

OCCUPY CENTRAL

SHOCK, THEN ANGER, AT POLICE TACTICS

Rights activist accuses force of 'unprecedented' action to quell protesters; officers say they had to stop acts that 'endangered public safety'

Staff Reporters

The decision by police to fire tear gas on the streets of Admiralty shocked protesters and was condemned by Human Rights Monitor as "unprecedented".

Officers used the tear gas after thousands of protesters stormed onto Harcourt Road outside the Tamar government headquarters and caused gridlock.

The demonstrators scattered but quickly regrouped to occupy the major road linking Central and Wan Chai.

Police fired the first rounds of tear gas shortly before 6pm, about 15 minutes after issuing a warning for demonstrators to stop charging police and leave peacefully. "Otherwise, police will use a high level of force in order to restore public order and safeguard public safety."

Anti-riot officers wearing helmets and gas masks and carrying tear gas launchers were then called in. Displaying a banner with the words "Warning – tear smoke" on one side and "Disperse or we fire" on the side, they

acts which endangered public safety and public order," it said.

But protesters were shocked. A 13-year-old boy said: "I was here for the past two days and I can't believe police would resort to tear gas. My eyes hurt so badly and my lungs are burning ... police have used excessive force today."

Felix Tang, 25, who had been protesting near Admiralty Centre, said: "No one even guessed the police would be so violent. We are unarmed, we only have our hands."

His friend, Eric Lai, 27, who was not wearing goggles, said: "Don't let my look fool you – I am really scared."

He wanted Hongkongers and those outside the city to see what was happening.

Alvin Lai, 23, a recent university graduate, said he was shocked at the force deployed by the police.

Law Yuk-kai, director of Human Rights Monitor, said it was "an unprecedented deviation of normal police practices".

He said the protesters were only exercising their basic human rights for a peaceful demonstration. "The way the police cracked down on protesters was not proportionate," he said.

Earlier, at about 1.30pm, police threw a cordon around the government headquarters to surround hundreds of demonstrators on the first day of the Occupy Central movement.

Thousands of protesters then broke through the police lines and stormed onto Harcourt Road at about 4pm, about 12 hours after the Occupy movement kicked off in Tim Mei Avenue.

Traffic came to a standstill as demonstrators occupied the westbound and eastbound lanes.

At 7pm, New World First Bus and City Bus said 77 bus routes were temporarily suspended or diverted.

About half an hour later, the MTR Corporation said trains on the Tsuen Wan line and Island lines would not stop at Admiralty. The service was cut for two hours.

"It is totally unexpected. It's all about our pursuit of democracy. Beijing now sees it; the world now sees it; C.Y. Leung, do you see it?" Occupy co-founder Benny Tai Yiu-ting said as he greeted the crowd of thousands. Clifford Lo, Samuel Chan, Amy Nip, Chris Lau and Phila Siu



Enveloped by clouds of tear gas smoke, a protester strikes a defiant pose during yesterday's stand-off near the government headquarters in Admiralty. Photo: K.Y. Cheng

How Occupy leaders lost grip on protest

They lacked means to direct demonstrators, who were isolated by police

Joyce Ng, Jeffie Lam and Gary Cheung

The early start of Occupy Central, the geography of the protest site and the overnight police reinforcements meant it was difficult for Occupy leaders to take full command of the situation.

After police used tear gas, Occupy leaders called on protesters to retreat to Tamar Park, but some remained on the road.

Co-founder Chan Kin-man said the crowds that stormed on to Harcourt Road and Connaught Road Central were "not

under [Occupy's] control". "Their actions were not organised by us," Chan said.

The crowds on those roads were peaceful, he noted, and "it was the police who provoked them with tear gas".

Another co-founder, the Reverend Chu Yiu-ming, conceded that bringing forward the Occupy date had affected the movement's operation.

"A lot of our equipment was unable to be used, including the audio and portable toilets," Chu said. Their walkie-talkies had also not arrived. Police confiscated the audio equipment, including

amplifiers, saying they were not allowed at an unlawful assembly.

The lack of communication tools considerably weakened the command of Occupy leaders.

The original venue of Occupy was believed to be Chater Road in the heart of Central and near MTR stations. Tim Mei Avenue, isolated by busy roads from inner Admiralty and connected to the MTR only through footbridges, proved to be an unfavourable spot for a mass protest and was easy for the police to blockade.

Significant police reinforcements overnight and their closure of access points from Admi-

rality meant that protesters who turned up in the afternoon could not reach the core protest area.

Thousands of them, blocked by police, gathered near Fenwick Pier Street and Performing Arts Avenue, unable to see or hear the Occupy leaders. Democrat Lee Wing-tat tried to control the scene in this area, but without a speaker he could only shout and tell people to sit on the road.

The lack of command and the invisibility of Occupy leaders in the Fenwick Pier Street area proved crucial – dozens of youngsters soon became impatient and broke through police cordons, stormed Gloucester Road and tried to get to Tim Mei Avenue to join the Occupy crowd.

Not long after, another crowd at Admiralty Centre, where police stopped people from getting on to the footbridge to reach Tamar, also poured onto the road.

Ma Ngok, a political scientist at Chinese University, said Occupy leaders "should not be blamed" for bringing forward their campaign. "They were only riding on the developments of the class boycott," he said.

But he also noted that Occupy had originally planned to start with a letter-of-no-objection from police on October 1. "Now, without the letter, Occupy leaders put themselves in an unfavourable position, giving police an easy excuse to seal off the protest site and bar equipment".

No one even guessed the police would be so violent. We are unarmed ...

FELIX TANG, PROTESTER

released the gas at close range when surrounded by demonstrators at 6.50pm. They fired several rounds of tear gas while marching to government headquarters in Tim Mei Avenue.

The confrontation between protesters and police continued at the junction of Harcourt Road and Tim Mei Avenue. Another batch of protesters occupied a section of Queensway outside the Lippo Centre in Admiralty.

