guilty for subversion under NSL.

7 members of the self-proclaimed revolutionary Hong Kong protest group Returning Valiant (光城者), including its 21-year-old founder Choi Wing-kit and the then underaged member Wan Chung-wai (now 16), were convicted for conspiring to incite subversion.

They were accused of spreading messages inciting subversion through organising street booths, holding press conferences, and posting on social media. Evidence presented to the Court included items seized from the members’ homes, such as toy guns, walkie-talkies and masks.⁵

The verdict was handed down by government-picked Designated National Security Law Judge Kwok Wai-kin, saying the group encouraged people to “[get] prepared” to take action, although they have yet to commit any act of violence.

Police continues arrests for sedition after speech therapists sentenced to prison

In early September, five speech therapists were convicted of “publishing seditious material” under Hong Kong’s colonial-era law over a series of children’s books depicting a “sheep village” under attack by “wolves”.⁶

The five therapists are also ex-board members of the now disbanded The General Union of Hong Kong Speech Therapists. They were arrested on 22 July 2022, and are now sentenced to 19-months imprisonment for publishing the series of 3 children cartoon books.⁷

The government-picked designated National Security Law Judge Kwok Wai-kin said their "seditious intention" was clear.⁸

The original three volumes are now released with additional three volumes on [The Guardians of Sheep Village-English Version](#) set up by Sheep Village 3.0, a new group set up by Hongkong educators living in exile.

Hong Kong authorities continued to prosecute dissidents with the “overly broad” interpretation of the colonial-era law. The latest arrests under the sedition law included one man playing ‘Glory to Hong Kong’ with a harmonica during the Queen’s vigil in front of the

⁵ [Founder of 'revolutionary' Hong Kong protest group Returning Valiant pleads guilty to conspiring to incite subversion - Hong Kong Free Press HKFP \(hongkongfp.com\)](#)

⁶ [Hong Kong Sentences 5 Over ‘Seditious’ Children’s Books - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](#)

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<https://hongkongfp.com/2022/09/07/breaking-5-hong-kong-speech-therapists-found-guilty-of-sedition-over-childrens-books/>

⁸ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-62821043>

UK Consulate in Hong Kong⁹ and two men publishing a ridicule of the national anthem and defacing the PRC's flag on social media platforms^{10 11}.

A combat coach duo arrested in March by National Security police for sedition now face subversion charges. They have been remanded in custody since the arrest.¹²

Tiananmen vigil organisers defend NSL charge on the grounds of freedom of speech

The National Security Law (NSL) case against Tonyee Chow Hang-tung and other ex-leaders of the now disbanded organiser of the Tiananmen Square Massacre vigil continues. Chow and two other ex-leaders are charged for incitement to subversion under NSL.

Chow defended her case by arguing in front of Acting Principal Magistrate Veronica Heung that the group was merely exercising freedom of speech, asking the magistrate to rule that she and the group have no case to answer under the NSL.¹³

After the other two ex-leaders Lee and Ho entered not-guilty pleas, the National Security Law Judge Principal Magistrate Peter Law lifted their cases to the High Court, where their charges could result in sentences of up to 10 years of imprisonment.

More Protesters to face imprisonment for participating the 2019 Anti-ELAB protests

The Hong Kong authorities continue to pursue those who participated in the 2019 Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill protests.

Nine protesters, including a 24-year-old now pregnant woman, are each sentenced to three years and six months in prison for rioting outside the government headquarters at Admiralty on 28 September, 2019. Although there was no evidence to suggest that the nine defendants had planned to riot, had directly assaulted anyone, or had acted as leaders on the day, they were accused of rioting for being more than “onlookers” at the scene, chanting and showing support to the protesters.

Li Wing-yan, who was 21 at the time of the protest, is pregnant and expected to go into labour in jail. Her lawyer told the Court that Li has been suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PDST) after the 2019 protests and had considered having an abortion.¹⁴ The verdict was handed down by District Court Judge Frankie Yiu. He said in the sentencing that he had tried his best to minimise their jail terms.

