

# Hong Kong is getting darker and darker

Tuesday 2 March 2021, by [CHAU Candice](#), [CHENG Selina](#) (Date first published: 2 March 2021).

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## **‘Ideas are bulletproof’: Hong Kong democrats share final words as they face security law charges**

Over 30 activists and politicians arrested under the national security law shared their last words ahead of police detention.

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/03/01/ideas-are-bulletproof-hong-kong-democrats-share-final-words-as-they-face-security-law-charges/>

by Selina Cheng (HKFP)  
12:31, 1 March 2021

Hong Kong democrats, district councillors and activists took to Facebook over the weekend to share final messages of hope and encouragement before 47 of them were charged on Sunday under the national security law.

All but one appeared in court on Monday 1 to face charges of “*conspiracy to commit subversion*” after participating in a primary legislative election held last July. District Councillor Chui Chi-kin did not attend as he remains in hospital.

In total, 55 primary election candidates and organisers – arrested and released on bail in early January – were told on Friday 26 to report to a police station on Sunday 28, earlier than scheduled.

Only eight in the group were granted bail and not formally charged. The rest are expected to be denied bail under the Beijing-imposed national security law. The maximum sentence is life behind bars.

### **‘Don’t give up Hong Kong’**

*“Ideas are bulletproof,”* Tuen Mun District Councillor Sam Cheung – one of the 47 charged – wrote in a handwritten note posted to Facebook. *“Our future is never determined. It’s the people who can walk through the fog, that can actualise the future. Our will and our faith will be our guiding light through everything.”*

Several of the arrested activists wrote notes from the police stations where they were detained. The notes were passed on to friends or assistants, who posted them on Facebook. Others shared messages on social media before reporting to the police.

- *"Dear Hongkongers,"* wrote localist activist Owen Chow in a note. *"I will continue to walk with you, strengthen myself, become a better person, and fight with you again beyond the wall. Don't worry, and don't give up Hong Kong."*

*"When suffering seems endless, what we need isn't to imagine what such suffering will be, but to have hope and determination to surpass it,"* Chow wrote in an earlier message on Sunday. *"Suffering helps us grow, hope strengthens us. In the long age of darkness, wherever we have gone in exile, whether it is on the street, in jail, underground, or overseas, we will need endless hope to sustain our fight together."*

Stand News reporters shadowed nine activists as they made final arrangements before visiting the police station. Chow, a Buddhist, visited a tattoo parlour to have Tibetan scripture etched on his forearm over the weekend.

- Ventus Lau, also a localist activist, visited an optometrist to replace his glasses with ones made of plastic, since metal frames are not allowed in prison.

*"When [pro-independence activist] Edward [Leung] was asked if he would leave Hong Kong, he said he would stay, because he wanted to prove that there are Hongkongers willing to sacrifice themselves completely for their political beliefs,"* Lau wrote. *"Five years later, we no longer need to prove that many, many of us, are willing to give up everything in life for our ideals, for this city. Please take care, everyone."*

- Tsuen Wan District Councillor and activist Lester Shum, who got married shortly after his arrest in January, wrote: *"[We] needn't carry worry nor lose our will. We have chosen this path, Hong Kong has chosen this path. Once chosen, we must keep walking. History has no way back, only predecessors."*

- Tat Cheng, a district councillor in the Eastern District, wrote: *"Breathe with all your strength. Live well, and don't lose hope for life."*

- 22-year old student activist Wong Ji-yuet recalled her hope to hike across Hong Kong after graduating from university in a few months' time. *"One stands upright in the mountains, the heart is at peace even when the terrain is rugged,"* she wrote.

*"Thank you for your care. If I am detained, I hope that, when I would be released, you all will still be here, persisting,"* Wong wrote.

- Ex-lawmaker Eddie Chu also thanked his supporters: *"Thank you to the people of Hong Kong for giving me the opportunity to contribute to society over the past 15 years. I feel deeply honoured to be guilty of upholding our common ideals." "I've received all of your greetings and I wish everyone will live fully everyday, under whatever circumstances, to make those around you feel love and hope."*

### **Hong Kong democrats trial: Police cordon off area outside court, warn supporters that slogans may violate security law**

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/03/01/hong-kong-democrats-trial-police-cordon-off-area-outside-court-warn-supporters-that-slogans-may-violate-security-law/>

by Candice Chau (HKFP)  
18:21, 1 March 2021

Hong Kong police locked down an area outside a court on Monday 1 as they issued warnings to

supporters of the 47 pro-democracy activists facing trial over security law charges.

Police officers cordoned off an area surrounding the West Kowloon Law Courts building after supporters chanted slogans such as *"Hong Kong people add oil," "supporting our comrades till the end"* and *"liberate Hong Kong, revolution of our times."* The latter was deemed illegal under the security law by the government last year.

