

July in Hong Kong

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## Mainland

### Clamp down on all anti-China forces', says Xia Baolong

At an online forum discussing Chinese President Xi Jinping's July 1 speech held by the Chinese Association of Hong Kong and Macao Studies in Beijing, director of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office Xia Baolong said anyone who opposes China and disrupts Hong Kong must face severe punishments and that people should stay vigilant and be watchful of anti-China troublemakers who have not given up their 'evil intentions'. He said all Hong Kong and Macao residents should guard against anti-China troublemakers and defend the two SARs from the United States and other Western forces. [The Standard](#) [SCMP](#) [RTHK](#) [Ming Pao](#) [HKEJ](#) [Sing Tao Daily](#) [Wen Wei Po](#) [RFA](#) [VOA](#) [Xinhua](#) [Global Times](#), Jul 19

### Top Beijing diplomat urges foreign governments to present Hong Kong objectively

Liu Guangyuan, the commissioner of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Hong Kong, urged foreign consulates and businesses to help present the city around the world in a more objective manner as Chinese President Xi Jinping has promised a long-term commitment to maintaining the 'one country, two systems' governing principle. He also said that they should seek to protect and make contributions to Hong Kong. [SCMP](#), Jul 6

## Foreign Policy / International Relations

### UN human rights watchdog urges Hong Kong to repeal national security law

The UN Human Rights Committee released a 12-page report after reviewing Hong Kong's human rights situation. It expressed 'grave concern' about an 'overly broad interpretation' and 'arbitrary application' of the Beijing-imposed National Security Law. It urged Hong Kong to repeal the legislation and in the meantime refrain from applying it as it is threatening civil rights protected by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It also called on the authorities to establish a fully independent mechanism to conduct a proper investigation into complaints into misconduct or abuse of power by the police during the 2019 unrest. The SAR government prepared a 6 300-word statement to reject suggestions made by the UNHCR. It strongly opposes what it called unfair and unsubstantiated criticisms from the watchdog. [SCMP](#) [The Standard](#) [Ming Pao](#) [HKEJ](#) [Sing Tao Daily](#) [RFA](#) [The Witness](#) [Reuters](#) [UNHCR's report](#) [Government's statement](#) Jul 28

### Top US envoy rebukes China's crackdown in farewell speech

Hanscom Smith, who completed his three-year term as the Consul General of the US in Hong Kong, urged China to ease political pressure on Hong Kong, warning that the 'crude and chilling' use of the NSL threatened its role as an international hub. The NSL and electoral reforms imposed by Beijing had destroyed and dismantled the freedoms and autonomy the city was promised in the Sino-British Joint Declaration. He complained that routine diplomatic activities were characterised as 'interference' and diplomats have been threatened under the security law. The Commissioner's Office strongly condemned Smith's remarks, saying that he has slandered the Chinese central government's policies towards Hong Kong and vilified the successful practice of 'one country, two systems'. [SCMP](#) [The Standard](#) [HKEJ](#) [HK01](#) [Reuters](#) [OCMFA's remarks](#) [Government's statement](#) Jul 12

### UN body grills Hong Kong officials over use, scope of national security law

On the first day of a 3-day session tasked with reviewing Hong Kong's implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Geneva-based United Nations Human Rights Committee fired questions to the Hong Kong delegation about the use of the national security law, the colonial-era sedition law and whether the prosecutions comply with the city's international duty to respect human rights. Head of the delegation, Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Erick Tsang, responded in a video call that the national security law introduced by Beijing in 2020 upholds the rights and freedoms of people and high degree of autonomy of the SAR. [SCMP](#) [HKFP](#) [RTHK](#), Jul 7

### Vatican envoy in Hong Kong warns Catholic missions to prepare for China crackdown

Monsignor Javier Herrera-Corona, the Vatican's unofficial representative in HK, told some 50 Catholic missions before finishing his six-year posting in March that the freedoms they had enjoyed for decades were over. He warned them to protect their missions' property, files and funds as China tightens its control over Hong Kong, which could lead to mainland-style restrictions on religious groups. [Reuters](#), Jul 5