⁹ [Hong Kong arrests harmonica player at Queen vigil for sedition](#)

¹⁰ [National security police arrest 2 Hong Kong men for allegedly publishing seditious social media posts](#)

¹¹ [Hong Kong men remanded in custody on sedition charges; 1 faces allegations he defaced country's flag and ridiculed national anthem | South China Morning Post](#)

¹² [Sedition charge against Hong Kong combat coach upgraded to subversion - Hong Kong Free Press HKFP \(hongkongfp.com\)](#)

¹³ [Hong Kong's Tiananmen vigil group was merely exercising freedom of speech, court hears in national security case - Hong Kong Free Press HKFP \(hongkongfp.com\)](#)

¹⁴ [9 Hong Kong protesters jailed for 3.5 years each over 2019 riot near gov't headquarters - Hong Kong Free Press HKFP \(hongkongfp.com\)](#)

A student at the Hong Kong Design Institute was sentenced to a training centre after pleading guilty to rioting near the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) during the police's siege of the university.

Two men were convicted for taking part in an unlawful assembly during the 2019 protests. The two, Tse and Ho, were arrested along with another man who was acquitted at the scene of the protest. The protests took place on 11 August 2019, when around 100 to 200 protesters congregated to block nearby roads, with some chanting “black cops”, shining laser pointers at the police, and hurling objects at police vehicles. Magistrate Leung Ka-kie ruled that Tse and Ho were guilty because at the time they dressed like and carried equipment of protestors, including helmets, gloves, and an umbrella.¹⁵

13 protesters have been charged with multiple offences, including conspiracy to murder police officers and the violation of the “prohibitions against bombing of prescribed objects” under the Counter Terrorism Ordinance. It is the first time a charge under the Ordinance is tried in Court. Some defendants have been detained for 2-3 years.¹⁶

Ted Hui, the ex-legislator now in exile, was found guilty of ‘foreign collusion’ under the National Security Law for his international advocacy work during the 2019 movement and sentenced to 3.5 years in jail in absentia.¹⁷

Humanitarian Funds Confiscated, Trustees tried

The court ordered the confiscation of approximately HKD 70million (around £8million) funds from Spark Alliance¹⁸, one of the two humanitarian funds that provide legal aid and living expenses support to pro-democracy protesters. The funds were raised through crowdfunding and the account has been frozen for alleged money laundering offences since December 2019.¹⁹ Among the four who were arrested for the offences, two have left Hong Kong, one has been charged, and the other is on bail pending further police investigation.

The six trustees of the other fund, known as the 612 Humanitarian Fund, who were arrested in May 2022 under NSL for alleged collusion with foreign powers,²⁰ began their trial in September, including 90-year-old retired Catholic Bishop Emeritus Cardinal Joseph Zen,²¹ for allegedly failing to register the fund to the group. The prosecutor accuses the fund of being “a

¹⁵ [Hong Kong court convicts 2 of taking part in 2019 unlawful assembly, third man acquitted - Hong Kong Free Press HKFP \(hongkongfp.com\)](#)

¹⁶ [13 人被控《反恐條例》及串謀殺警等罪 全部完成交付高院程序 各人已還押 2 至 3 年 - 法庭線 The Witness \(thewitnesshk.com\)](#)

¹⁷ [Hong Kong pro-democracy figure Ted Hui sentenced to jail over 2019 protests](#)

¹⁸ [Hong Kong court orders seizure of HK\\$70 million from crowd-funding platform that raised money for 2019 protesters - Hong Kong Free Press HKFP \(hongkongfp.com\)](#)

¹⁹ [【凍結星火】警指星火同盟涉洗黑錢 凍結\\$7000萬拘四人 \(hk01.com\)](#)

²⁰ [612人道支援基金5名信託人涉國安法被捕——支援反修例運動，基金如何被盯上？ | 香港 | 即時 | 國家安全法 | 端傳媒 Initium Media \(theinitium.com\)](#)

²¹ [Hong Kong's Cardinal Zen goes on trial over fund defending protesters](#)

political organisation in disguise.”²² The trustees face Principal Magistrate Ada Yim Shun-yeet for the trial with a national security investigation underway.²³

A Harmonica Player Arrested at the Queen’s Vigil

A harmonica player, aged 43, was arrested for a “seditious act” at the Queen’s vigil in front of the UK Consulate in Hong Kong. Prior to his arrest, the man played the British national anthem God Save the King and Glory to Hong Kong to the mourners in front of the Consulate. Many of them later chanted “Hongkongers add oil” and sang Glory to Hong Kong. The arrest was made by citing a dormant colonial-era sedition law, which was reintroduced after the 2019 protests.

