



CONTENTIOUS BANNER. Students walk beneath a black banner reading “Hong Kong Independence” in Chinese at the Chinese University of Hong Kong campus in Hong Kong. Banners supporting independence for Chinese-controlled Hong Kong appeared on the campus at the start of classes, rekindling tensions over free speech in the semiautonomous city. (AP Photo/Kin Cheung)

Independence banners on Hong Kong campus renew tensions

HONG KONG (AP) — Banners supporting independence for Chinese-controlled Hong Kong appeared on a university campus at the start of classes, rekindling tensions over free speech in the semiautonomous city.

The black banners declaring “Hong Kong Independence” in English and Chinese were put up around the Chinese University of Hong Kong campus.

The school quickly took them down but more were put up a day later, according to local media reports.

One had remained strung up over a busy central square in early September. Posters on a nearby wall said, “Fight for our homeland. Fight for Hong Kong independence.”

It’s unclear who was responsible, but student leaders have been wrangling with the university administration to keep them up.

University officials say the banners are

illegal while the student union says they should be allowed to discuss current issues.

Hong Kong, a former British colony, maintains civil liberties unseen on mainland China, including freedom of speech following its 1997 handover, but many residents fear Beijing is tightening its grip.

Young activists started promoting the once-unthinkable notion of independence from mainland China after massive pro-democracy protests ended without resolution in 2014. There’s almost no chance of success, but their ideas have alarmed China’s Communist leaders in Beijing.

Hong Kong’s Beijing-backed government has clamped down on such sentiment, including using the courts to get two newly elected pro-independence lawmakers disqualified from office last year for making improper oaths of office.

Top Indonesian judge gets eight years for corruption

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Indonesia’s corruption court has sentenced one of the country’s top judges to eight years in prison for taking bribes, the second time a constitutional court judge has been imprisoned for bribery since 2014.

A five-member panel of judges ruled that Patrialis Akbar was guilty of receiving thousands of dollars from a meat importer to influence the outcome of a judicial review of the law on animal husbandry.

Akbar was caught in an anti-graft sting in January, Indonesia’s anti-corruption police say.

Akbar, a law and human-rights minister under former President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, denied any wrongdoing. After the sentencing, he said it was up to god to decide what was right and wrong.

The meat importer, Basuki Hariman, was earlier sentenced to seven years in prison and his secretary, Ng Fay, received five years.

The judges said Akbar received \$10,000 in expenses to perform minor *hajj* and about \$300 for golf expenses. The panel also fined Akbar \$22,500 or a further three months in prison.



CORRUPTION COURT. Constitutional court judge Patrialis Akbar is escorted by security officers after his sentencing hearing at the corruption court in Jakarta, Indonesia. The court sentenced Akbar, one of the country’s top judges, to eight years in prison for receiving thousands of dollars from a meat importer to influence the outcome of a judicial review of the law on animal husbandry. (AP Photo)

In 2014, Akil Mohtar, the former chairman of the nine-member panel of judges of the constitutional court, was sentenced to life in prison for accepting bribes. Mohtar also was caught by the Corruption Eradication Commission.



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