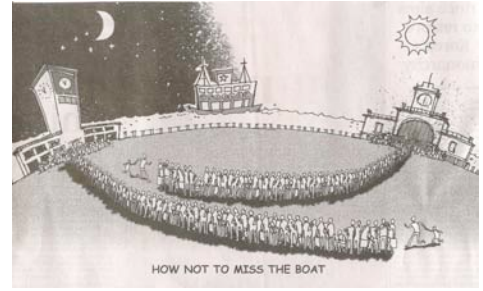


The HK SAR Government Icon Ripper

Manning the The Star Ferry Clock Barricades

Going... going.....going . but not without a fight!



SCMP 16/12/06

Ageing icon fights for life at death's door

Photos: Edward Wong, K. Y. Cheng and Ricky Chung

The scuffles at the Star Ferry pier this week may not bear comparison with the riots sparked by a fare rise in the 1960s, but they demonstrated once more the ability of the 50-year-old icon to inflame social passions and pit people against the government.

The group of students, former journalists and university lecturers were all but unknown before they made headlines this week. The protesters forced their way into the cordoned-off terminal in Central twice, on Wednesday and Thursday, and camped there early on Thursday morning, demanding that Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands Michael Suen Ming-yeung stop the demolition process and reopen discussions on the pier's future.

Scuffles and confrontations were seen during the protests, including angry activists attempting to block a police car from leaving the terminal by lying across its route.

Emotions ran particularly high on Thursday night and early yesterday morning, which marked the pier's 49th anniversary. About 100 people attended a candlelight vigil at the partially destroyed pier to lament the loss of the historic icon. Eight men and five women activists were arrested for obstructing police officers in carrying out their duties. At least three were sent to hospital.

Despite the protesters' outcry, the government has been unmoved by their demands for the preservation of the pier and its clock tower – which, originally, was a gift to the Swire Company in England from a Belgian king and was later erected in its existing position.

Chief Executive Donald Tsang Yam-kuen reiterated the government's decision to pull down the building. He said sufficient consultations on the project had been carried out over five years and that a reconstructed clock tower would be blended into the future design of the Central waterfront.

Protesters said the pier was significant to Hong Kong because it had witnessed the takeoff of the city's economy and societal development, and that its historic value could only be preserved in situ. *Helen Wu*

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Hundreds of people protest against the demolition of the Star Ferry pier, which was completed in the early hours of yesterday morning. Photo: Oliver Tsang



Flute-playing protesters stage a musical lie-in late last night.



People light candles as crowds stage a final protest at the closure.



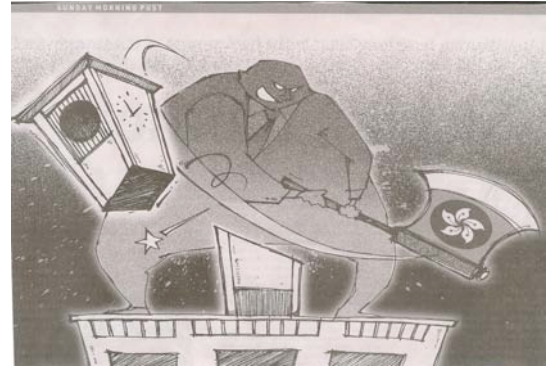
“Arrest those protesters”!



GOING! GOING!

Gone!!

The Old Clock is gone with one chop! Ho! Ho!"



You old Pier!!!



Front line in preservation battle switches to Queen's Pier

SCMP
18/12/66

Ng Kang-chung and Danny Mok

Queen's Pier has emerged as the next front line in the battle over the Star Ferry clock tower as activists have demanded the preservation of the pier because of its role in Hong Kong's colonial past.

Some legislators have also vowed to try to block the plan to tear down Queen's Pier at the Legislative Council planning lands and work panel meeting today. The demands were immediately rejected by the government last night.

"As for Queen's Pier, the public consultation was done long ago. Works will proceed as planned," a Housing Planning and Lands Bureau spokeswoman said.

The new row was brewing last night as a protest against the demolition of the Star Ferry clock tower turned violent, forcing police to close Upper Albert Road to stop about 150 protesters marching to Government House, the chief executive's residence, to demand that Donald Tsang Yam-kuen stop the demolition.

About 100 metres from the residence, minor scuffles broke out as



Activists scuffle with police as they march to Government House last night.
Photo: Dick Fung

police forcibly moved about 30 marchers from the road, after several futile warnings were issued to the protesters to move to a designated roadside demonstration area. In the crowd were legislators "Long Hair" Leung Kwok-hung and Fernando Cheung Chiu-hung and social activist and former legislator Cyd Ho Sau-lan.

"The government is deliberately trying to remove the unique culture and history of Hong Kong. We should not only confine ourselves to the Star Ferry. Queen's Pier will be our next battle," said protest leader, Chu Hoi-dick, who had led 16 people in a 49-hour hunger strike

over the clock tower. The hunger strike ended early today.

The demolition of the piers is part of the Central-Wan Chai reclamation project to build roads to ease traffic problems in the central business district. Parks and a waterfront promenade are also planned.

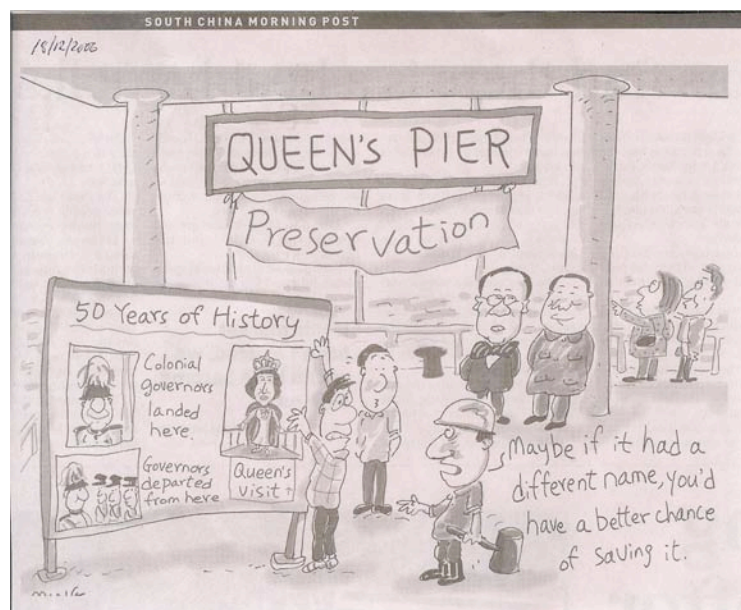
The bureau spokeswoman declined to say whether or how the clock tower would be relocated. Nor would she confirm the whereabouts of the structure, which was removed on Saturday.

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皇后碼頭



Where do I park my car now?



The HK SARG Apparatus at The Altar of Progress



“Forget about it!....The Pier Goes!”