THE STATE OF THE RULE OF LAW

Police intervened after a week of Hongkongers’ outpouring mourning to the late Queen

Hong Kongers lined up for hours in the week following the death of the Queen to pay their respects. Their queue created a now rare scene of public gathering in the city, 33 months since the city last saw a mass protest. Commentators say the outpouring of mourning showed a mixed sentiment, including a nostalgia for a ‘golden age’ under the colonial rule and the discontent towards Beijing.²⁴

A team of police officers put out the mourning candles at the vigil for the late Queen Elizabeth II in front of the UK Consulate in Hong Kong and intervened in the vigil entering the consulate area. The trespassing officer was told to leave by a Consulate staff member. The officers then arrested a harmonica player after he played ‘Glory to Hong Kong’ and the British national anthem. Ian Paisley MP tabled an Urgent Question to the UK Government on this matter.²⁵

Police were also seen filming churchgoers coming out from a memorial service for the late Queen. Around a dozen police officers were on stand-by outside St John’s Cathedral in Central that evening, some of whom recorded churchgoers as they walked out.²⁶

Police Strengthen Surveillance

In addition to the police’s intervention against mourners of the Queen, police were also seen filming Hongkong fans at the Hong Kong v Myanmar friendly football match. The Chinese anthem was booed even though most of the fans were wearing masks.²⁷ A solicitor warned

²² [Fund for Hong Kong protesters ‘a political organisation in disguise’, court hears, as Cardinal Joseph Zen and five others accused of failing to get approval for group | South China Morning Post \(scmp.com\)](#)

²³ [Hong Kong protests: retired cardinal Joseph Zen and 5 others to stand trial over fund registration, with group also facing national security probe | South China Morning Post](#)

²⁴ [Queen Elizabeth II: Hong Kong’s grief sends message to Beijing - BBC News](#)

²⁵ [Contribution by Ian Paisley \(North Antrim\) \(DUP\) \(parliament.uk\)](#)

²⁶ <https://twitter.com/initiumnews/status/1574370207354609672>

²⁷ [Chinese anthem booed at Hong Kong football match, as police film fans](#)

Political Prisoners' Right in Question

Jimmy Lai, the founder of the now dissolved *Apple Daily* newspaper, who is already in jail on charges of fraud and leading a procession in an illegal assembly, is appealing against the court's decision in August to uphold a national security search warrant on his phones. The case is yet another example of how the National Security regime erodes defendants' rights under the Common Law system.³⁴

Pastors Garry Pang and Chiu Mei-ying, who co-run the online YouTube channel Pastor Crazy with You (牧師和你顛), have been charged with sedition. Pang and Chiu were accused of clapping and uttering seditious words criticising the magistrate in the trial of Chow Hang-how after Chow made her mitigation speech.

During cross-examination, Pang, who opted to defend himself in court, questioned the accuracy of the transcript of the audio recording and an investigation report prepared by the officer. Pang said some words in the transcript did not match the recording and questioned how the officer had concluded that it was him who had shouted in the courtroom.³⁵

The case of 47 pro-democracy legislators and activists case continues. The prosecutor told the High Court that it would be "proper" to delay the sentence of the 29 democrats who have pleaded guilty for subversion until the trial of the 18 others. 32 defendants in the case have been held in custody for more than 18 months.³⁶ If the Court accepts this opinion, the 29 democrats would face further detention without bail.

Hong Kong targets professionals and civil servants dodging the zero-COVID strategy

Six doctors were arrested in September for issuing 'fake' certificates for COVID-19 vaccine exemptions. According to the government's guidelines on COVID-19 vaccination, citizens medically certified by a doctor as unsuitable for COVID-19 vaccination, such as those suffering from chronic diseases, can be exempted from the city's stringent policy on vaccination. More than 20,000 certificates are expected to become invalid from 12 October, on the grounds that they were allegedly issued without proper medical diagnosis.³⁷ Medical records have been seized from the arrested doctors' clinics. The Civil Service Bureau said at least 370 civil servants and employees are suspected of using fake certificates, of which 4 were arrested in early October.³⁸ No court trial was completed before the government declared the exemption certificates "fake".

