

# **Thousands Hong Kong protesters despite police ban - Police fire tear case during chaotic protest clearance across Western district (July 28)**

Sunday 28 July 2019, by [CHAN Holmes](#), [TAYLOR Jerome](#), [YU Elaine](#) (Date first published: 28 July 2019).

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*Separate groups of Hong Kong protesters marched to Causeway Bay and Sai Wan on Sunday 28 – despite police instructions that they remain in Chater Garden in Central only.*

*The anti-police violence protests took place spontaneously on Sunday afternoon, with marchers deciding on the fly where they would go.*

*As of 5pm, riot police have been station outside the China Liaison Office in Sai Wan, where acts of vandalism took place last Sunday. The protest site in Causeway Bay saw no police presence.*

Riot police fired multiple volleys of tear gas to disperse pro-democracy protesters close to Beijing's office in Hong Kong, plunging the financial hub deeper into crisis.

## **Thousands of Hong Kong protesters march to Causeway Bay and Sai Wan on the fly, despite police ban**

28 July 2019 18:12 - Holmes Chan (HKFP)

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2019/07/28/protesters-march-causeway-bay-sai-wan-fly-despite-police-ban/>

### **3 pm**

Shortly after the sanctioned Central rally started at 3pm, protesters were agitated by the decision by police officers to stop a car on a nearby road.

A woman in the car claimed that police scared her child, and protesters occupied Des Voeux Road Central and shouted "Shame on black cops." The car was allowed to leave after brief questioning. Lawmaker Claudia Mo, who arrived on scene, told HKFP that police said the car was stopped because of a criminal investigation. It had nothing to do with the rally, police claimed. But Mo said it was too "convenient" and wondered if police was trying to incite a response.

Hundreds of protesters then headed towards Causeway Bay, occupying Queensway and Hennessy Road.

"Shame of black cops, the police knowingly break the law!" Some chanted. Others shouted localist

Edward Leung's 2016 election slogan: "Reclaim Hong Kong, the revolution of our times."

Ms. Chung, an elderly marcher, told HKFP that her main grievance was with the police, and how they handled the recent protests. Chung said she went to Yuen Long despite her fears for personal safety, and said it was wrong for riot police to storm the MTR station while protesters were leaving.

At the beginning of the rally, one of the organisers Ventus Lau reminded attendees that the march he applied for had been made illegal. Anyone who strays from the approved area may be in breach of the law, he said.

Police had previously banned a protest march from Chater Garden to Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park in Sheung Wan.

In an unusual twist, most protesters have eschewed the police HQ in Wan Chai, instead continuing east towards Causeway Bay.

Some protesters shouted "Causeway Bay," though it is unclear what their destination is for now.

### **Around 5pm**

Just as protesters were setting up barricades outside the SOGO department store in Causeway Bay, local media reported that a separate group of protesters headed west from Central.

Police in riot gear were spotted forming a line near Connaught Road West, near Beijing's office in Hong Kong. Another team of riot police held their position outside the Western Police Station in Sai Wan.

## **Hong Kong anti-police violence protesters driven from Beijing's top office with tear gas**

28 July 2019 20:34 - Jerome Taylor and Elaine Yu (HKFP)

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2019/07/28/hong-kong-anti-police-violence-protesters-driven-beijings-top-office-tear-gas/>

*Sunday's 28 **clashes took place close to the Liaison Office**, which represents Beijing in the semi-autonomous hub and which was pelted with eggs and paint last week.*

Police and protesters had been engaged in a tense standoff for hours **after tens of thousands of demonstrators** held a series of unsanctioned marches through the city.

A group of some **200 protesters** had made their way towards the Liaison Office where they met a phalanx of riot police. A second, larger crowd massed in the popular shopping district of Causeway Bay, where they built barricades and took over a main thoroughfare.

