

23 April 2026

The Editor
BBC News

Dear Editor,

I write to strongly condemn the biased and inaccurate reporting in your article, "The Hong Kong rape allegation that led to blackmail conviction" (22 April 2026). The piece presents a one-sided narrative that overlooks the rigorous judicial process of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and makes unfounded allegations regarding our legal system.

First, it is essential to emphasise that the conviction of Isabel Rose for blackmail and perverting the course of public justice was the result of a trial in an open and independent court, where the accused was legally represented and the prosecution had to meet the high burden of proof beyond reasonable doubt required for a criminal conviction. The court had fully considered all evidence and the elements of the offences before convicting the accused. The 300-page reasons for verdict, which is available in the public domain, provides an account of the court's deliberation. The evidence therein details the accused's attempt to leverage a false allegation for substantial financial gain. We also note from the reasons for verdict that the judge finds the accused "dishonest, incredible and unreliable" and thereby rejects her evidence because of the many inconsistencies between her evidence in court and her witness statement and medical report.

Second, we firmly reject the article's suggestion that the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) failed to investigate the rape claim. Such accusation is factually incorrect. The HKPF takes all allegations of sexual violence seriously. In this instance, the complainant's claim was duly investigated; however, the investigation uncovered evidence that contradicted the complainant's account, leading to the subsequent charges of blackmail and perverting the course of justice.

Third, the claims of inadequate support for the accused during the reporting process are unfounded. The HKPF attaches great importance to combating cases involving sexual violence, protecting victims' rights and safety, and lessening the stress and psychological trauma encountered by victims when assisting in investigation. The HKPF strictly

adhered to all established professional protocols for handling such cases. In this case, the accused was accompanied by a social worker from a non-governmental organisation throughout the reporting process.

It is regrettable that BBC News has chosen to publish a biased piece that seeks to undermine the integrity of the legal system of the HKSAR. We condemn the attempt to mislead the public through a narrative that ignores the judicial findings of the court. Your irresponsible reporting not only distorts the truth but may also discourage genuine victims from coming forward — the very outcome the article apparently claims to prevent.

Tang Ping-keung

Secretary for Security

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

Ends