³⁴ [Hong Kong media tycoon Jimmy Lai appeals against failed bid to block police from searching his phones - Hong Kong Free Press HKFP \(hongkongfp.com\)](https://www.hongkongfp.com/2022/08/24/jimmy-lai-appeals-against-failed-bid-to-block-police-from-searching-his-phones/)

³⁵ [Hong Kong pastor accused of sedition questions accuracy of police audio recording transcript - Hong Kong Free Press HKFP \(hongkongfp.com\)](https://www.hongkongfp.com/2022/08/24/hong-kong-pastor-accused-of-sedition-questions-accuracy-of-police-audio-recording-transcript/)

³⁶ [Hong Kong activist denied bail pending trial in subversion case involving 47 democrats - Hong Kong Free Press HKFP \(hongkongfp.com\)](https://www.hongkongfp.com/2022/08/24/hong-kong-activist-denied-bail-pending-trial-in-subversion-case-involving-47-democrats/)

³⁷ [Fake Covid exemptions: more than 20,000 certificates will no longer be valid from October 12, Hong Kong government says, as another doctor arrested | South China Morning Post \(scmp.com\)](https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/2022-10-12/fake-covid-exemptions-more-than-20000-certificates-will-no-longer-be-valid-from-october-12-hong-kong-government-says-as-another-doctor-arrested)

³⁸ [Coronavirus: 370 Hong Kong government workers suspected of using fake vaccination exemptions from arrested doctors, as city logs 3,907 infections | South China Morning Post \(scmp.com\)](https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/2022-10-12/coronavirus-370-hong-kong-government-workers-suspected-of-using-fake-vaccination-exemptions-from-arrested-doctors-as-city-logs-3907-infections)

Hong Kong sees no signs of going back to normality in full. COVID-19 related restrictions on public gatherings persist with selective enforcement, although the maximum number for indoor gathering have now been relaxed to 12. On the eve of the mid-autumn festival, a pro-democracy restaurant in Tsuen Wan was raided by officers from the Police and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. Two out of around two dozen diners were found to have not scanned their COVID-19 vaccine certificate QR codes. Although they claimed that they had checked their CCTV showing everyone has scanned their QR codes, fixed penalty notices were issued to 6 diners and the restaurant operators and the restaurant has been ordered to close for 14 days. The restaurant subsequently announced it would wind up soon.³⁹

A FREE PRESS IN THE CROSS HAIRS

Threatening Internet Journalism to Silence ‘nonharmonic’ Voices

Ronson Chan, the head of Hong Kong Journals Association (HKJA) and the deputy assignment editor of internet news outlet Channel C, was arrested for obstructing the police. At the time of the arrest, he was doing live coverage of a controversial homeowner general meeting of Long Ping Estate, held in Mongkok and far away from the Estate in Yuen Long.⁴⁰

The government mouthpiece *Ta Kung Pao* earlier accused Chan of “hidden power to oppose the Central Authorities and stir up disorder in society (反中乱港势力)” for inciting the homeowners.⁴¹

Chan’s arrest was made weeks before he was set to leave the city for six months to join the Reuters Institute’s fellowship programme at Oxford University. He was allowed to go on bail and to leave Hong Kong for the fellowship. The case’s trial is scheduled for next year.⁴² Chan has arrived in the UK to start the fellowship on time.⁴³

On 7 September Hong Kong Foreign Correspondents’ Club (FCC) issued a statement expressing concern over the arrest.⁴⁴ The spokesperson of the Commissioner’s Office of the Chinese Foreign Ministry in Hong Kong responded with a strong rebuke to the FCC, claiming the FCC’s statement was a move to slander the Police’s law enforcement and “interfere with the rule of law in the HKSAR”.⁴⁵

Journalists’ confidence to the city’s press freedom hits new low

³⁹ [警食環荃灣食肆票控8人 「黃店」被停晚市14日「不日結業」\(14:39\) - 20220910 - 港聞 - 即時新聞 - 明報新聞網 \(mingpao.com\)](#)

⁴⁰ [朗屏業主立案法團疑揮霍無度惹民憤 業主組成「朗屏邨街坊會」自救 - 和你報 WhatsNews Media](#)

⁴¹ [調查報道/亂港勢力滲入多個屋苑謀奪權 \(takungpao.com.hk\)](#)

⁴² [記協主席陳朗昇否認阻差辦公 明年5月開審 准保釋赴英交流 - 法庭線 The Witness](#)

