

Their arrests were purely because they had expressed them in an illegal way," the judge said.

Thousands of protesters gathered in and around the shopping centre on the afternoon of that day, accusing operator Sun Hung Kai Properties of enabling the arrests of their comrades by allowing police to enter the venue in a previous demonstration on July 14, 2019.

Former marketing officer Chan Lok-yi, 26, engineer Chau Kam-wai, 25, and former real estate manager Edmund Wong Yat-lam, 45, were among more

November 18, 2019.

In his verdict, Judge Josiah Lam Wai-kuen said Kwok was hit in the right leg by a rubber bullet that night, indicating she had been there for some time potentially to commit an offence with the multipurpose pliers and lighter fluid she had with her.

But Lam said prosecutors failed to show the accused had taken part in the riot on Nathan Road, as she might have been a participant of an unlawful assembly nearby. The student was remanded in custody until sentencing on June 18.

MEDIA

Baptist University awards 2 senior Post staff with journalism fellowships

SCMP Reporter

Two senior *South China Morning Post* employees have been awarded fellowships at Baptist University in Hong Kong's first-of-its-kind programme designed to boost journalism standards.

Hong Kong news editor Denise Tsang and senior China reporter Laura Zhou will take a break from work to participate in undergraduate or postgraduate courses as auditors for one or two semesters in the coming academic year 2022-23.

“This is a great opportunity for two of our veteran journalists to hone their skills even further”

TAMMY TAM, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The pair, who were selected for the Professional Journalism Fellowship yesterday, are expected to enrich their knowledge and widen their horizons in the hopes of becoming change agents in the journalism industry during a challenging time.

After completing their studies, Tsang and Zhou will share what they have learned during the

fellowship with their employers, colleagues and media counterparts.

The *Post*'s editor-in-chief Tammy Tam congratulated the pair for beating an undisclosed number of people who applied to the school of communication and film's fellowship. "This is a great opportunity for two of our veteran journalists to hone their skills even further and share their expertise at the *Post*," she said.

The programme is a strategic initiative launched and funded by the Dorothy Shen Wong Memorial Fund. The fund was founded by veteran journalist Raymond Wong who donated HK\$50 million to the university's school of communication and film in 2020, the largest donation the faculty has received, in memory of his late wife to support journalism education.

The fellows will be granted a stipend commensurate with their respective incomes and levels of journalistic experience.

The chair of the programme's selection committee, Lau Chi-kuen, who is a professor of practice and the head of the department of journalism, said the two fellows had a lot to offer and gain from the university and he hoped the programme would contribute to the development of Hong Kong's news industry.

Tsang, an award-winning journalist with over 20 years of experience covering economic news, said she expected to be refreshed and recharged during the programme.

The public housing supply in the next 10 years may fall short of the official target of 300,000 by 8 per cent, a think tank has estimated, as it called for greater transparency and accountability over the lack of homes from the incoming administration.

In a report released yesterday, Our Hong Kong Foundation noted the perennial delays in housing projects and said land immediately available for building private housing would be used up soon. Until new townships were ready, a few years of bottlenecks could be expected, it warned.

"The government has been talking about a backloaded supply since 2015, but it is just wishful thinking," said Ryan Ip Man-ki, head of land and housing research, as the group released its yearly forecast of housing supply.

The report warned the situation could be just the "tip of the iceberg", given government reluctance to disclose details on delays unless requested by district councils or the Legislative Council.

Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor said in her 2020 policy address that the government had located all 330 hectares of land needed to build 316,000 public flats in the decade to 2031, exceeding the 301,000 targeted.

One-third would be completed within the first five years, while the rest would be completed in the latter half, she said.

But the think tank said it had little faith in the government meeting supply projections, given

14,000 flats were delayed annually between 2013 and 2024.

Assuming a one-year delay in major land initiatives, such as new development areas in the New Territories, the group estimated only 277,100 public housing flats would be built in the next decade, falling short of the government's target of 301,000 by 8 per cent.

It identified "hidden delays" in some projects, which are beyond the Housing Authority's five-year production plans, meaning officials are not required to disclose their progress. There was Chung Nga Road West in Tai Po, which has been trapped in an endless cycle of back-and-forth deliberations since 2014.

District councillors have raised concerns over the 1,000-flat project, such as traffic congestion and a lack of parking spaces and shopping facilities in three initial rounds of consultation.

Each time, officials submitted similar plans without addressing the issues. The project's estimated completion date is set at 2030-31, but there has been no consensus on the proposal.