At 7.15pm, police issued a statement saying that protesters violently charged the police cordon outside the government headquarters. "After police repeated warnings and protesters refused to leave, police decided to escalate the use of force and tear gas was used to stop those



- 1-4 Police throw cordon lines there at about 1.30pm
- 5 A group of protesters storm onto Harcourt Road at 3.45pm
- 6 Large crowd of protesters occupy Harcourt Road at 4.10pm
- 7 Another group storm onto Queensway at 4.45pm

Police start firing tear gas at 5.58pm in areas including Harcourt Road, Connaught Road Central near City Hall and Statue Square after protesters scatter

Transport fears and strike call hit schools

Shirley Zhao and Peter So

Some schools in Central and Western district might suspend classes today with principals raising concerns about traffic arrangements.

The worries were doubled when the Professional Teachers' Union, which has 90,000 members, called on all teachers and even principals to boycott classes from today.

Dr Yip Wai-ming, principal of St Louis School in Sai Ying Pun, said the school might consider suspending classes today, depending on whether police had cleared protest scenes in Admiralty and Central.

"Now the traffic is all jammed up," said Yip. "It may be a problem for teachers and students to go to school tomorrow."

An Education Bureau spokesman said parents should listen to the morning news for updates.

Yip said the school would not stop teachers from joining the boycott and would not punish them. But he said these teachers must inform the school about their plans.

Albert Chung Chun-sing, secretary of the Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations in Southern district, said many schools, especially secondary, might also be affected, as many students and teachers needed to cross districts to go to school.

"Many parents are also worried if their children, especially senior ones, will join the protests without informing them, as the situation has escalated to such an extent," Chung said.

Tik Chi-yuen, chief executive of the Hong Kong Institute of Family Education, urged the Education Bureau to suspend classes at kindergartens and primary and secondary schools today because of possible traffic disruptions.

Fung Wai-wah, president of the Professional Teachers' Union, said the union started the teachers' strike campaign to express its anger towards the police use of "violence and weapons" to disperse protesters.

"The police have made themselves the enemy of the people," said Fung. "The PTU strongly condemns the crazy actions of the government and police."

Classical music gives way to brollies and barricades

Jeffie Lam, Stuart Lau, Samuel Chan and Joyce Ng

In the end, it wasn't energy bars, bottles of water or protective gear that sustained protesters into the night – it was determination.

Although it started earlier than expected, many protesters came prepared with food, umbrellas and goggles. Two tents were set up, signposted "The People's Toilets".

It was never intended to be violent. Chan Kin-man, one of the organisers, had earlier talked about live classical music performances to create a peaceful atmosphere for the sit-in.

But any thoughts of cellos and violins gave way to more practical needs: water bottles, metal barricades and umbrellas were what protesters grasped for as police laid siege to the crowd.

In the morning, protesters set up barricades at four locations to keep advancing officers at bay.

They moved plastic barriers left behind by the authorities to Tim Mei Avenue and Lung Wui Road, spending hours trying to fill them with water. Some tied metal barriers together to block the road, attaching open umbrellas to create a shield against pepper spray.

There was an almost palpable nervousness as rumours spread about police reinforcements and movements. There were many false alarms, with protesters rushing behind the barricades before police finally moved in.

Supporters brought supplies for the protesters – even though they did not plan to join the civil disobedience action themselves.

Mo Cheuk-yin did not take part yet he went to Tamar in the afternoon, carrying a bag of cling film, masks and ponchos to give to the protesters. "Hongkongers should stay united," said Mo, 38, a designer. "The government has completely ignored the people. Now police are resorting to violence. The city looks so strange."



Harrow International School Hong Kong

Sixth Form (Year 12) Open Evening

Thursday 16th October 2014, 7.30 – 9.30pm

Harrow International School Hong Kong opened in September 2012, and is the first international co-educational day and boarding school in Hong Kong. It blends elements of educational philosophy and practice from Harrow School in England with the needs of the diverse international community of Hong Kong.

In advance of applications for new Year 12 students for entry in August 2015, there will be an opportunity to attend presentations about the Sixth Form (Year 12) at Harrow Hong Kong and view the School on Thursday 16th October at 7.30pm.

The deadline for receipt of Year 12 applications for entry in August 2015 is 1st November 2014

To reserve a place for this Open Evening, please register through the School website: www.harrow-school.hk/events/SixthFormOpenEvening.aspx

For further information about the School, please visit the School website.

Harrow International School Hong Kong
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Leadership for a better world



OCCUPY CENTRAL - DAY 4

Few options left but to wait it out

After tear gas failed to dislodge the protesters, officials hope fatigue and public criticism will wear them down and force end to occupation

Gary Cheung, Amy Nip and Vivienne Chow

Both the Beijing and Hong Kong governments are pinning their hopes on the pro-democracy protests running out of steam due to fatigue and complaints from people inconvenienced by the demonstrations.

Sources close to both governments gave an indication of their thinking as uniformed police remained absent from affected areas such as Mong Kok and Causeway Bay. Few police have been seen near the protests since Monday, despite concerns about public order and further polarisation in the community.

The softy-sofy approach has been in place since riot police were withdrawn after the use of 87 rounds of tear gas overnight Sunday failed to break up



Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying

[CY Leung] will not resign, nor will the central government allow him to

GOVERNMENT SOURCE

demonstrations in Admiralty – and indeed prompted new protest zones to emerge.

Tsim Sha Tsui was the latest area affected, with a few dozen protesters blocking a section of Canton Road early yesterday, an area full of luxury goods stores popular with mainland tourists arriving for National Day.

A mainland researcher familiar with the central government's thinking said the best scenario would be for protesters to gradually pull out, worn down by fatigue and complaints from the public, and to be replaced by the police.

Hongkongers should seriously ponder the impact on people's livelihoods and business operations if the protests are prolonged," the researcher said.

