

'Black terror' on rise in Hong Kong, official says



Mak Chin-ho, assistant commissioner of police operations in Hong Kong, displays a gasoline bomb confiscated during the weekend's unauthorized assemblies, at a news conference at police headquarters in Wan Chai on Monday. [Photo/China Daily]

After another weekend of destructive unrest, officials and members of the public of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region condemned the violence that has dragged the city into chaos without a foreseeable end.

Hong Kong Secretary for Security John Lee Ka-chiu said a "black terror" had taken hold over the past weekend as the violence became extraordinarily serious and terrorized the city, which "completely undermined the city's rule of law".

Lee made the remark at an interdepartmental news conference on Monday.

Some 100 gasoline bombs were hurled at police officers by violent radicals over the weekend. Many rioters set fires in different locations across the city. They

attacked police officers with bricks and corrosive liquids. Such acts pose a serious threat to public security, Lee said.

Violent protesters attacked people whose views differ from their own, creating an atmosphere of “black terror” in Hong Kong, Lee said.

Authorities have referred to the term terrorism in commenting on the city’s prolonged protests against the now-shelved extradition amendment bill.

In mid-August, a spokesman for the nation’s top authority on the city’s affairs—the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council—warned that violence has shown the “first signs of terrorism” in the SAR.

Facing such a severe situation, Lee urged the Hong Kong public to speak out against violence.

Finding an excuse for violence equals encouraging violence, Lee said. It will only push Hong Kong closer to the verge of losing control, he added.

Over the weekend, 159 people were detained on suspicion of committing various offenses, including possessing offensive weapons, taking part in an unauthorized assembly and obstructing or assaulting police officers, police said at a news conference on Monday.

Police said 1,117 arrests had been made in relation to the violent protests that started in June.

Radicals have brazenly subverted the rule of law and disrupted order, Chief Secretary for Administration Matthew Cheung Kin-chung said.

The government and police will strictly follow up on all those illegal acts and bring the offenders to justice, Cheung pledged.

In another development, Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang on Monday dismissed remarks from an EU official and urged the European Union to “distinguish right from wrong”.

Geng was speaking at a news conference after EU diplomatic chief Federica Mogherini talked about the situation in Hong Kong on Friday.

The protests in Hong Kong have turned radical and violent and have challenged

the rule of law and order in Hong Kong, Geng said, adding they have seriously threatened the lives and property of Hong Kong residents, and have violated the red line of the “one country, two systems” principle.

“If such serious and violent crimes happened in Europe, I believe no European country would just sit and ignore them,” he said.

Also over the weekend, radical protesters paralyzed traffic and disrupted operations at Hong Kong International Airport, where 25 flights were canceled on Sunday, according to Secretary for Transport and Housing Frank Chan Fan.

And more than a third of the city’s 90 subway stations were damaged.

Chan said it was “absolutely unacceptable” for radicals to ignore the court’s interim injunction against protests at the airport and on the subway network.

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