

Tens of thousands march through HK, defying order

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Protesters march in Hong Kong yesterday.

Photo: AP

Tens of thousands of Hong Kongers yesterday marched through the center of Hong Kong Island to the vicinity of government headquarters, ignoring a police-approved end point and defying a ruling that shortened the planned route.

The march marked the sixth straight week of anti-government rallies that have put increasing pressure on the Hong Kong government.

The organizer, the Civil Human Rights Front said that the rallies, which have drawn hundreds of thousands of people, were held to show support for demands including the withdrawal of legislation that would allow extraditions to China, amnesty for arrested protesters and the resignation of Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam (林鄭月娥), who is backed by Beijing.

The Appeal Board on Public Meetings and Processions on Saturday ruled that the march, originally planned to end at the Court of Final Appeal in Central, must finish in the Wan Chai district, citing potential difficulties in crowd control.

However, marchers ignored the ruling, and police retreated and shifted their barricades to allow the mass of protesters past the Wan Chai end point.

Shopkeepers along the route supplied marchers with water and other drinks as the temperature in the territory hovered above 30°C.

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Barricades surrounding the police station in Wan Chai were converted into so-called “Lennon Walls,” spontaneous message boards adorned with brightly colored sticky labels.

Pro-democracy lawmaker Claudia Mo (莫國光) said that protesters wanted Lam to pledge not to target people who took part in the rallies.

“We would like her to say that there will be no prosecution of the protesters arrested, that there will be general amnesty in this very sad saga,” Mo said.

“She refuses in the name of the rule of law,” she said.

Lam will not resign and will not make any further concessions to the protesters, Hong Kong Executive Council Convener Bernard Chan (陳健波) said in an interview with the New York Times published on Friday.

The chief executive would consult with different sectors of the Hong Kong population and would concentrate on drafting a broad policy address for the middle of October, the report quoted Chan as saying.

Kingston Cheung, a 17-year-old student who has taken part in the protests since they started on June 9, said he marched yesterday to voice opposition to the government’s handling of previous protests.

“The focus of the protests has been about the extradition bill, but we are also starting to see how the government and police have mishandled them,” he said. “The abuse of power by the police has added to the public’s anger.”

Source: [Taipei Times - 2019/07/22](#)