With reference to Gramsci’s notion of ‘hegemony’, explain how power is exercised in modern society and, importantly, the role of discourse in this exercise of power. If possible, ground your discussion in specific settings and/or domains (see attachments).

This question requires you to refer to authentic textual evidence (see attachments) and perform some level of close textual analysis to illustrate your points and substantiate your arguments.

Human rights firmly upheld – The Hong Kong Analysis

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government today stressed that it attaches the utmost importance to and firmly upholds human rights and freedoms in Hong Kong. It made the statement in response to media reports saying that an organization had invited religious and faith leaders across the UK to sign a letter to urge the UK government to ensure the lives and freedoms of Hong Kong people are protected.

The Hong Kong SAR Government said it deeply deplored the move as it is absolutely unwarranted, grossly misguided, and completely ignores the real situation in Hong Kong. It also objected to the organization’s remarks that the people of Hong Kong have endured suppression of their basic freedoms and human rights in their fight for justice and democracy and that they have been routinely subjected to police brutality and state repression in the last six months.

These accusations are groundless, insulting and malicious, it said, adding that nothing could be further from the truth. Despite the social unrest affecting Hong Kong in the past six months, freedoms and human rights have continued to be guarded, the statement said. During the past six months, the vast majority of requests for public meetings, processions and protests were given the green light by the Government, it said. It pointed out that the public protests against the extradition bill, which began as largely peaceful and orderly marches in June soon spiraled out of control into a highly violent and disorderly campaign, even though the bill was formally withdrawn in October.

Unprecedented violence and reckless and organized destruction became the norm. Radical activists attacked police officers and facilities with petrol bombs, iron bars, bricks and chemicals, while public infrastructure and transport were repeatedly vandalized. Countless shops, restaurants and shopping malls, which apparently did not side with the radical activists, were also targeted.

Additionally, intimidation and doxing on social media of senior government officials, police officers and their families, as well as other outspoken individuals, have been rampant. The Hong Kong SAR Government said these unlawful and violent acts must end and be condemned if Hong Kong is to continue as a vibrant international financial, business and logistics hub. Contrary to their claims to be campaigning for freedom, the radicals and violent protesters have openly joined hands to undermine the rights and freedoms of those who do not agree with them and attack the rule of law in an organized fashion. For a long time, Hong Kong has enjoyed the full substance of real freedoms, the statement said.

This is one of the success factors which makes the city tick and propels it forward. The Hong Kong SAR Government said it will ensure that this crucial attribute is safeguarded.