⁴³ [Head of Hong Kong journalist group Ronson Chan arrested for obstructing police and public disorder - Hong Kong Free Press HKFP \(hongkongfp.com\)](#)

⁴⁴ [The Foreign Correspondents' Club Hong Kong \(fcchk.org\)](#)

⁴⁵ [The Foreign Correspondents' Club Hong Kong \(fcchk.org\)](#)

On 23 September, HKJA and Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute (HKPORI) co-published Press Freedom Index Survey 2021. The results showed that 97% of journalists in Hong Kong surveyed said press freedom is in decline and more than half of public respondents agreed with this view. The figures hit a new low since the survey started in 2013.

International Journalists Federation (IFJ) issued a statement echoing the survey's alarming findings⁴⁶, citing the federation's own report on how journalists are harassed by the authorities in Hong Kong and China.⁴⁷

Ronny Tong's party rally for legislating a fake news law

As a part of its recommendations for the upcoming Policy Address from Chief Executive John Lee, the self-proclaimed non-pro-establishment party Path of Democracy (民主思路), led by Ronny Tong, a non-official member of John Lee's Executive Council, has appealed to the government to enact a fake news law.⁴⁸ The proposed legislation would empower the authorities to vet journalists' reports.

THE GREAT PURGE UNDERWAY

Trade unions must pledge not to engage in activity threatening national security

According to a latest amendment to the Trade Unions Ordinance, trade unions now must make a declaration that they will not 'endanger national security' in order to register in Hong Kong.⁴⁹ The Registrar of Trade Unions may order the cancellation of a union's registration at any time if it believes the union has been used for any unlawful purpose. This is the latest blow to the right to establish trade unions in Hong Kong, following the disbanding of over 60 employees' unions last year. Some unions which disbanded, such as the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions and the Frontline Doctors' Union, had been in operation for over 20 years before their dissolution.⁵⁰

Charity Mooncake pickup point raid by multiple authorities

Multiple authorities raided the office of a pro-democracy ex-district councillor serving as a community mooncake sales pickup point. The mooncake sales were organised to raise funds for district work and ex-councillor Lam Cheuk-ting's legal expenses.⁵¹ Tim Hamlett, from Hong Kong Free Press, commented that "is it any wonder that low-level functionaries visiting

⁴⁶ [Hong Kong: HKJA reveals alarming decline in press freedom - IFJ](#)

⁴⁷ [Hong Kong: IFJ report documents dire status of Hong Kong's media - IFJ](#)

⁴⁸ [Hong Kong Policy Address: Enact fake news law and give subsidies to mainland graduates, says centrist party - Hong Kong Free Press HKFP \(hongkongfp.com\)](#)

⁴⁹ [egn202226375158 \(gld.gov.hk\)](#)

⁵⁰ [Trade unions must now declare they will not 'endanger national security' to register in Hong Kong](#)

⁵¹ [Authorities look into office of Hong Kong pro-democracy ex-district councillor - Hong Kong Free Press HKFP \(hongkongfp.com\)](#)

vaguely democratic premises think their job is to find something the Director of Public Prosecutions can work with”.⁵²

Mandatory national security module for university students failed to draw “red lines”

Starting from this academic year, undergraduate students at HKU and other publicly funded universities across the city must view pre-recorded online lectures on the Beijing-imposed security legislation. In July 2021, former Education Secretary Kevin Yeung said it was a “requirement” for higher education institutions to incorporate national security education into their curriculums.⁵³

In one video by HKFP, the module teaches that the “riots of 2019” made Beijing aware of “an extremely serious loophole in Hong Kong law”, justifying the enactment of NSL. Students said anonymously to the HKFP that the module’s content is hypothetical and failed to show where the “red lines” are drawn in real life.

Major dissident universities to held flag-raising ceremony on the PRC’s National Day

Major dissident universities during the 2019 protests, including the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) and Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), are to hold flag-raising ceremonies on campus to boost students’ sense of national identity.

