

March 27, 2024

Dear Editor,

We strongly disapprove of and condemn the extremely misleading opinion piece “Hong Kongers Now Only Whisper About Freedom” (March 26). It is necessary to set the record straight.

Offences endangering national security stipulated by Hong Kong National Security Law and Safeguarding National Security Ordinance (the Ordinance) target acts endangering national security with precision, and define elements of offences with clarity. Law-abiding persons (including ordinary travellers to Hong Kong) will not engage in acts and activities endangering our national security and will not unwittingly violate the law.

In fact, in relation to the offence of possessing seditious publication in the Ordinance, it is clearly provided that a person commits the offence only if he or she possesses a publication that has a seditious intention without reasonable excuse. Whether a publication has seditious intention has to be determined after all relevant circumstances are taken into consideration. Besides, it is not possible for a person who does not know that the publication concerned has a seditious intention to be convicted.

We should also stress that the Ordinance clearly specifies that rights and freedoms enshrined in the Basic Law, as well as the provisions of relevant international human rights convention, are to be protected in accordance with the law.

We strongly urge The New York Times to ensure that reports concerning Hong Kong are fair and just, and stop making scaremongering remarks.

Yours faithfully,

Tang Ping-keung
Secretary for Security
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

(ENDS)