

(By email)

To the Letters Editor of the Independent

I refer to the article ‘While the world is distracted by coronavirus, China is clamping down on Hong Kong's pro-democracy campaigners’ (April 30), which made unfounded allegations about the arrests of people for organising and participating in unauthorised assemblies in Hong Kong. The arrests have nothing to do with the distractions of the Coronavirus pandemic, but everything to do with upholding the rule of law.

The rule of law is a core value in Hong Kong. As in the UK, everyone in Hong Kong is equal before the law; no one can break the law without facing consequences, nor will cases be handled any differently owing to the political beliefs or background of the persons involved. The arrests in question were made in strict accordance with the laws in Hong Kong and based on evidence from investigations. The Police are duty bound to handle every case in a fair, just and impartial manner. Prosecutions are commenced only if there is sufficient admissible evidence to support a reasonable prospect of conviction. Furthermore, our fiercely independent judiciary rules on every case without fear or favour.

Like elsewhere in the world, the HKSAR Government is presently devoting most of its time and energy to combatting COVID-19, keeping its citizens safe, and preventing the spread of the virus inside and out of Hong Kong. At the same time, we must also ensure the smooth functioning of government and our legal system both of which are fundamental pillars of Hong Kong's success.

Sincerely,
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