

Hong Kong's national security crackdown - month 7

Sunday 7 March 2021, by [Hong Kong Free Press \(HKFP\)](#) (Date first published: 3 March 2021).

Contents

- [47 charged with subversion](#)
- [Apple Daily founder again](#)
- [Second radio host charged with](#)
- [District councillors to \(...\)](#)
- [Calls for electoral reform](#)
- [Proposed law grants power to](#)
- [Law against criticising \(...\)](#)
- [Dual nationality not recognise](#)
- [Universities under fire](#)
- [Bureaucrat becomes new RTHK](#)
- [Democrats Lunar New Year \(...\)](#)

The last day of February saw over ten times more people charged under the security law than the previous seven months combined.

Leaders at a university student union resigned en masse amid increasing pressure from management to avoid acts which "endanger national security." All district councillors will soon be required to swear oaths of allegiance to the government. And calls for electoral reform threatened an already restricted voting system.

47 charged with subversion over unofficial primary elections

A group of 47 pro-democracy political candidates were charged with "subversion" over their participation in an unofficial primary election for the democratic camp last summer. The group, who were among the 55 arrested in January, face up to life imprisonment.

The move threatens to remove the city's entire political opposition and has been slammed by foreign governments and rights groups. The US "condemned" the mass charges while the UK called it a "deeply disturbing" move to "eliminate political dissent."

Apple Daily founder again denied bail

Media mogul and staunch Beijing critic Jimmy Lai was denied bail after the city's highest court ruled there is no presumption of bail for security law cases. A High Court judge cited a lack of sufficient evidence Lai would not re-offend if he were to be granted bail.

The decision sets a much higher standard for bail to be granted for all future charges brought under the law.

Lai faces allegations of colluding with foreign forces via Twitter and other non-security law charges relating to alleged violation of an office lease and participating in unauthorised assemblies during the 2019 protests.

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/19/hong-kong-media-tycoon-jimmy-lai-again-refused-bail-over-alleged-national-security-law-violations/>

Second radio host charged with ‘sedition’

Radio host Wan Yiu-sing, also known as “Giggs,” was charged with “seditious intent” under a colonial-era law after he hosted programmes discussing anti-government demonstrations. Wan had also previously called for donations to support young Hongkongers who have fled to Taiwan. He was later denied bail.

Giggs becomes the second radio host in the city to be charged with “seditious” speech “inciting hatred or contempt” for the government after Tam Tak-chi was arrested last September and held without bail.

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/07/second-hong-kong-radio-host-arrested-under-colonial-era-sedition-law/>

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/10/hong-kong-radio-host-giggs-denied-bail-ahead-of-trial-for-allegedly-seditious-broadcast/>

<https://hongkongfp.com/2020/09/06/hong-kong-activist-tam-tak-chi-arrested-for-uttering-seditious-words/>

District councillors to swear oaths or face disqualification

The government announced the city’s district councillors will be required to swear an oath of allegiance to the government and the Basic Law, or face being disqualified from running for elections for five years.

The oath-taking requirement, covering members of the Legislative Council, judiciary and civil servants, will now be extended to the 18 district councils, all but one of which are controlled by democrats after their landslide win in 2019. They are seen as the last pro-democracy force left in Hong Kong after pan-democratic members of LegCo resigned en masse last year following the disqualification of four of their colleagues.

Four pro-democracy district councillors face being disqualified as soon as the new regulations come into effect. All four were later charged with subversion under the security law as part of the 47.

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/23/breaking-hong-kong-to-require-district-councillors-to-swear-allegiance-to-govt-or-face-election-ban/>

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/25/four-hong-kong-pro-democracy-district-councillors-vow-to-serve-till-the-last-moment-after-govt-signals-ousting/>

Calls for electoral reform, restrictions on lawmakers' powers

Pro-Beijing figures have called for reforms to Hong Kong's electoral system after a Beijing official said authorities must ensure only "patriots" should serve in its governance. Chief Executive Carrie Lam has denied that the reforms will be aimed at removing democrats from Hong Kong politics.

Meanwhile, pro-Beijing lawmakers called for reforms to Legislative Council house rules which would further limit their own powers.