### **Police holding up warning flags**

Police holding up warning flags warning people outside the West Kowloon Law Courts Building that they might be violating the national security law and participating in an illegal assembly. Officers raised a purple warning flag telling citizens that their slogans may be in violation of the national security law, as well as a blue warning flag, which cautions people that they are participating in an illegal assembly, and police may use force to disperse them.

Some of those gathered made a *"five-one"* finger gesture, representing the *"five demands, not one less"* slogan from the anti-extradition bill protests in 2019, as well as the three-finger salute in solidarity with anti-coup protesters in Myanmar.

### **Supporters dispersed**

The commotion outside court happened as the hearing of 47 democrats charged with *"conspiracy to commit subversion"* got underway. They stand accused of participating in and organising a primary election for the now-postponed 2020 legislative council election.

Over 100 people remained queuing outside the court as they waited for a seat for the afternoon hearing.

Police then told the members of public over a loudspeaker to leave the cross-section of Tonkin Street West and Tung Chau Street. Some shouted back at the police and told them to *"get off the road."* According to a StandNews livestream, police then cordoned off the periphery of the courthouse whilst several people were stopped by officers and had their identification cards checked. The lockdown was later partially lifted at around 5pm as the majority of those gathered left the area.

## **Bail hearing for 47 Hong Kong democrats facing security law charges drags on, with four hospitalised due to exhaustion**

<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/03/02/bail-hearing-for-47-hong-kong-democrats-facing-security-law-charges-drags-on-with-four-hospitalised-due-to-exhaustion/>

by Selina Cheng (HKFP)  
14:13, 2 March 2021

A magistrate on Tuesday 2 resumed hearing bail applications from 47 pro-democracy figures charged with subversion under the national security law, after the hearing which began on Monday 1 had dragged on for close to 14 hours, leaving four defendants hospitalised due to exhaustion.

The initial hearing continued till almost 3am and resumed late on Tuesday 2 morning at West Kowloon Magistrates' Court, giving defendants little time to sleep. Government prosecutors want them held in custody for at least three months pending trial under the Beijing-imposed law, while defence lawyers are pressing for bail.

The case represents the most significant move against Hong Kong's opposition under the security law and has attracted strong international criticism, from the United States, Britain and other countries.

Hundreds of supporters gathered Monday 1 in the street when the group was brought to court, prompting police warnings to the crowd. Leo Yau, one of the defence lawyers, was arrested outside the court on suspicion of obstructing a police officer and failing to produce proof of identity.

The defendants were arrested in a swoop by some 1,000 police in early January and were bailed pending charges, which were laid on Sunday against 47 of the 55 originally arrested.

Bail proceedings for the 47 former democratic legislators or activists — charged with subversion over participation in an opposition primary poll last July — began on Monday afternoon and was adjourned at 2:45am the next day.

Proceedings were adjourned at least twice during the day, to give the defendants time to meet their lawyers and the prosecution time to supply documents. The court began hearing bail applications at around 8pm, Stand News reported.

The 39 men and eight women are charged with “conspiracy to commit subversion” in connection with the unofficial primary to choose opposition candidates for the now-postponed 2020 Legislative Council election, which attracted some 600,000 voters.

Authorities say their aim of winning a majority in LegCo and blocking government budgets in order to force the chief executive to quit amounted to subversion.

All defendants appeared in court on Monday apart from District Councillor Chui Chi-kin, who remains in hospital.

The prosecution has applied to postpone the hearing until May 31 as its investigations continue.

By 10:30pm on Monday 1, the court had only managed to hear the bail applications of seven defendants. District Councillor Clarisse Yeung appeared to collapse in the courtroom at around 1am and was rushed to hospital.

Defendants Mike Lam, Leung Kwok-Hung and Roy Tam were also sent to hospital afterwards due to exhaustion.

A post on Clarisse Yeung's Facebook page on Tuesday morning said she had felt dizzy, heard a ringing noise and collapsed shortly afterwards.

The magistrate ordered the hearing to be adjourned after Yeung collapsed and even those defendants who were not hospitalised appeared exhausted.

They were taken to Lai Chi Kok Detention Centre, arriving between 3:30am and around 6:30am, Stand News reported. They returned to the courthouse shortly after 9am after going through proceedings at the detention centre, with almost no time for sleep in between.

Defence senior counsel Alan Leong questioned why police had “rushed” to press charges against the democrats on Sunday 28, some five weeks earlier than originally scheduled.

Leo Yau, one of the defence solicitors for nine of the defendants, was arrested in front of the courthouse Monday night, police said in response to HKFP's enquiry.

The 34-year-old attempted to pass a police cordon outside the court around 9:30pm, but appeared uncooperative after multiple warnings when police officers stopped him to make inquiries, police said in a statement.

Yau intended to enter the courthouse but was stopped by officers requesting proof of his identity as a lawyer, Apple Daily reported. Yau said police had no authority to block the courthouse nor to ask

lawyers to show identification documents.