

# Hong Kong : ‘We are not afraid’ - Over a thousand Hongkongers protest gov’t use of emergency law

Saturday 12 October 2019, by [CHENG Kris](#) (Date first published: 12 October 2019).

**Over a thousand people** gathered at Tsim Sha Tsui’s clock tower on Saturday 12 afternoon in protest of emergency legislation enacted a week ago (October 4) by the Hong Kong government. Marchers – most in masks – proceeded to Sham Shui Po, halting traffic during the unauthorised demonstration.

Last Friday, Chief Executive Carrie Lam invoked powers under the colonial law Emergency Regulations Ordinance of 1922 – which has not been used since the 1967 leftist riots – to enact an anti-mask law.

The law imposes a maximum of a year in jail for those who wear masks at lawful or unauthorised protests, but it has failed to deter demonstrators from wearing facial coverings.

The police have said more than 70 people have been arrested in connection with the office.

Hong Kong has entered its 19<sup>th</sup> week of protests since June. The movement against an extradition bill, which will be revoked next week, have evolved into greater calls for democracy and accountability over alleged police violence.

Most of the protesters wore masks on Saturday 12, a week after the new law sparked three days of city-wide unrest.

*“No crime to cover our faces, no reason to enact [anti-mask] law,”* protesters chanted. *“I have the right to wear masks!”*

They frequently sang the protest song Glory to Hong Kong, and chanted other popular slogans such as “Hong Kong people, resist!” “Disband the police force now!” and “No rioters, only tyranny!”

*“We came to protest against the mask law. I feel like Hong Kong is no longer normal like the past – it’s already damaged... We’re not afraid [of arrest],”* a protester named Emily told HKFP.

Protesters started marching at 3:15pm, as rain began to fall. They marched through Salisbury Road and north onto Nathan Road.

Some blocked roads and directed traffic at main traffic points, such as the intersection between Jordan Road and Nathan Road, as well as between Gascoigne Road and Nathan Road, in order to stop vehicles from entering the march route.

Tom, a local university engineering student, told HKFP that he believed **the number of people marching was modest because there were many other protests occurring at the same time**, including some at shopping malls.

*“To me, I would rather march than stay inside a mall to protest,”* he said.

Tom said he was wearing an extra pair of removable black sleeves to decrease the chances of him being recognised in a photo.

Protesters also spray painted slogans on the facade of a Chinese-owned Bank of Communications branch in Prince Edward, reading: "Betraying Hong Kong; Communist dog; Hong Kong people, resist!"

Whilst some protesters stopped at the Sham Shui Po Playground in Cheung Sha Wan, others dispersed towards Mei Foo and told others to continue protesting in their own districts on Sunday. *"18 districts, see you tomorrow!"* many chanted.

Riot police cleared roadblocks around different districts after protesters left.

### **Cruz in Hong Kong**

Meanwhile, US Senator Ted Cruz arrived in Hong Kong on Saturday, according to the group Hong Kong Autonomy Action which seeks US help in Hong Kong affairs.

The group held signs that read "Senator Ted Cruz, thanks for helping us!" whilst welcoming him. Cruz arrived after a trip to Taiwan, where he met Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen.

Cruz is one of the most high profile US politicians to voice support for the Hong Kong protests.

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