

**HONG KONG IN 2016:
“FISHBALL REVOLUTION” AND
BASIC LAW INTERPRETATION**

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Executive Summary

1. Since the pro-democracy Occupy Central event, Hong Kong has become a factionalised society of moderates, pro-Beijingers, pro-Hong Kongers, pro-independence activists, radicals, anarchists, pro-democracy activists, leftwingers, localists, *minzhulun* advocates, greater autonomy advocates and others.
2. The activities, street-level and Legco tactics as well as the political orientation of the pro-autonomy advocates, localists and pro-independence groups in Hong Kong are visible in the September 2016 events of the Legislative Council Election, “Fishball Revolution” and Beijing’s interpretation of the Basic Law.
3. The “localists”, an amorphous group that ranges from greater Hong Kong autonomy-seekers to outright independence sympathisers, were major supporters of the street vendors at the site of the “Fishball Revolution”.
4. After the “Fishball Revolution” tapered off in early 2016, the second leg of post-Occupy Central resistance began in the legislative council when pro-democracy and pro-independence individuals ran for the Hong Kong legislative council or Legco elections.
5. The Basic Law came under interpretation by the National People’s Congress when two legislator candidates were stopped from taking oath for supporting independence activities and other factors.
6. All stakeholders are navigating this complexity gingerly to avoid rising tensions. The study of political factionalism in Hong Kong serves as an important comparative case study for other social movements in the Northeast Asian region.
7. The stock market aggregates all factors—political, social and economic factors—within an economy. The market is fickle and can react both to perceptions and misperceptions. It depends on the level of instability brought about by political movements supported by a sizeable number of Hong Kongers.

8. Foreign investors are concerned about the outcome of the political dynamics between pro-democracy movement and the Hong Kong establishment (including law enforcement) and the outcome of a perceived polarised society.
9. Hong Kong is a vibrant society with relatively high levels of freedom, a thriving market economy (one of the most competitive laissez faire economies in the world) and a hardworking pragmatic population. It had weathered political storms and even wars in the past and did remarkably well.
10. The resilient and hardworking Hong Kong society is likely to find its own unique way of navigating political and geopolitical changes that are affecting all stakeholders in the region.