### European, UK, US and Australian officials call for China to honour HK commitments

EU's foreign policy spokeswoman, tweeted that the EU 'reiterates its concerns at the removal of fundamental freedoms previously enjoyed by the people of HK'. British Prime Minister said Britain would do all it could to hold Beijing to its commitments on Hong Kong's democratic rights and China had failed to comply with its commitment to respect 'one country, two systems'. Last British governor Chris Patten criticised Hong Kong authority suppressing Hong Kong people, undermining the rule of law and attacking press freedom with the National Security Law. Antony Blinken, Secretary of State of the United States, said HK and Beijing authorities no longer view democratic participation, fundamental freedoms, and an independent media as part of the promised autonomy. Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong said

Australia remains deeply concerned by the continuing erosion of HK's rights, freedoms and autonomy since the imposition of the National Security Law. [Reuters](#), Jul 1

### **Foreign Ministry slams Western countries' 'outdated colonial' remarks**

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said Britain and the United States are not qualified to comment on a prosperous, stable and united Hong Kong. He said they often talk about 'democracy and human rights,' but turn a blind eye to their own serious problems and misdeeds. Meanwhile, the Commissioner's Office of the Chinese Foreign Ministry in the HKSAR said that the western countries' hysteria will only make people around the world see more clearly their arrogance, hegemony-oriented thinking, their hypocrisy and double standards. [GT1](#) [GT2](#) [MFA](#) [OCMFA](#), Jul 1

## **Domestic Policy / Politics**

### **Government launches public consultation for Policy Address**

The government announced that it will conduct about 30 consultation sessions to listen to views and suggestions of legislators, representatives of various sectors and members of the public as part of a public consultation for Chief Executive John Lee's 2022 Policy Address. Lee will deliver his first Policy Address on October 19. [The Standard](#) [SCMP](#) [RTHK](#) [Ming Pao](#) [HKEJ](#) [Sing Tao Daily](#) [Xinhua](#), Jul 26

### **National security arrests exceed 200**

According to the latest crime statistics released by the Police, a total of 201 people were arrested for allegedly committing acts endangering national security in the first two years since the Beijing-imposed national security law came into force. As of mid-July, the police received more than 3'800 messages through its recently revamped Counter-terrorism Reporting Hotline. [HKFP](#) [The Standard](#) [HKEJ](#) [Sing Tao Daily](#) [Wen Wei Po](#) [Government press release](#) Jul 26

### **Surge in teachers quitting leads to hiring difficulties for schools for certain subjects**

Secretary for Education Christine Choi admitted that some schools were facing difficulties in hiring teachers for certain subjects such as English language and home economics. The Education Bureau revealed in May that the number of teachers who had left public and direct subsidy schools had jumped to 4 050 in the current academic year, a 70% increase from 2 380 in the previous one. [SCMP](#) [RTHK](#) [The Standard](#) Jul 18.

### **Patriotic Education Centre to host classes for students from September**

Patriotic Education Centre is set to begin hosting national education courses for both teachers and students of primary and secondary schools in September. Chief Executive John Lee said teenagers are successors of the 'one country, two systems' enterprise, and their national identity needs to be 'nurtured' since young. [SCMP](#) [RTHK](#) [Ming Pao](#) Jul 18

### **John Lee to set up 4 task forces to tackle key livelihood issues**

At his first Q&A session in the LegCo, Chief Executive John Lee pointed to his results-oriented governance principle and said that he will set up four working groups to tackle intergenerational poverty, land supply, district affairs and the production of public housing. Lee said he would revive a government think tank, to be renamed the Chief Executive's Policy Unit, to gauge local public sentiment and to help with policymaking. He also proposed meeting with lawmakers on a monthly basis. [SCMP](#) [HKFP](#), Jul 6

### **Overseas delegation a part of 'tell HK's story right' plan**

Responding to lawmakers' enquiry on how he would 'tell Hong Kong's story right', Lee said he will send officials overseas to promote and 'speak out' about Hong Kong's achievements, as well as cite facts when refuting false allegations made by foreign forces. Analysts said Lee and some other principal officials, still under the US sanctions, would face difficulty in visiting important trade partners of Hong Kong such as Europe and the US. [TS](#), Jul 2

## **Economy / Finance**

### **Hong Kong to report quarterly GDP shrank from year earlier**

Financial Secretary Paul Chan wrote on his blog saying that he expected the economy to weaken in the second half of the year, citing external factors such as rising global inflation, interest rate hikes in the US and the war in Ukraine. The government will 'inevitably revise down' its full-year forecast in the middle of next month. However, he expressed confidence in the economic outlook with the resumption of international events. [RTHK](#) [SCMP](#) [Ming Pao](#) [Wen Wei Po](#) [Bloomberg](#) [Chan's blog](#) Jul 31