New public housing flats at Queen's Hill Estate, Fanling. Photo: May Tse

ager to coordinate and monitor progress with clear key performance indicators, and ensure communication between the government and district council.

A project at San Hing Road in Tuen Mun, announced in 2014, was also raised. The government held only 34 per cent of land for the site while various parties held the rest privately, increasing the difficulty in land resumption and worsening delays.

The foundation said the private landlords had been discouraged from developing private housing themselves, with the government rejecting developers' applications to relax the building height limit and site density. This had stymied progress.

The think tank suggested the government be more open-minded in working with the private market. It pointed to a lack of a proper accountability mechanism and urged the government to be more transparent and end the vicious cycle of project delays.

Cleresa Wong Pie-yue, chairwoman of the Housing Authority's subsidised housing committee,

ment would need to set key performance indicators carefully as targets might not be easily fulfilled when the external environment affected home affordability.

On the idea of a project manager for each housing project, Wong stressed the authority had been responding to district council concerns and it was unclear if such appointments would help.

She said the authority anticipated the next government would coordinate departments to speed up housing supply.

On private housing, the report said that the annual completion rate would remain at a reasonable level of 17,300 flats in the coming five years, mainly due to the Tung Chung New Town extension development. The supply between 2027 and 2031, however, was expected to fall short.

It explained that sites from government land sale and railway projects would be used up in the coming few years and new development areas would only be ready from 2027. Ip said it would be crucial to push forward completion of these areas, as Hung Shui Kiu, Kwu Tung North and Fanling North would provide over 200,000 homes.

To expedite housing supply, Ip called for administrative procedures to be streamlined. He noted that public consultations could be integrated before applications were made to the Town Planning Board, and to proceed with private landowners' development applications even if they did not fit the government's timeline of development for the area.

row seats were reportedly being offered for HK\$438,000 by a scalper.

Under the real-name ticketing system, each person can buy only two tickets at the most each time and must provide his or her full English name – which must correspond to that listed on the buyer's identification documents – that will be checked at the concert.

The buyer cannot transfer the tickets to another person, nor change the timing stated. Refunds at half price are allowed if the buyer cannot attend.

Francis Fong Po-kiu, honorary president of the Hong Kong Information Technology Federation, said sales were slow because of Urbtix's system rather than the real-name ticketing method.

"It relies on its own server rather than a cloud-based system, which means it cannot increase its traffic size," he said, adding that the site automatically attempted to enter the purchase system every three seconds, which slowed itself down.

"The problem is many people like me have opened seven browsers or more ... As a result, the system is kind of attacking itself," he said.

The city has faced mounting calls in recent years to crack down on the rampant scalping of concert tickets. Some scalpers queue for days at box offices or use computer programs to buy tickets automatically from websites and resell them at a higher price.

* Name changed at interviewee's request

POLITICS

Lam delivers legal warning over June 4 events

Nadia Lam
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Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor has warned that events in the city mourning those killed in the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown will be subject to laws, including the national security legislation.

She addressed concerns on the issue yesterday, four days ahead of the 33rd anniversary of the crackdown.

Asked if residents who gathered at Victoria Park or commemorated June 4 by lighting candles at home on Saturday would face legal consequences, Lam said all public activities must fulfil legal

requirements regardless of purpose.

"As far as any gathering is concerned, there are a lot of legal requirements," she told reporters. "There is a national security law, there is the social-distancing restrictions under Cap 599 [of the

Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance], and there is also a venue question.

"So whether a particular activity has received authorisation to take place in a particular venue has to be decided by the owner of the venue."

180,000

Number of people who attended the Victoria Park vigil in 2019, according to organisers – police said the turnout peaked at 37,000



Pandemic rules cap gatherings in public places at four.

The football pitches in Victoria Park have since 1990 been a venue for tens of thousands to gather for an annual candlelight vigil to mark the crackdown and commemorate pro-democracy activists killed in the incident.

But authorities banned the past two events, citing health concerns related to the pandemic.

Chow Hang-tung, vice-chairwoman of the now-disbanded Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China, was sentenced to 15 months' jail in January for her role in instigating an illegal gathering at the park on June 4 last year through her remarks in two

articles published on social media and in a local newspaper.

This year, the football pitches for June 4 have been fully booked, with officials saying they will be available for sports on that day, but not for "other purposes".

Ward Memorial Methodist Church in Yau Ma Tei on Monday held a prayer meeting to mark the anniversary. According to a poster released by the church, the event for members involved hymn singing and the sharing of messages and prayers.

The city's Catholic churches previously announced they would not hold the annual mass to mark the occasion for the first time in three decades, citing concerns over the security law.