The renewed violence comes a day after a town near the border with mainland China descended into chaos as police fired tear gas and rubber bullets at protesters holding another banned rally against suspected pro-government triad gangs who beat up democracy demonstrators there last weekend. Now a common refrain at #HongKong protests: "Reclaim Hong Kong, the revolution of our times." It was localist Edward Leung's election slogan in 2016.

The front of the march reached Sogo shopping in Causeway Bay around 4:25pm.

Despite facing unprecedented levels of public anger and frustration, the city's pro-Beijing leadership are seemingly unable, or unwilling, to end the chaos.

### **Weeks of chaos**

Hong Kong has been plunged into its worst crisis in recent history after **millions of demonstrators took to the streets** and **sporadic violent confrontations** erupted between police and pockets of hardcore protesters.

**The demonstrations over the last seven weeks** were triggered by a controversial bill which would have allowed extraditions to mainland China, but have evolved into a call for wider democratic reforms and a halt to sliding freedoms.

Yet the unprecedented protests with huge turnouts — as well as frequent clashes and the **sacking of parliament** — have had **little luck persuading Beijing or Hong Kong's leaders**.

- Beijing has issued increasingly shrill condemnations in the last two weeks, but has left it to the city's government to deal with the situation.

- The Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office in Beijing said it would hold a press conference on Monday afternoon.

- City leader Carrie Lam has shown no sign of backing down beyond agreeing to suspend the extradition bill.

Her administration has faced down weeks of public anger and she has made few public appearances beyond visiting injured officers and holding a handful of press conferences.

**Pro-democracy lawmaker Claudia Mo** said the city was now trapped in a **“vicious cycle” where huge peaceful marches that have been ignored by the government end with violence** between police and small groups of hardcore protesters.

*“You see force being escalated on both sides but then this is a huge imbalance because the police are in possession of deadly weapons. This sums up Hong Kong today,”* she told AFP.

## **Battle for Yuen Long**

Clashes have been raging for weeks. But public anger intensified to new levels a week ago when a pro-government mob of men wearing white shirts and armed with sticks attacked protesters in **Yuen Long**.

The town is in Hong Kong's **rural New Territories** where many of the surrounding villages are known for **triad connections** and their staunch support for the pro-Beijing establishment.

That brazen assault resulted in at least 45 people being taken to hospital. Police were heavily criticised for being too slow to respond to the violence, fuelling accusations of collusion or turning a blind eye to the pro-government mob — allegations the force has denied.

In a rare move, police banned **Saturday's 27** rally saying they feared reprisal attacks against villagers from protesters, a decision that only heightened anger towards a force already perceived to be protecting pro-government aggressors.

They also banned a proposed march on **Sunday 28**.

**But on both days protesters simply ignored the orders.**

## **On Saturday 27**

Small groups of more hardcore protesters, many in helmets and carrying shields, confronted police outside the villages and accused them of protecting triads.

Tensions quickly rose and a now-familiar pattern of running battles between police and protesters began.

Rubber bullets were fired later in the clashes, which ended when officers baton-charged the last remaining demonstrators inside the town's metro station, leaving pools of blood in the same

concourse where the suspected triads had attacked the previous weekend.

Police on Sunday said 13 arrests were made in Yuen Long.

Among them was Max Chung, a young activist who had initially applied for permission to hold the Yuen Long protest. He was arrested for inciting an illegal assembly.

Hospital authorities said **24 people were injured**, most of whom have been discharged but with **two remaining in a serious condition**.

## **Police fire tear case during chaotic protest clearance across Western district**

29 July 2019 01:49 - Holmes Chan (HKFP)

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2019/07/29/video-hong-kong-police-fire-tear-case-chaotic-protest-clearance-across-western-district/>

One week after Sheung Wan was rocked by clashes, protesters and riot police fought pitched battles in the neighbourhood again on Sunday night.

