

Daily Express

INDEPENDENT NATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF EAST MALAYSIA
Established since 1963

What did HK protests achieve?

Datuk Yong Teck Lee

November 03, 2019

IN the interest of a healthy discourse on current matters, I would like to pen a reply to the letter “HK protestors care for their freedoms” by one “Observer” in last Sunday Forum.

“Observer” had accused me of fear mongering with conspiracy theories. He had mistakenly questioned my views on freedoms and democracy.

My description of the HK protestors as “nothing but pawns in the US game of power play with China” was based on US President Trump earlier openly admitting the link between the Hong Kong protests and US interests.

Trump had described “the latest US-China trade deal as ‘very positive’ for Hong Kong, and claimed the city’s anti-government protests had de-escalated significantly.”

President Trump was reported to be very happy about “a very substantial trade deal” with China that allows the US to export USD40 billion (or 1/3 of the US140 billion total exports of) agricultural products to China, up from the USD20 billion per annum previously.

The unpalatable truth is that the US has used the HK protests as a pawn in their trade war with China. The HK people might not know. Or maybe they knew. It does not matter.

The western media was predicting, indeed hoping, that the China army would intervene in Hong Kong. The protestors’ extreme provocation to make China intervene militarily did not work.

The consequence is that the militant youths in Hong Kong, like the Kurds of Syria, will now have to fend for themselves.

Their applications to migrate to the US will be rejected. And as the Hong Kong economy slips into official recession, these youths will not find employment in Hong Kong. Hong Kong is a tough society where the rule “survival of the fittest” reigns. Some of these HK youths will have to find jobs in mainland China.

The world has changed. China has changed. China is no longer backward. China has lifted up 600 million people from back breaking poverty and reduced social injustices.

China's economic successes have boosted the global economy and driven scientific advancements beneficial to humankind. China has joined other more advanced, mostly western, nations in contributing towards the betterment of humankind.

China has changed. But Hong Kong has not. Hong Kong remains an unrestrained free market competitive society that is a legacy of the colonial era complete with social injustices, such as prohibitive housing and living costs.

Hong Kong has freedoms. Hong Kong is a free economy. Hong Kong is also a free society. Hong Kong is ranked No. 1 for Economic Freedom (Economic Freedom of the World by Canadian think tank Fraser Institute).

On Personal Freedoms, Hong Kong is ranked No. 3, after New Zealand and Switzerland. (Malaysia and India tied at 110, China at 135. UK at 8 and US at 17) (source: Cato Institute, at cato.org). The HK protesters were reported as pro-democracy and freedom lovers. But in the eyes of many people, they were simply rioters and hooligans. What they wanted was not democracy but anarchy.

The protestors forfeited their slogan of "freedom" when they violently beat up bystanders who voiced a different viewpoint.

The protests turned racist when protestors beat up someone for speaking in Mandarin (the language of China mainlanders). These HK youths have abandoned "freedom" and embraced racism when they harassed an old man simply because he is a mainlander.

To get a taste of the racism of the HK protestors, "Observer" should visit Hong Kong. He can pretend to be a mainlander by speaking in Mandarin.

He can pretend to express freedom of expression by wearing a badge with the China flag. And we shall see if freedom of expression will be respected by the protestors. Thank you.