And those that opened a shop in Hong Kong, liaison office chief Zhang Xiaoming (张晓明), added credence to the idea of a "wait-and-see" approach. Asked about the impact of the protest at a National Day reception, he said

only: "The sun rises as usual." A Hong Kong government source admitted there was little else the administration could do.

"We can't afford to adopt a high-handed approach to protesters again after the public outcry sparked by the use of tear gas on Sunday," the source said.

Meanwhile the prospects for dialogue between the government and protesters remain slim.

The Federation of Students had offered talks with Chief Secretary Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor – if Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying resigned first. An authoritative government source yesterday rejected the idea, but said the administration retained an open mind on the possibility of talks at "appropriate venues".

Lester Shum, the federation's deputy secretary general, said talks with Lam or even Beijing officials were possible – if they faced protesters outside government headquarters.

"If Leung does not step down by today, we will escalate the protests by spreading the Occupy movement to premises of other government departments," Shum said.

But the authoritative government source rejected the idea of Leung going – even if he wanted to. "The chief executive will not resign, nor will the central government allow him to step down," the source said.

And, dismissing rumours of discord at the top, the source said the government was "highly united", adding: "It is out of the question that the chief secretary adopts a softer stance while the chief executive is tougher."

Meanwhile criticism of the protests from business leaders grew yesterday, as the week-long national holiday began.

Michael Li Hon-shing, executive director of the Federation of Hotel Owners, accused the students of "making Hong Kong collapse". He said bookings at some Wan Chai hotels had been cancelled, though the full impact had not yet been calculated.

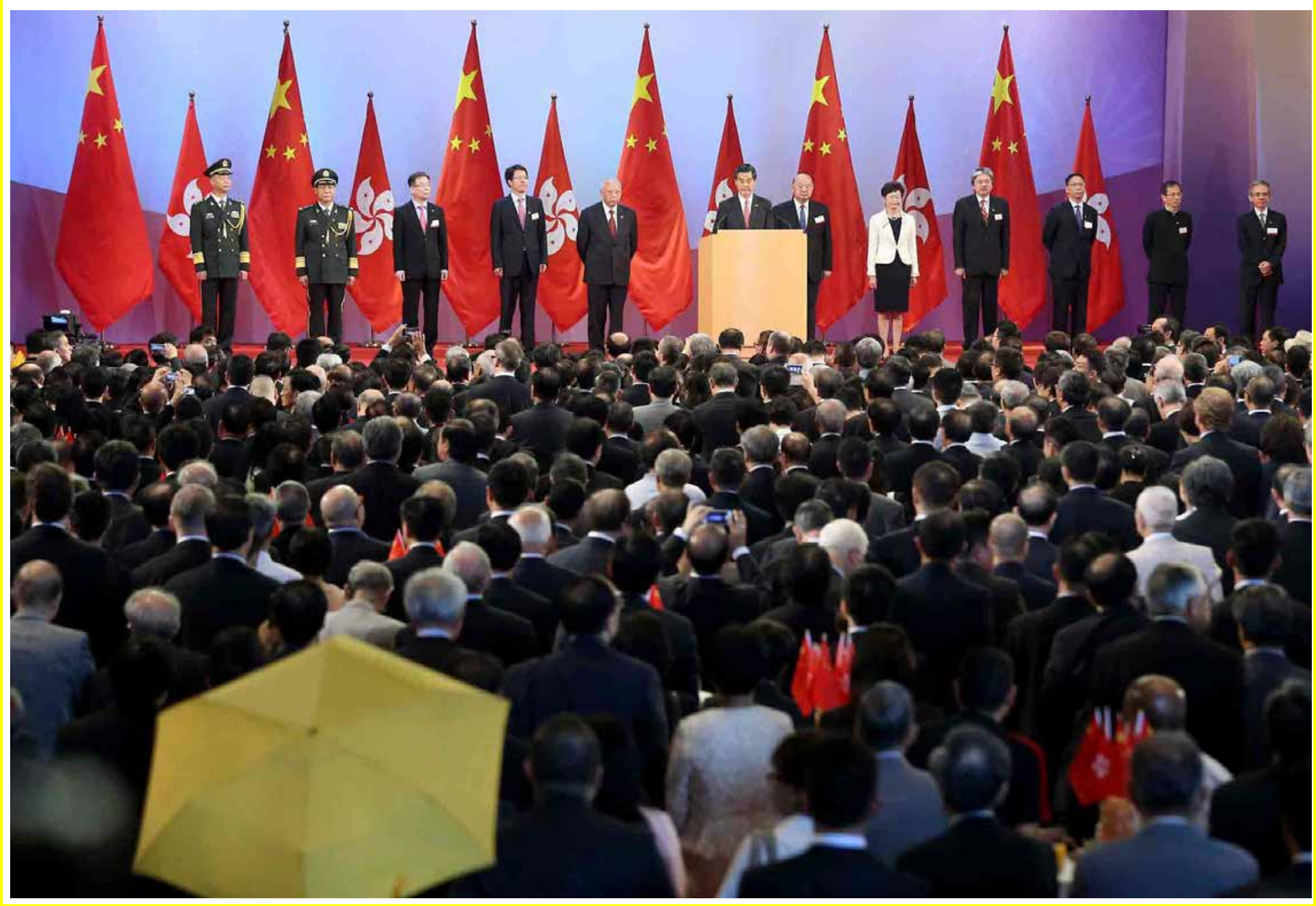
"People started dumping eggs [on protesters] because they are growing impatient," he said, referring to incidents at the Causeway Bay protest zone.

Staff at the Fuk Fung Dispensary in the Mong Kok protest zone said business was slow.

"Of course [the protest] has affected business," one shop assistant said. "Rents are expensive here. We can't pay rent or salaries without business, right?"

Meanwhile Chinese University vice chancellor Professor Joseph Sung Jao-yiu spoke of his fears when he saw Sunday's crackdown on protesters.

