

Hong Kong will keep watching internet platforms for non-compliance with ban on protest song

May 21 2024, by Kanis Leung



Hong Kong Chief Executive John Lee speaks at a reception following a flag raising ceremony for the celebration of 74th National Day of the People's Republic of China at the Golden Bauhinia Square in Hong Kong on Oct. 1, 2023. Hong Kong's leader said Tuesday, May 21, 2024, his administration would keep monitoring for any non-compliance with a court order that bans a popular protest song, days after YouTube blocked access to dozens of videos of the tune in the

city. Credit: AP Photo/Chan Long Hei, File

Hong Kong's leader said Tuesday his administration would keep monitoring for any non-compliance with a court order that bans a popular protest song, days after YouTube blocked access to dozens of videos of the tune in the city.

The ban targets anyone who broadcasts or distributes "Glory to Hong Kong"—popularly sung during huge anti-government protests in 2019—to advocate for the separation of the city from China. It also prohibits any actions that misrepresent the song as the national anthem with the intent to insult the anthem.

In his weekly news briefing, Chief Executive John Lee said if the government found any instances of non-compliance, it would then notify the relevant internet platforms about the content of the injunction.

"I believe that operators in general operate within the law, so we will continue to monitor the situation," Lee said.

The court ban sought by the government has raised concerns over a further decline in the city's freedom of expression and internet freedom. Critics have also warned it might disrupt the operation of tech giants and undermine the city's appeal as a global financial hub.

Last week, YouTube blocked access to 32 videos of the song that were deemed to be "prohibited publications" under the injunction for viewers in the city. The tech company said it was disappointed by the court's decision and would continue to consider its options for an appeal.

In the news briefing, Lee said there is no link relating to the song shown

on any local platforms and "Google's search doesn't show any link to the song in question." A government transcript of his comments later clarified Lee was referring to links specified in the injunction order.

The Associated Press found videos of the song on YouTube on Tuesday morning. The song is also available on Spotify and Apple Music.

It is unclear whether the tech giants will block access to more video or audio clips of the song for Hong Kong viewers. Google, Spotify and Apple did not immediately comment.

"Glory to Hong Kong" is widely seen as the protest anthem of the 2019 movement, which was followed by a crackdown that has all but erased dissenting voices in the city.

Instances where the song was mistakenly played as the city's anthem at international sporting events, instead of China's national anthem "March of the Volunteers," also have angered city officials.

The government went to court last year after Google resisted pressure to display China's national anthem as the top result in searches for the city's anthem instead of the protest [song](#).

© 2024 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed without permission.

Citation: Hong Kong will keep watching internet platforms for non-compliance with ban on protest song (2024, May 21) retrieved 16 August 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2024-05-hong-kong-internet-platforms-compliance.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.