### **Hong Kong hires officer in Europe to attract family offices**

The government will station an officer in Brussels to encourage European family offices to invest in the city and use it as a gateway to the Greater Bay Area. The Hong Kong Economic Trade Office in Brussels said they have contacted many wealthy families in the EU during the handover events. The new officer will handle promotional work in Germany, France, Italy, **Switzerland** and other European countries to attract family offices to invest in Hong Kong. [SCMP](#), Jul 18

### **De facto central bank buys \$12.7 billion to defend peg**

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority stepped into the market and bought HK\$12.796 billion (EUR1.63 billion) to stop the local currency from further weakening, for the first time in nearly a month. Since May 12, the HKMA has intervened in the market 15 times this year. [The Standard](#) [SCMP](#) [WSJ](#) Jul 15

### **Hong Kong's Top Market Regulator Alder to Join UK Watchdog**

Hong Kong's longest-serving market regulator Ashley Alder is unexpectedly leaving his post to become chair of the UK's Financial Conduct Authority, marking one of the highest-profile departures from the Asian financial hub. His departure comes as the regulator faces an increasingly complex environment -- with a new listing regime for blank-check companies, the emergence of digital assets, and green finance initiatives. The city is seeking to lure more initial public offerings, especially from mainland Chinese companies as political tension makes it harder for those firms to raise money in the US. [Bloomberg](#), Jul 8

### **Swap Connect on way as ETF trade kicks off**

China and Hong Kong will launch a new 'Swap Connect' scheme in six months, allowing mutual access to interest rate swaps trading to promote financial derivatives markets, and also upgrade a separate currency swap agreement. This came as the northbound trading of the ETF Connect saw 150 million yuan (EUR21.46 million) turnover and the southbound link recorded HK\$84.13 million (EUR10.28 million) worth of transactions on its debut yesterday, while the Bond Connect scheme celebrated its five-year anniversary. Only northbound trading will be permitted at the initial stage. [TS](#) [Bloomberg](#), Jul 7

### **Peg would act as bridge in event of finance war**

Former chief executive of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority Joseph Yam said Hong Kong should maintain its peg to the US dollar as the financial hub would be able to bridge capital flows between China and the US should there be a financial war between the two superpowers. Yam said the role of Hong Kong is to protect the financial security of the mainland. He stressed that Hong Kong will always have a deep understanding of the 'one country, two systems' and continue to be an international financial hub in the years ahead. Hong Kong's 'huge' foreign exchange reserves, about US\$440 billion (EUR431 billion), are enough to maintain the linked exchange rate system with the US dollar even as America's rising interest rates lead to capital outflows. [Bloomberg](#) [Global Times](#), [TS](#), Jul 4 & 25

## **Culture / Innovation / Technology**

### **Beware of 'destructive forces' in industry, warns John Lee to reporters**

In a speech at the Hong Kong News Awards, Chief Executive John Lee said some people used journalism as a tool for achieving their own goals or political gains, or used journalistic work as a pretext to endanger national security. He added that the government certainly has the responsibility to combat 'the destructive forces that polluted journalistic work'. Ronson Chan, Chairman of the Hong Kong Journalist Association, said that Lee's remarks are serious accusations and hoped that he could explain the grounds clearly. [SCMP](#) [Ming Pao](#) [HKEJ](#) [HK01](#) Jul 25

### **Books of social movements disappear while Xi emerges in book fair**

The 7-day annual book fair, the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition after the implementation of the national security law, opened its door on 20 July. Unlike previous years, books related to the 2019 anti-extradition bill protests, the 2014 Umbrella Movement and June 4 Incident were nowhere to be seen. Meanwhile, books related to national security law and Chinese President Xi Jinping were among the titles being stacked up, including a 14-page speech Xi delivered during his visit to Hong Kong to mark the July 1 handover anniversary. [Ming Pao](#) [Wen Wei Po](#) [HK01](#) [VOA](#) Jul 21