"I call upon all to refrain from using force... I urge... dialogue between the government and our students," Sung urged to students, staff and alumni.



'The sun rises as usual': Beijing's man

Peter So and Chris Lau

The sun may rise as usual, but Occupy Central hasn't felt any warmth from Beijing.

With city streets filled by democracy protests, Zhang Xiaoming (张晓明), director of the central government's liaison office in Hong Kong, responded for the first time yesterday to a barrage of media questions about the protests. He said with a slight smile: "The sun rises as usual."

Occupancy Central co-founder Dr Chan Kin-man disagreed. "To be honest, even if the sun has risen, we don't feel the warmth," he said.

"Dark clouds have been covering us, particularly in the past two years since Leung was sworn into office."

Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying and one of his predecessors, Tung Chee-hwa, were tight-lipped at the National Day flag-raising ceremony yesterday at the Convention and Exhibition Centre in Wan Chai.

In his opening remarks, Leung did not mention the mass protests or the Occupy movement directly.

He called for "peaceful, lawful, rational and pragmatic" means in pushing forward universal suffrage.

And he reiterated that a popular vote, which would allow the city's five million eligible voters to choose their next leader, would be an improvement from the current electoral system, which allows only 1,200 members of the election committee to vote.

Leung's remarks were greeted

with jeers from League of Social Democrats lawmaker "Long Hair" Leung Kwok-hung, who had ditched his trademark T-shirts and was dressed in a suit.

Chanting slogans, he called for Leung's resignation and for universal suffrage. Security staff escorted him off after about 30 seconds.

District councillor Paul Zimmerman, a former Civic Party member, brought a yellow umbrella to the ceremony – a symbol of the protest movement – as a silent statement against the police force's use of tear gas on the crowds who gathered on Sunday.

"CY, and the police commissioner owe Hong Kong an apology, nothing less than an apology, for what they have done," Zimmerman said.

Earlier yesterday, guests and officials arrived by ferry at the convention centre flag-raising ceremony to avoid the crowds of protesters.

While more people seemed to be pouring into the city's central district to take part in the civil disobedience movement, a carnival organised by the Home Affairs Department as part of National Day celebrations struggled to attract visitors.

The National Day Extravaganza at Victoria Park occupied four soccer pitches, but drew just a few hundred visitors.

An attempt by the Civil Human Rights Front to hold a National Day demonstration in the park was previously turned down because the Leisure and Cultural Services Department said the Home Affairs Department submitted the application first.

STREET TALK

Lynn Butler, teacher, bringing supplies to Mong Kok with her husband. "We just want to tell all you [students] that many Westerners in Hong Kong are proud and amazed... We really want to express our admiration and respect to this movement for democracy. In South Africa, where we are from, and the UK where we used to live, protests of this scale usually mean broken windows and stores lit on fire. We were originally here just to make money for retirement, but we are now deciding to stay for good. This is really an exciting period for Hong Kong."

Kristine Kwok and Teddy Ng

From the South China Sea to Tibet (西藏) and Xinjiang (新疆), the mainland is beset by problems brought on by foreign interference. Beijing had made it difficult for any other countries to lend support to the Hong Kong demonstrators as any support could be read as meddling in China's internal affairs.

Chinese foreign ministry officials also expressed concern over foreign interference during meetings with diplomats posted to the city, several diplomats have said in recent months. On Monday, Beijing underscored its point by sending an official letter to consulates in Hong Kong, reminding diplomats and their staff not to join the protests.

David Zweig, a professor of political science at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, said Beijing's habit of blaming domestic problems on foreign governments could have its roots in the administration's Marxist mentality.

"There is a strong viewpoint within Marxism that talks about the external having an impact through the internal," said Zweig, who studied Marxism in China.

"There are internal contradictions everywhere, but these contradictions don't have to turn into major problems until there are some external forces."

Beijing might be sensitive about what happens in Hong Kong because of the role the city has played in aiding opposition movements.

Deng Yuwen, a former editor of the Study Times, a newspaper affiliated with the Central Party School, said officials sometimes put the focus on foreign interference to sidestep their own responsibility.

"By saying there are foreign factors, officials may be held less accountable for the problems facing the government," Deng said. "Officials may know the other reasons behind the problem, but they will tell the public that foreign interference is to blame."

Caesar Chan, local student: "What better place than here, what better time than now?"

OCCUPY CENTRAL - DAY 4



(Clockwise from left): Leung Chun-ying at the ceremony, and Paul Zimmerman's yellow umbrella; the flag ceremony in Golden Bauhinia Square; a puppeteer, flags and a mock cinema, in Victoria Park; Scholarism's Joshua Wong (centre) in Golden Bauhinia Square. Photos: K.Y. Cheng, Jonathan Wong, Chris Lau



Signs of friction as protest sites extended

Staff Reporters

The occupation of Tsim Sha Tsui late on Tuesday and the flag-raising ceremony a few hours later revealed splits in strategies and frictions emerging among the growing number of protesters against Beijing's political reform framework.

Metal barricades and a truck were used to block a section of Canton Road in an apparently spontaneous sit-in by a few hundred protesters in Tsim Sha Tsui on Tuesday night.

Unlike the three other sit-in sites – Admiralty, Causeway Bay and Mong Kok – no campaign leaders came to give lectures and no marshals from the student groups or the Occupy Central movement could be spotted.

The supply station – which gave out face masks, umbrellas and refreshments – was run by non-student volunteers.

Lester Shum, deputy secretary general of the Federation of Students, said they could not stop people extending the protest to more sites but would call on supporters to remain in the three original areas.

And Joshua Wong Chi-fung, convenor of the student activist group Scholarism, said the sit-in in Tsim Sha Tsui had not been mobilised by them.

"The turnout... has far exceeded our expectations. We have not got enough resources to provide supplies to the [extra] site," he added.