Police fired numerous rounds of tear gas, rubber bullets, sponge grenades and pepper spray during the Western district clearance operation. As of 10pm, four men were hospitalised due to injuries

*"In recent months, this is **the most serious conflict that I've ever seen**. And I don't understand why they chose tonight to really attack protesters with a lot of rubber bullets and tear gas, and I don't see the urgency," lawmaker Ted Hui told HKFP, who was on the frontlines. Hui said that the violence was coming from the police side.*

Police were seen making **multiple arrests throughout the night**, though the exact figure is not yet known.

### **Government statement**

In a statement issued early Monday morning, the government said it *"strongly condemn[s] the radical protesters who disregarded the law and order and violently breached the public peace."*

*"Some radical protesters acted violently in parts of Sheung Wan and Western District, including hurling bricks at police officers, committing arson and pushing towards the police cordon line a cart with burning cardboards, threatening the safety of police officers and members of the public," the statement read.*

The government also *"expressed regret"* over a street occupation in Causeway Bay, where it said activists damaged public property and obstructed traffic.

**Police** said at around 9pm that they were dispersing people on Hong Kong Island as *"some protesters committed arson at various locations."* The force also condemned violence and said protesters should leave the scene.

*"In the vicinity of Western Market in Sheung Wan, some protestors set ablaze a cart with miscellaneous objects and pushed them towards Police cordon line, seriously threatening the safety of everyone at the scene," the statement read said.*

### **Multiple protest hotspots**

Hong Kong saw spontaneous demonstrations against police violence on Sunday, with protesters gathering at Causeway Bay, Central, Wan Chai, Sheung Wan and Sai Wan throughout the afternoon. Police had banned a protest march intended for Sheung Wan, only allowing protesters to gather at a

rally at Central's Chater Garden.

However, attendees left the venue shortly after 3pm and began a roaming protest across the island, occupying roads as they marched.

From 9:38pm — After multiple rounds of tear gas were fired by police, smoke hangs in the air on the streets of Sheung Wan.

Poor ventilation in the inner streets means that the smoke takes longer to dissipate. #HongKong #antiELABhk #HongKongProtests

**Ventus Lau**, one of the organisers of the authorised rally in Central said on Sunday night that the police *"opened up the path for the public to march,"* which resulted in *"10,000 cases of lawful marches which were made up of groups of less than 30 people, taking different routes."*

Lau also condemned the police for their clearance operation, which he said were akin to *"war crimes"* as they hurt journalists and even children.

In one instance, police fired tear gas only to have the smoke blown back their direction. #HongKong #antiELABhk #HongKongProtests

While the large-scale street occupation in Causeway Bay was mostly left alone, riot police were deployed in force around Sheung Wan at around 5pm on Sunday.

### **Clearance operations**

Some 200 protesters made their way towards Sai Wan's China Liaison Office – where a week before, protesters engaged in acts of vandalism, defacing the Chinese emblem on the building's facade.

**Police fired the first tear gas rounds shortly before 7pm**, and gradually pushed protesters to the east and away from the Liaison Office.

The Special Tactical Squad – also known as the "Raptors" – made lightning raids into the ranks of protesters, resulting in **multiple arrests** on Des Voeux Road. Police officers were seen manhandling some protesters who had already been subdued.

According to Initium, police also said at one point that ambulances could only enter a protest zone if they granted them permission.

**At around 8:45pm**, protesters were seen setting fire to a cart loaded with recycled cardboard paper, and pushing it in the direction of police lines.

Police used numerous rounds of tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse crowds, both on Connaught Road West and Des Voeux Road West.

Some protesters took refuge in Sheung Wan MTR station, and sprayed water from a firehose to keep police from entering one of the exits. In response, riot police outside the station used pepper spray and directed it to protesters inside.

Later in the night, staff members of the IFC shopping mall in Central reportedly denied entry to police officers.

Earlier this month, the New Town Plaza mall in Sha Tin drew criticism for allowing riot police to enter to pursue protesters.

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**P.S.**

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