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/25/beijing-loyalists-urge-reforms-to-ensure-only-patriots-win-in-hong-kong-elections/>

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/22/beijing-official-signals-china-led-electoral-reforms-for-hong-kong-to-ensure-only-patriots-hold-power/>

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/23/hong-kongs-lam-says-chinas-patriots-only-rule-is-not-meant-to-exclude-democrats-from-politics/>

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/04/hong-kong-pro-establishment-lawmakers-seek-to-amend-legislatures-house-rules-in-move-set-to-further-restrict-their-power/>

Proposed law grants power to bar anyone leaving the city

The government proposed a law amendment which would grant the Immigration Director the power to prevent anyone from leaving the city, bypassing the courts. The Hong Kong Bar Association expressed concern over the law's broadly-defined, "intrusive" powers, saying the need for such wide legislation was "difficult to understand."

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/13/intrusive-power-concern-over-proposed-hong-kong-law-that-could-bar-anyone-from-leaving-city/>

Law against criticising civil servants, police mulled

Authorities confirmed they were considering introducing legislation criminalising criticism against civil servants and the police. Carrie Lam said any legislation must be "balanced" with considerations of free speech.

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/11/hong-kong-police-discuss-possible-use-of-stun-guns-as-ban-on-insults-against-officers-proposed-report/>

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/23/lam-confirms-hong-kong-considering-law-against-insulting-officials-and-police-says-free-speech-must-be-balanced/>

Dual nationality not recognised

Chief Executive Carrie Lam confirmed holders of dual nationality in Hong Kong are not entitled to foreign consulate protection in the city, saying that dual nationality was not recognised by China's nationality laws.

Her comments came amid warnings from western diplomats that those in prison in the city who hold

dual nationalities will have to choose a single nationality in order to gain consular protection. Local authorities assert Hong Kong has always followed this policy while Western diplomats say it marked a concrete change.

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/09/hong-kong-leader-carrie-lam-confirms-no-consular-protection-for-dual-nationals/>

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/08/hong-kong-govt-says-it-does-not-recognise-dual-nationality-uk-warns/>

Universities under fire

CUHK's student union leaders resigned citing death threats after the university officially ended ties with the student body. The university management had earlier issued a warning of "strict penalties" against students and student bodies deemed to commit acts that "endanger national security."

Separately, another CUHK student was arrested under the security law over a peaceful pro-democracy demonstration on its campus last November. The police confirmed they have arrested 99 people under the security law since its enactment in June.

Earlier in the month, the University of Hong Kong warned its student union against a screening of a protest-related documentary while the Hong Kong Baptist University axed an annual World Press Photo exhibition which displayed images from the 2019 protests three days before it was expected to begin, citing "safety and security concerns."

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/03/02/chinese-university-hong-kong-student-union-leaders-quit-after-withdrawing-election-manifesto-citing-death-threats/>

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/26/security-law-newly-elected-student-union-leaders-say-chinese-university-hong-kong-trampled-on-popular-opinion-by-cutting-ties/>

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/05/chinese-university-of-hong-kong-warns-of-strict-penalties-against-students-and-student-bodies-if-they-endanger-national-security/>

Bureaucrat becomes new RTHK chief

A bureaucrat with no former journalistic experience became the director of broadcasting at RTHK. The leadership change coincided with a highly critical government report on the public broadcaster's governance which found "deficiencies" in its editorial management and "weak" editorial accountability.

Three senior producers have resigned from the public broadcaster, with two citing mandatory oath requirements to the government.

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/03/02/new-rthk-head-takes-over-after-three-senior-officials-quit/>

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/19/hong-kong-govt-report-finds-deficiencies-in-public-broadcaster-rthks-editorial-management/>

Democrats Lunar New Year flower stalls shut down

The Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China's annual stall at the Victoria Park's Lunar New Year flower stalls was closed down by authorities for the first time in 32 years.

The stall, which displayed banners demanding justice for victims of the Tiananmen Square massacre, was ordered to close by officials from the Food and Environmental Health Department for displaying "irrelevant" objects.

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/02/08/hong-kong-govt-shuts-down-lunar-new-year-stall-run-by-tiananmen-massacre-vigil-group-as-organiser-warns-of-more-censorship/>

P.S.

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/03/03/explainer-hong-kongs-national-security-crackdown-month-7/>