At the National Day flag-raising ceremony in Wan Chai's Golden Bauhinia Square yesterday, protesters argued over the most effective tactics.

Scholarism members, who advocate peaceful protest, set up metal barricades at the entrances to the square overnight to prevent the ceremony being stormed by demonstrators. Before dawn, about 20 protesters arrived who appeared to favour a more confrontational approach.

A passionate debate with the Scholarism members ensued as they argued that they had a right to protest in a more radical way.

About 30 Scholarism members and radical protesters eventually were allowed past security and into the ceremony.

There, Scholarism members turned their backs, forming a cross with their arms signifying "no", as the national anthem, Hong Kong flags were raised and the national anthem played. They left as the flags were hoisted.

In contrast, the radical protesters yelled "Step down 689" when Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying entered the square. Leung was elected leader of the city by getting 689 votes from the 1,200-strong election committee.

Emily Tsang, Jeffie Lam, Chris Lau, Timmy Sung and Peter So

'Marxist outlook' explains Beijing's finger-pointing

Kristine Kwok and Teddy Ng

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Protesters in Mong Kok form their own security

Stuart Lau, Ernest Kao and Danny Mok

With no police around, protesters in Mong Kok have created a vigilante patrol, beefing up security around Nathan Road and Argyle Street, a spillover of the main occupation site in Admiralty.

Protesters jumped into action after a car buzzed through the crowd early Tuesday morning.

Trucks, vans and private cars were positioned to form barricades at entry points to the crossroads, while rubbish bins and bus stop poles were moved to the middle of both roads.

Adding to those barriers were seven double-decker buses left deserted in the initial hours of the protesters' surprise takeover of the major traffic junction.

The blockades stretched along 1km of Nathan Road, between Mong Kok and Waterloo roads.

Volunteers have also stepped up patrols to guard against any police intrusion and prevent further unexpected incursions.

At around 2am on Tuesday, protesters had to scatter clear of a Mercedes-Benz driven by Cheung Wai-ming, 59, through a section of Argyle Street near the junction with Nathan Road. No one was injured.

Cheung, who was later arrested on suspicion of dangerous driving, has been released on bail. He told media that he was exercising his citizen's right to use the road.

Man Ka-ho, who owns a logistics firm, asked his staff to park their trucks on Argyle Street.

Around 20 trucks and private cars had joined the "glorious mission", he said.

"When I saw the use of tear gas on named students in Admiralty and learned that some protesters would be in Mong Kok, I decided to come," Man said. "We are worried about the safety of the schoolchildren."

One of his employees said they had no fear. "It is a righteous thing to do. The police are not

protecting the students, so we should," he said, referring to a lack of police presence for two nights in a row.

Painted on his vehicles were such slogans as "You use a car to crash, we use cars to shield".

The roadblocks in Mong Kok and elsewhere could delay emergency services, some fear. Police have urged protesters to remove them.

Early yesterday, protesters said they found a man trying to remove some of their roadblocks.

In Causeway Bay, there has also been a backlash against the protesters. A 59-year-old woman was arrested yesterday for allegedly throwing two pieces of watermelon skin and a bag filled with water from her flat in Yee Wo Street, where thousands are staging a sit-in. The woman also allegedly assaulted police officers during her arrest.

The incident happened a day after three eggs and five oranges were thrown from the same building. Three girls were hit by the oranges.



Protesters in Mong Kok have barricaded the site. Photo: David Wong

Barriers removed for fire engines

Shirley Zhao and Ernest Ng

Protesters in Causeway Bay agreed to clear makeshift barriers from a section of the rallying site outside the Sogo shopping mall yesterday to allow fire engines to pass.

But Fire Services Department negotiators failed to secure a similar agreement with occupants of streets in Mong Kok. No talks have been held with demonstrators in Admiralty.

The talks followed an offer by protesters to set up "humanitarian corridors" where barriers could be removed quickly to give access for emergency vehicles.

But deputy chief fire officer Leung Wai-hung said it was "not as simple as a corridor" when it came to putting out a fire.

Fire rescue work needed enough ground-level space to set up apparatus such as ladders and elevated platforms, he said.

"In places where many people are gathering and a lot of stuff is placed on the ground, it's not easy to clear out a way quickly," Leung said, calling for protesters to open up more roads.



Officers tried but failed to tow away this bus. Photo: SCMP Pictures

POLICE CHIEF IN BID TO BOOST MORALE

Police chief Andy Tsang Wai-hung has praised his frontline officers for their handling of the Occupy Central protests on Sunday.

In an address to the officers at the central government offices in Tamar yesterday, Tsang, dressed in uniform, said: "There were criticisms and investigations. But I would like to tell you, you have not done anything wrong."

Loud applause could be heard in an 11-second video clip leaked to the media.

The participants were those who had been deployed to respond to the protesters on Sunday, during which 87 rounds of tear gas were fired.

Also at the meeting were Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying, Chief Secretary Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor and Secretary for Security Lai Tung-kuok. Leung praised the police for their hard work, while Lam said she appreciated the officers faced difficulties and that they were also "victims" of the political situation.

Police were criticised for using excessive force on Sunday. The use of tear gas, in particular, fanned the anger of the people and encouraged more of them to join the street protests.



Police Chief Tsang Wai-hung (right) meets frontline officers.

Meanwhile, Hampshire-based Cheung, the British company that supplies tear gas to the police, was reviewing its sales policy, The Guardian newspaper reported.

British government officials also made it clear they would review their policy if asked to approve future export licences for tear gas to Hong Kong.

However, British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond said it was largely immaterial because the gas could be bought in many other places, including the United States.

The Campaign against the Arms Trade said Britain had sold HK\$2.2 million worth of tear gas to the city in the past four years.

Luxury brands downbeat, tourists more divided

Staff Reporters

The National Day "golden week" holiday began yesterday on a quiet note, with prospects of the usual strong sales at prime shopping districts clouded by the spreading Occupy Central civil disobedience operation.

