

Hong Kong national security police freeze assets from 1989 Tiananmen Massacre vigil group, as leaders charged and Museum to the memory of the massacre raided

Friday 10 September 2021, by [KWAN Rhoda](#) (Date first published: 10 September 2021).

Hong Kong national security police have frozen HK\$2.2 million worth of assets belonging to the group behind the city's annual Tiananmen Massacre vigil, the force has announced. The move on Thursday 9 came as the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Democratic Movements of China and three of its leaders were charged under the national security law.

Lee Cheuk-yan, 64, **Albert Ho**, 69, and **Chow Hang-tung**, 36, and the group were charged with "*incitement to subversion*," a security law crime which carries up to 10 years in prison.

Earlier this week, five key members of the Alliance, including Vice-chair Chow Hang-tung, were separately arrested for refusing a police data request made under the security law.

The five, including committee members **Simon Leung Kam-wai**, 36, **Tang Ngok-kwan**, 53, and **Chan To-wai**, 57, and **Tsui Hon-kwong**, 72, have been charged with breaching the implementation rules of the security legislation allowing the police to demand information during national security probes. The seven will appear at the West Kowloon Magistrates' Court on Friday 10 morning.

Lee Cheuk-yan and Albert Ho are currently serving separate sentences relating to unauthorised assemblies during the 2019 protests.

Museum to the memory of the 1989 massacre raided

Police also raided the Alliance's premises, including its shuttered historical museum to the memory of the 1989 massacre on Thursday 9, removing key exhibits and boxes of material. "*Documents, computers and promotion materials were seized*," the force said of the searches.

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/09/09/in-pictures-hong-kongs-m-museum-finally-set-to-open-amid-concerns-over-artistic-freedom-censorship/>

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/09/09/breaking-hong-kong-national-security-police-raid-tiananmen-massacre-museum-a-day-after-vigil-group-leaders-arrested/>

The museum had been closed since early June, after authorities accused it of operating without a proper licence. The Alliance has since paid a HK\$8,000 fine.

The Alliance has been a key player in Hong Kong civil society, organising annual candlelight vigils every June 4 to call for democracy and commemorate victims of the bloody crackdown in Beijing. The vigil was often seen as a barometer of the city's freedoms, in contrast to the strict censorship in mainland China where the massacre has been scrubbed from collective memory.

The operation against the Alliance came after months of attacks from Chinese state-run media and increasing pressure on civil society groups under the security law. Last month, two of the city's

largest pro-democracy groups disbanded citing an inability to see a way forward.

- The city's leader Carrie Lam has said any pressure on the group was not a crackdown, as one had to obey the law to be a part of civil society. Critics have decried the national security law as draconian and designed to quell all political dissent, though Beijing says it has restored stability.
 - The arrests of the Alliance members drew international criticism. The US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Thursday 9 called on Hong Kong to *"end ongoing threats against civil society and individuals with differing political viewpoints."*
"Today's arrests of Tiananmen vigil leaders are political motivated and constitute a blatant abuse of the law by those in power," Blinken tweeted.
 - Meanwhile, Beijing's representative office in Hong Kong expressed its support for the police operation, accusing the Alliance of *"smearing the police"* and *"stirring up trouble in Hong Kong."*
"Chow Hang-tung and others still use 'reasons' constantly boasted by those who are anti-China and stirring up trouble in Hong Kong, such as so-called 'achieving justice by violating the law' and 'civil disobedience.'"
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