CityU students’ union members fined for taking photos before evicted from their office

Members of Hong Kong City University students’ union have been issued fixed penalty notices of HK\$7,000 (approx. £800) for violating COVID-19 gathering ban while taking a group photo before moving out of the union’s office. CityU earlier ordered the student union to move out within 7 days after the union failed to hand over 19 years of audited financial records.⁵⁴

Schools to strengthen national education and national security education under new guidelines

Christine Choi Yuk-Lin’s Education and Development Bureau issued a new Primary Education Curriculum Guide (Pilot Version), emphasising nurturing understanding of Chinese culture and a sense of national identity through national education and national security education.⁵⁵ The full guideline is only published in Chinese with a brief in English.⁵⁶ The guideline highlights Chinese national identity as a key moral value to be fostered, saying

⁵² ['Mooncake raid' reveals much about Hong Kong's rule of law - Hong Kong Free Press HKFP \(hongkongfp.com\)](https://www.hongkongfp.com/2021/07/23/mooncake-raid-reveals-much-about-hong-kongs-rule-of-law/)

⁵³ [HKU's national security course explains the law but fails to answer where the red line is drawn, students say - Hong Kong Free Press HKFP \(hongkongfp.com\)](https://www.hongkongfp.com/2021/07/23/hku-national-security-course-explains-law-but-fails-to-answer-where-red-line-is-drawn-students-say/)

⁵⁴ [Members of Hong Kong CityU students' union fined HK\\$7,000 for violating gathering ban while taking group photo - Hong Kong Free Press HKFP \(hongkongfp.com\)](https://www.hongkongfp.com/2021/07/23/cityu-students-union-fined-hk7000-for-violating-gathering-ban-while-taking-group-photo/)

⁵⁵ [香港小學教育強化國家觀念，「明確承認自己是中國人」 | 大陸傳真 | 兩岸 | 聯合新聞網 \(udn.com\)](https://www.udn.com/2021/07/23/education/1444444)

⁵⁶ [EDBCM](https://www.edb.gov.hk/eng/curriculum/primary/primary-education-curriculum-guide-pilot-version/)

“who identify with the national identify shall unambiguously identify themselves as Chinese. (認同國民身份的人會明確承認自己是中國人)。”

The city’s film association warn filmmaker against participating the Taiwanese film festival

Hong Kong Motion Picture Industry Association (MPIA) issued a statement to warn filmmakers to ‘think-twice’ before entering the Taiwanese Golden Horse Film Festival and Awards. A Chinese cinema studies academic interpreted the letter as a gesture to show allegiance to Beijing.⁵⁷ The warning did not appear to deter Hong Kong filmmakers from entering the Taiwanese contest.⁵⁸

A city’s actor apologised for a social media post mourning the late Queen

Artists Law Kar-Ying and Carina Lau published posts to mourn the late Queen in their social media and were trolled by mainland netizens. The former then went on camera to apologise.⁵⁹ Carina was bullied by netizen in various ways, including citing her alleged rape incident.⁶⁰

In the shadow of Cardinal’s arrest arrested Vatican plans to move office to Beijing

While 90-year-old Cardinal Joseph Zen stands trial for failing to register the humanitarian fund with a national security investigation underway, the Vatican confirmed that the Pope intends to move the Holy See’s “study mission” in Hong Kong to Beijing.⁶¹ This development comes despite the PRC’s President Xi Jinping’s refusal to meet the Pope in Kazakhstan. German Cardinal Gerhard Muller expressed his disappointment toward the Vatican to speak out for Zen.⁶² A political commentator described the Vatican’s latest move as a betrayal to Zen.⁶³

STATE SECURITY AND ECONOMY

Hong Kong Resident outflow continues

⁵⁷ [Hong Kong film association head defends call for members to ‘think twice’ before going to Golden Horse Awards in Taipei | South China Morning Post \(scmp.com\)](https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/2019-09-12/hong-kong-film-association-head-defends-call-for-members-to-think-twice-before-going-to-golden-horse-awards-in-taipei)

⁵⁸ [香港影協警告無效？金馬獎「港片報名量增加」：5年來最好一次！ | 電影 | 三立新聞網 SETN.COM](https://www.setn.com/news/2019/09/12/hong-kong-film-association-head-defends-call-for-members-to-think-twice-before-going-to-golden-horse-awards-in-taipei)

⁵⁹ [Hong Kong actor apologises on Chinese social media for praising British queen - Hong Kong Free Press HKFP \(hongkongfp.com\)](https://www.hongkongfp.com/2019/09/12/hong-kong-actor-apologises-on-chinese-social-media-for-praising-british-queen/)