The sluggish start was bad news for luxury retailers, coming on top of falling sales this year due to anti-corruption policies on the mainland that put expensive gifting under scrutiny.

At Tsim Sha Tsui, a new Occupy sit-in formed late on Tuesday night. Brand-name stores had to close just as the holiday began, joining shops in Admiralty, Causeway Bay and Mong Kok that had been hit since Sunday.

The flagship stores of Coach and Dolce & Gabbana near Canton Road were among those that were shuttered yesterday.

"This upset people who have usual, hoping to target tourists, reported grimmer takings than previous National Day holidays.

New Luen Fai Medicine at Jardine's Bazaar, Causeway Bay, made less than HK\$100 in the morning. The pharmacy raked in tens of thousands of dollars a day during the holiday last year, the shopkeeper said.

"It is okay for students to fight for democracy, but it is not right to impose their opinions on others [by occupying the streets]," she said, voicing worries about when the sit-ins would end.



Many luxury outlets in the prime shopping districts remained closed yesterday. Photos: K.Y. Cheng

mainland's tough anti-bribery policies began to be felt. In August, sales of jewellery, watches and gifts decreased 6.1 per cent year on year.

Tourists had divided views about the inconvenience posed by the democracy movement.

Some, such as Qin Hong from Guizhou (贵州) province, said it had little impact on their plans. Qin, 23, said the wait at the Lo Wu checkpoint was very short in the morning. Her friend said: "Our Hong Kong friends advised us to stay away from Central. But from what we see here [in Cause-

way Bay], the situation is not as bad as we thought."

Ryan Ruan, 30, said his trip had not been affected since he arrived on Sunday. "It is actually more comfortable as there are fewer people on the streets."

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OCCUPY CENTRAL - DAY 22

Spinning out of control?



Protesters man the barricades in Mong Kok early yesterday. There have been violent clashes in the area since police reclaimed part of the rally site on Friday. Photo: Sam Tsang

Violent clashes between protesters and police have become a regular occurrence in Mong Kok

Phila Siu, Joyce Ng and Timmy Sung

Concerns are growing that the Occupy movement in Mong Kok has spun out of control and is on the verge of turning into a riot, after nights of violent clashes since police reclaimed part of the rally site on Friday.

New clashes erupted between protesters and police in Mong Kok early yesterday, just hours after Chief Secretary Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor announced that talks with student leaders were scheduled for tomorrow.

Some protesters tried to remove barricades on the junction of Nathan Road and Argyle Street shortly after midnight, prompting officers to warn them against charging police cordons.

Officers then used batons to counter the protesters' umbrellas. At about the same time, police reinforcements arrived and rushed into the protest zone to push the crowds back.

Images of protesters with blood streaming down their faces were widely circulated on social media.

One protester said he saw plainclothes policemen hitting protesters after they moved into the protest zone.

"I saw anti-triad officers hitting protesters with batons. Several protesters suffered head injuries and were bleeding. They also dismantled supply stations," said the protester, who gave his surname as Lo.

Another protester blamed police for the violence.

"I was here last night and the

police were hitting the protesters on their heads and arms with their batons. But the protesters were not doing anything," said the 26-year-old, who works at an elderly care centre.

Labour Party lawmaker Fernando Cheung Chiu-hung told a talk show yesterday that he was worried about the situation. "I have been to Mong Kok many times, and it is on the verge of a riot," he said. "But it is very simple to handle the situation. The government needs to respond to the public's demands."

Winnie Chiu Wai-yin, acting director of the police force's management services, said the Mong Kok protest zone was "very dangerous", with radical elements infiltrating the crowd.

On a radio programme, she called on people to stop charging

at police cordons, and said police "did not want to be embroiled in the political turmoil".

But the Federation of Students' deputy leader Lester Shum told the City Forum that protesters were holding up their hands or umbrellas when their heads were bloodied by police batons.

"If you say this is a riot, it was only caused by police who used force. Only [Chief Executive] Leung Chun-ying is able to control the movement now," he said.

Yvonne Leung Lai-kwok, another spokeswoman for the federation, also denied the movement had spun out of control.

She said that even when some protesters wanted to storm the roads, other protesters tried to stop them. But before they had the chance to do so, the police had used pepper spray, she said.

Secretary for Food and Health Dr Ko Wing-man told the protesters that violence was counterproductive. "I am very concerned about the recent direction of [Occupy], especially what seems to be evidence pointing to purposeful violence and attacks in Mong Kok," Ko said.

Dr Au Yiu-kai, medical head of the Occupy Central movement, said his team treated 13 protesters during the latest clashes.

I have been to Mong Kok many times, and it is on the verge of a riot

FERNANDO CHEUNG, LABOUR PARTY

"And seven of them sustained injuries to their heads with blood streaming down their faces. The police were hitting them with their batons. That was not minimum force as the police have claimed," Au said.

"Some of them refused to get treated in hospital because they feared they would get arrested. Hitting people with batons can cause concussion and fracture the skull. It could be fatal."

Police said four men aged 25 to 37 were arrested during the early hours of yesterday on suspicion of assault, possession of offensive weapons and disorderly conduct in a public place.

Police also said three protesters and five police officers were injured.

Hospital Authority figures showed that 20 people were injured from 10pm on Saturday to 6am yesterday due to the Occupy movement.

Credit-card spending hit by protests, Tsang warns

Financial secretary says retail and catering industries in occupied areas are suffering

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Credit-card spending has plunged as major shopping areas are hit by Occupy protests, the financial secretary says.

John Tsang Chun-wah did not provide statistics, but said the government had started to collect data to assess the impact of Occupy on the economy.

"Preliminary data shows that retail and catering industries in relevant districts have been hard hit," Tsang wrote on his blog yesterday. "Overall credit-card spending has dropped considerably."

