

September 17, 2024

The Editor,
Wall Street Journal

Dear Editor,

We strongly oppose and condemn the opinion piece "The Man Who is Hong Kong" (September 17) in which remarks on the handling of Lai Chee-ying case and involvement of the Chief Executive therein are totally flawed, misleading, amounting to smear and slander.

Time and again we reiterated that rights and freedoms enjoyed by our residents under the Basic Law and provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as applied to the HKSAR are protected according to the law.

Under "one country, two systems", Hong Kong exercises a high degree of autonomy while preserving its own economic and social systems, and common law system.

Particularly, rule of law is in place and our legal system is well recognised by international communities. Independent prosecutorial decisions are strictly based on evidence and applicable laws.

The courts exercise judicial power independently, free from any interference. All judges abide by Judicial Oath, administering justice in full accordance with the law, without fear or favour, self-interest or deceit. All defendants have right to a fair trial.

Suggestion that certain persons should be immune from legal sanctions for their illegal acts or be pardoned due to any political motives is totally contrary to the spirit of the rule of law.

Smears regarding treatment received by Lai Chee-ying are also rejected: we ensure that custodial environment is secure, safe, humane, appropriate and healthy, and have established mechanism to safeguard rights of persons-in-custody, including independent visitors vested with the statutory duties to inspect prisons and ensure protection of rights.

The HKSAR will continue to resolutely discharge the responsibility of safeguarding national security, and at the same time safeguard the rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong people in accordance with the law.

Chan Kwok-ki
Chief Secretary for Administration
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region