

The Hong Kong Government's View

The government's commissioner in the United States says the arrests of people "in unauthorized assemblies" have nothing to do with the coronavirus.

April 24, 2020

To the Editor:

Re "With Coronavirus as Cover, Hong Kong Is Targeting Activists" (news article, April 23):

The recent arrests of people for taking part in unauthorized assemblies last year have nothing to do with Covid-19 as suggested in your article but everything to do with upholding the rule of law.

As in the United States, everyone in Hong Kong is equal before the law. Cases will not be handled any differently owing to the political beliefs or background of the people involved.

Recent comments by the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in Hong Kong on the operation of the Legislative Council should be seen from the perspective of the constitutional setup of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

As a special administrative region of China, Hong Kong enjoys a high degree of autonomy and comes directly under the Central People's Government, according to Article 12 of the Basic Law. Concerns about the failure of the House Committee of our Legislative Council to elect its chairman after 15 meetings over the last six months are legitimate from the perspectives of our Constitution, governance and operation, and are in full compliance with our constitutional order under "one country, two systems."

Like elsewhere in the world, the Hong Kong government is devoting most of its time and energy to combating Covid-19, keeping its citizens safe, preventing the spread of the virus inside and out of Hong Kong, and gladly sharing our knowledge on our very effective strategies to detect, isolate, trace and treat Covid-19 infections and possible carriers.

At the same time, we must also ensure the smooth functioning of government and our legal system, both of which are fundamental pillars of Hong Kong's success.

Eddie Mak
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The writer is Hong Kong's commissioner in the United States.