The impact would soon be reflected in short- and medium-term economic data, Tsang said. While the financial market remained stable, Tsang said that some foreign investors were delaying decisions before making investments in Hong Kong.

He urged protesters to leave the streets as soon as possible, saying they had already made their voices heard.

"The clashes in Mong Kok ... can only make one believe that some people want to destroy public order just for the sake of it. They are messing around in the Occupy movement," he said.

A similar point was made by Secretary for Labour and Welfare Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, who said that shops and restaurants in Mong Kok and Causeway Bay had complained to him that they have had no customers at night.

"If the situation continues, we are worried because employers might lay off casual staff," Cheung said. "They won't hire temporary workers and may also ask employees to take outstanding leave."

He also said the Occupy protests had affected elderly and disabled people who needed to travel for regular medical appointments.

Terence Chong Tai-leung, an economics professor at Chinese University, agreed that Occupy had affected retail businesses because the protest sites were in areas frequented by tourists.

But Chong said Occupy was unlikely to affect the financial market, as it was not dependent on a physical area.

The upcoming Shanghai-Hong Kong Stock Connect scheme would even boost transactions, Chong said.

According to the Immigration Department, 1.09 million mainland tourists visited Hong Kong during the week-long holiday from National Day on October 1. This was 6.8 per cent higher than the same period last year.

But the number of registered package tours from the mainland had dropped by 20 to 30 per cent since August, according to the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong.

Don't incite others online, police warn protesters

Force says more arrests could be made after first person is charged for posts on internet forum

Samuel Chan and Ernest Kao

Police say more arrests could be made of those who use the internet to incite others to join the "unlawful" Occupy protests.

The warning came after a 23-year-old man was arrested in Tin Shui Wai on Saturday for posting messages on an online forum encouraging people to join an unlawful assembly, charge at police and block railways.

The man was charged with "access to computer with criminal or dishonest intent" and unlawful assembly after he was found to have joined the protests in Mong Kok on Friday, police said.

The suspect has been released on bail and investigations are ongoing.

At the daily press conference yesterday, the police public relations bureau head, Chief Superintendent Steve Hui Chun-tak, said more such arrests were possible and that it was a "very serious criminal offence" to "incite others" to join the protests.

Hui reiterated that most laws

that apply to the real world were applicable to the internet and said that the force would make arrests if there was adequate evidence.

Hui did not reveal the exact wording of what was posted online, but said the suspect "was inciting others to join an unlawful assembly in Mong Kok, to charge police cordons and to paralyse the railway".

The number of readers ... would dictate the severity of the offence

SOLICITOR ERIC CHEUNG

"These amount to incitement of a very serious nature, and therefore we made the arrest," said Hui.

This is understood to be the first such arrest since the Occupy

Central movement began on September 28.

Stephen Hung Wan-shun, a criminal lawyer and president of the Law Society, said the charge was more common than most would think. He also said police would not have to prove whether anyone had actually acted after reading the forum posting, but the suspect could argue the plausibility of incitement in court.

"The number of readers of the comment would dictate the severity of the offence," he said.

Eric Cheung Tat-ming, a solicitor and principal lecturer at the University of Hong Kong law faculty, said there was legal basis for such an arrest but it depended on how clear the criminal intent was.

"If you say, 'Let's go and attend a peaceful civil disobedience movement', then it's harder to prove there is criminal intent but if you say, 'Let's go charge at police' then the criminal intent is clearer," Cheung said. "We must note that this is all happening within the context of Occupy Central."

He said it was difficult to say whether it would set a precedent for further such arrests, but added it was possible that police would now be monitoring the internet more strictly. "The legal weighing of what you say online and what you say in real life is pretty much the same," he said.

In a similar case, a man was arrested in 2010 for posting a message on an online forum about bombing the central government's liaison office. His case reached the top court in March, but was quashed by judges.

The judges said the man had sent his message on the web as a "medium". But the charge laid on him - outraging public decency - required the act to be done in a "physical, tangible place", which did not encompass cyberspace.

BEATEN PROTESTER DEMANDS POLICE NAME OFFICERS

The Civic Party protester allegedly beaten by police in Admiralty last Wednesday will seek a judicial review if the force fails to disclose the identities of the officers involved by 10am today.

As he made a second report to Wan Chai police station yesterday, Ken Tsang Kin-chiu, a 39-year-old social worker, said police had not taken any action since he made a complaint before his release last week. "Despite having reported the serious crime... the assailants have not been arrested or prosecuted," Tsang's lawyer, Michael Vidler, said.

Vidler said police had made an "excuse" for the non-disclosure by saying Tsang had not made a formal complaint.

Last week, TVB cameras filmed several people - allegedly police officers - kicking and punching the unarmed Tsang in a dark corner in Admiralty's Tamar Park during the protest. Another clip showed Tsang had poured liquid on officers before he was arrested. Vidler has denied

allegations that urine and faeces were thrown. Vidler said he would seek a court order if police did not disclose the identities of the officers allegedly involved today. He would also seek a court declaration that the treatment handed out to Tsang was "cruel, inhuman or degrading, if not torture".

A police spokeswoman said Tsang's request was being dealt with in accordance with "established procedures".

Meanwhile, Chan Cho-kwong, chairman of the Junior Police Officers' Association, said his organisation had set up a concern group with the Police Inspectors' Association to provide financial aid, counselling or legal advice to any colleagues who needed help due to their recent heavy workload.

There were no plans to raise funds for the seven officers involved in Tsang's case yet, Chan said.



Ken Tsang outside the police headquarters in Wan Chai.

Joyce Ng

Occupy wants self-rule: state media

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Occupy Central organisers were accused of plotting for an independent Hong Kong in a commentary published in state media yesterday.

The article penned by "He Yi-min", in Communist Party mouthpiece the *People's Daily*, said the demonstrators' slogan of "our fate should be decided by us" revealed the true intentions of the action's "organisers and controllers".