### **Independent 'HK book fair' axed after organisers allegedly accused of lease violation**

HongKongers' Book Fair has been axed a day before its official launch due to contract termination. The organiser cited the property owner saying that the event had already 'drawn too much attention on social media,' and accused them of subletting the premises to other publishers and endangering visitors. Some independent publishers have been rejected from participating in the flagship Hong Kong Book Fair this year, including Hillway Press, Sun Efforts and Humming Publishing. In response, Hillway Press, a publisher known for publishing politically sensitive books, initiated HongKongers' Book Fair which has attracted around a dozen exhibitors. [HKFP](#) [The Standard](#) [Ming Pao](#) [HKEJ](#) [Sing Tao Daily](#) [InMedia](#) [HK01](#) [RFA](#) Jul 14

### **Thousands throng Palace Museum to see precious relics**

Thousands of people flocked to the HK Palace Museum for a glimpse of about 900 relics and national treasures on loan from Beijing. Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism Kevin Yeung said the museum can play a role in telling Chinese stories and promoting cultural exchanges. [SCMP](#) [RTHK](#) [TS](#), Jul 4

## **COVID-19**

### **Hong Kong to cut hotel quarantine with health code, report says**

The government plans to cut hotel quarantine for arrivals with the introduction of a two-colour health code system. It is considering moving to five days of hotel quarantine, after which arrivals will be issued with a

so-called yellow health code for two days that would prohibit them from entering high-risk areas. Another option under consideration is four days of hotel isolation followed by three days of yellow code restrictions. Meanwhile, Executive Council member Ko Wing-man said authorities should give yellow vaccine pass codes to close contacts and people who are subject to compulsory tests to prevent them entering high-risk venues. [SCMP Bloomberg Oriental Daily Wen Wei Po HK01](#), Jul 25

### **Health code to be introduced first, quarantine-free travel to be expected by November**

Chief Executive John Lee said the first stage of the upcoming China-style health code system will only apply to those infected with Covid-19 and incoming travellers, but did not rule out possible expansion in the future. He neither confirmed nor denied whether authorities are giving up on real-name registration for the LeaveHomeSafe app. Meanwhile, Secretary for Health Lo Chung-mau said conditional quarantine-free travel could be allowed by November in time for a global bankers' summit to be held in the city. [HKFP The Standard – Lo The Standard – Lee Ming Pao – Lo Wen Wei Po Bloomberg](#) Jul 14

### **Circuit-breaker system switched off as Hong Kong ends Covid flight ban chaos**

The government announced that starting Thursday, the 'circuit-breaker mechanism' that banned airline routes that brought infected passengers to the city will end until further notice. The measure will help to reduce the impact on travel and stop transmission into the community from imported cases in a more precise manner with the least social cost. An updated testing regimen will require arrivals to take an additional PCR test on the third day when they are quarantined in designated quarantine hotels. [TS RTHK SCMP HKFP](#), Jul 7

## **Macao**

### **Two-week consolidation period after COVID lockdown**

Macao will start a two-week consolidation period – bridging partial lockdown and business as usual. Nucleic acid tests will continue, as will restrictions for certain types of commercial and industrial businesses. [Macao News The Macau Post Macau Daily Times](#) Jul 20

### **UN Human Rights Committee highlights concerns about political rights and lockdowns**

The UNHRC has questioned Macao about excluding pro-democracy candidates from the 2021 legislative elections, and expressed 'serious concerns' regarding possible violations of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It also expressed concerns about the 'very severe measures' of confinement imposed after the Covid-19 outbreak. [Macao News](#) Jul 18

### **Despite pandemic European businesses will still have future opportunities within GBA**

European businesses in Macao still have opportunities for new ventures within the Greater Bay Area, Rui Pedro Cunha, the newly elected president of the Macau European Chamber of Commerce (MECC) board of directors said. The MECC president pointed out that there are 'new opportunities' for European businesses within the Greater Bay Area and the Hengqin cooperation zone, with the chamber aiming to fully support members willing to invest in these areas. [Macao Business](#), Jul 5

### **Macao halts transport, closes casinos, tells residents to stay home**

Macao announced on 10 July a weeklong shutdown of its casinos and non-essential businesses as it confronted its worst coronavirus outbreak, lockdown then extended until 22 July. Only government-approved sectors such as supermarkets, restaurants and medical facilities can remain open. Residents must stay home. Rule breakers are liable to be jailed for up to two years. [HKFP The Standard Macao News SCMP HK01 Reuters](#) Jul 11 and 18

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