⁶⁰ [劉嘉玲悼念英女皇遭內地網民留言狂轟：中國人愛英女皇真賤得可以 | Headlife | 頭條日報 \(stheadline.com\)](https://www.stheadline.com/news/hk/2019/09/12/hong-kong-actor-apologises-on-chinese-social-media-for-praising-british-queen/)

⁶¹ [Pope Francis Extends a Hand to China \(aciafrica.org\)](https://www.aciafrica.org/2019/09/12/pope-francis-extends-a-hand-to-china/)

⁶² <https://www.rti.org.tw/news/view/id/2144036>

⁶³ [评论 | 沈旭暉：大出賣：梵蒂岡宣布擬搬香港辦公室到北京，代表什麼？ — 普通話主页 \(rfa.org\)](https://www.rfa.org/News/China/2019/09/12/hong-kong-film-association-head-defends-call-for-members-to-think-twice-before-going-to-golden-horse-awards-in-taipei)

The net outflow of Hong Kong residents through the Hong Kong International Airport has 19,580 in September (total 173,425 in 2022 so far). The number is regarded as a key indicator for the scale of Hongkongers' migration in response to the city's deteriorating environment.

Actual school classes less than the already reduced number

After counting the actual students reporting to school in the new academic year, subsidised schools are reported to incur a further reduction of 15 primary one classes and 8 secondary one classes, on top of the planned reduction of 62 primary one classes. Schools are to see further reduction of funded classes; some may face closure.

The city's budget to see its second highest red figure

The Financial Secretary Paul Chan Mo-po in his blog estimates that the Hong Kong budget will see a HK\$100billion deficit in the 2022/2023 financial year, the second highest ever. The Hong Kong budget is expected to fall under HK\$800billion. It is second to the city recorded the historical HK\$257b deficit recorded in the last financial year 2021/2022.

HKMA bought more HKD from the open market as HKD hit weak end of guarantee

On 28 September, the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) bought HK\$1.94billion as the Hong Kong Dollar continued to hit the weak end of the trading band.⁶⁴ At the end of September, Hong Kong Foreign Reserve amounted to US\$419.2billion, reduced from US\$431.8 billion at end-August.⁶⁵

US regulator to inspect auditors for Chinese US-listed company in Hong Kong

US public company accounting regulator the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB) has arrived at Hong Kong and is set to inspect auditing records of US-listed, China-based companies. The inspectors are first to inspect PwC and KPMG,⁶⁶ after the US regulator settles with Deloitte China for US\$20 million on audit issues related to 12 mainland clients.⁶⁷

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

European parliamentarian calls for awarding Sakharov Prize to Cardinal Zen

Bernard Guetta, a RenewEurope MEP, called for the 2022 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought to be awarded to Cardinal Zen, who was arrested in Hong Kong under its National

⁶⁴ [金管局入市承接15.7億港元沽盤 - RTHK](#)

⁶⁵ [Hong Kong's latest foreign currency reserve assets figures released \(info.gov.hk\)](#)

⁶⁶ [PwC Hong Kong, KPMG China are first firms to host US regulator for audit inspections of mainland firms, sources say | South China Morning Post \(scmp.com\)](#)

⁶⁷ [US regulator settles with Deloitte China for US\\$20 million on audit issues related to 12 mainland clients | South China Morning Post \(scmp.com\)](#)

Security Law regime. Cardinal Zen was not included in the final nominee list. The nominees include the brave people of Ukraine and President Volodymir Zelenskyy.⁶⁸

A Hong Kong technology company added to the US Treasury's Sanction List

A Hong Kong-registered technology company appears on the US Treasury's Russian-related Designations sanction list update on 30th September 2022.⁶⁹ The company is SINNO ELECTRONICS CO., LIMITED (Chinese Traditional: 信諾電子科技有限公司) with a registered address at Kwun Tong, Hong Kong. The company specialises in the design, production and sales of wireless radio-frequency modules and is found violating the US Treasury's sanction for having links with RADIOAVTOMATIKA LLC.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ <https://twitter.com/fbermingham/status/1566795610149232640?s=46&t=lRoT8HGJTzP62BtqcjtSzw>

⁶⁹ <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/recent-actions/20220930>

⁷⁰ <http://ec.eepw.com.cn/mfmember/index/userid/27535>