"What they want is not electoral democracy or the 'high-degree of autonomy' under 'one country [two systems]', rather, they want Hong Kong to act on her own", have 'self-determination' and to even be 'independent'," it said.

The commentary mentioned the chairman of Next Media, Jimmy Lai Chee-ying, and several

other Occupy campaigners, accusing them of working with Taiwan's pro-independence activists to plan the Occupy movement.

Professor Dong Likun, a senior research fellow at the Institute of Hong Kong and Macau Affairs, a think tank under the State Council's Development Research Centre, echoed the commentary. Dong said the city's opposition politicians were pro-Washington or pro-London, and if any of their members were given executive power, they would lead Hong Kong away from the mainland, which could be viewed as pursuing independence.

"To topple the present Hong Kong SAR administration is not simply about removing Leung Chun-ying," Dong said, referring to the chief executive. "It is about the Occupy movement attempt-

ing to overturn an administration that is in alignment with the central government [in Beijing]."

State media also widely carried two commentaries on the issue, with the author listed as "Guoping", an apparent pen name which translates as "national peace" or "state's view".

One said the movement was ultimately a violent protest, and the second reasserted Beijing's claim that foreign powers were working behind the scenes.

They want Hong Kong 'to act on her own' ... and to even be 'independent'

PEOPLE'S DAILY COMMENTARY

The US and Britain had pushed the unrest to its current level, challenging China's national dignity and interest, it said.

State Councilor Yang Jiechi (楊潔篪) discussed the Hong Kong crisis when he met US Secretary of State John Kerry in Boston for two days of talks.

A senior US State Department official said Yang and Kerry had engaged in a "non-combative" yet "direct and candid" exchange over a range of issues, including Hong Kong.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said Yang had asked the US to refrain from supporting Occupy Central, Xinhua said.

"We are resolutely opposed to all kinds of illegal activities that undermine Hong Kong's rule of law and social order and firmly support the SAR government in handling these in accordance with the law so as to safeguard Hong Kong's social stability," Yang was quoted as saying.



A 23-year-old man was arrested for an online post that encouraged people to charge police during Occupy protests. Photo: Sam Tsang



Tourists focus on Hong Kong from a Peak vantage point. Photo: Edward Wong



The Bird's Nest and Water Cube in double exposure in Beijing. Photo: Simon Song



International Commerce Centre peeks out from storm clouds. Photo: Felix Wong



A security guard and police protect the government headquarters. Photo: May Tse



A vessel is grounded off Butterfly Beach in Tuen Mun. Photo: Dickson Lee



An elderly woman is oblivious to passing marathon runners. Photo: David Wong



A pedestrian crosses a Causeway Bay road in heavy rain. Photo: Bruce Yan



A lone protester stands defiant amid tear gas in Admiralty. Photo: K. Y. Cheng

SHUTTERBUGS

Our photographers were asked to come up with their favourite shots of the past 12 months – a year that has seen the Occupy Central movement, sporting events galore, foul weather and a continuing influx of tourists, and in Beijing the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit.

Our snappers take thousands of photos every year and only a few make it to the pages of the newspaper.

They have chosen these as their favourites, though not necessarily the most newsworthy or indeed those published.

This page is dedicated to them.



A giant protest umbrella is laid out in Causeway Bay. Photo: Martin Chan



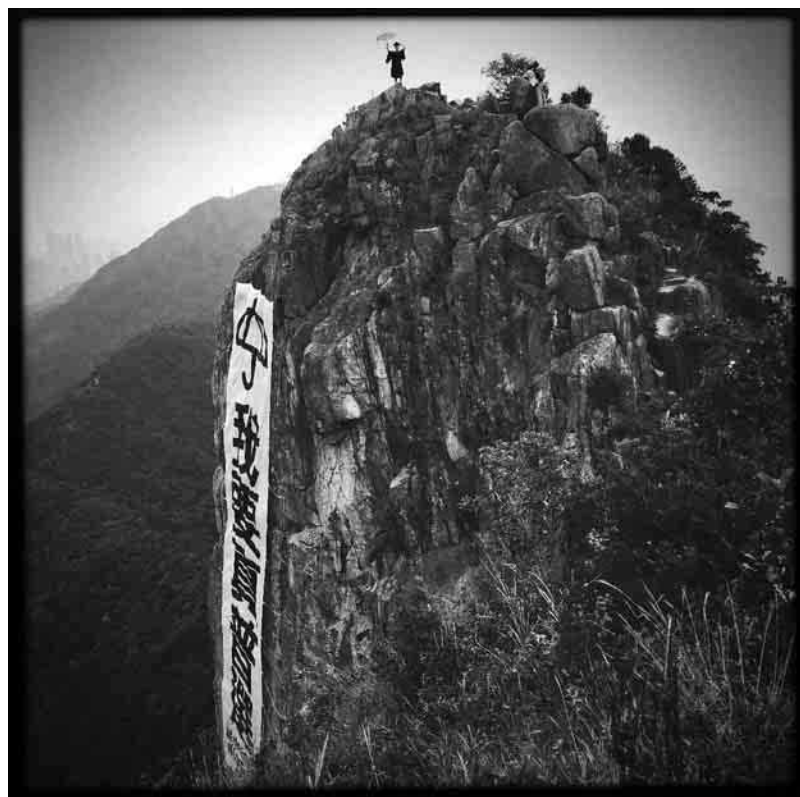
Taking part in a Valentine's Day display at Times Square. Photo: Sam Tsang



A mountain biker tests the trails on Tai Mo Shan. Photo: Jonathan Wong



A couple walk across flooded Leighton Road in Causeway Bay. Photo: Edmond So



An Occupy banner and a student with an umbrella on Lion Rock. Photo: Robert Ng



A boy holds a candle at the June 4 vigil in Victoria Park. Photo: Nora Tam