

保安局局長
政府總部



SECRETARY FOR SECURITY
GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT

香港添馬添美道 2 號

2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong

May 21, 2021

The Editor
Bloomberg

Dear Editor,

Re: Your opinion piece “Will the Rich Be Cool With Asset Freezes?”
(May 19).

It is entirely wrong to frame my decision to freeze certain property held by Jimmy Lai as “a political purge”, speculate that it would add “uncertainty” to the business community or suggest it would undermine the city’s status as a financial center.

Lai was charged for committing the offences of “Collusion with a Foreign Country or with External Elements to Endanger National Security”, “Conspiracy to Commit Collusion with a Foreign Country or with External Elements to Endanger National Security”, and “Conspiracy to Do an Act or a Series of Acts Tending and Intended to Pervert the Course of Public Justice”.

Lai’s case is squarely a national security issue, and the Government’s position in this respect is crystal clear : endangering national security is a serious crime, and we will use all appropriate legal measures to crack down on such criminal activities and bring the offenders to justice, regardless of their background. Action must be taken to prevent, interdict and suppress such acts endangering national security.

The freezing action against Lai’s property is taken in accordance with Schedule 3 to the Implementation Rules for Article 43 of the Hong Kong National Security Law (HKNSL) : where the Secretary for Security has reasonable grounds to suspect that any property held by any person is offence related property, the Secretary may issue a notice to freeze that property.

Apart from seeking a licence to deal with the property, the person affected by my notice may make an application to the Court of First Instance for the revocation of my “freezing notice”.

Lai's case will be handled in accordance with the law. There's no question of law-abiding investors and entrepreneurs unwittingly violating the HKNSL, and hence they have nothing to worry about.

The business community will note that since the HKNSL took effect last June following long months of serious violence and riots in the city, calm has returned to Hong Kong and our reputation as a safe, secure and vibrant global business and financial centre has been restored.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J.K.C. Lee', written in a cursive style.

(John K C Lee)

Secretary for Security

Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region