

By e-mail

The Editor
The Irish Times

Dear Sir,

I refer to your article of 17 June, “Police arrest editor in chief of Hong Kong’s Apple Daily newspaper” which wrongly claims that the National Security Law has paved the way for a crackdown on the city’s civic freedoms.

Hong Kong remains a free society where all legitimate rights and freedoms, including the freedoms of speech, of assembly, of demonstration and of procession, which Hong Kong residents enjoy under the Basic Law, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as applied to Hong Kong shall be protected in accordance with the law.

The National Security Law aims to improve our city’s system for safeguarding national security. It has stopped chaos and restored order in Hong Kong, ensuring the smooth and continuous implementation of “One Country, Two Systems” and the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. The National Security Law upholds the rights and freedoms of Hong Kong people, as well as the high degree of autonomy of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The media reports freely in Hong Kong and performs its role as a watchdog over public affairs in accordance with laws and regulations.

However, no one is above the law. The arrests under the National Security Law at the media organisation in question relate to an alleged conspiracy involving the exploitation of journalistic work as a tool to commit collusion with a foreign country or external elements to impose sanctions or engage in other hostile activities against the People’s Republic of China and Hong Kong. This is a serious offence under the National Security Law and will be handled in accordance with the law. Countries around the world take threats to national security very seriously.

Normal journalistic work takes place freely and lawfully in Hong Kong and we do not envisage that professional journalists would be conspiring to do any act to break Hong Kong law or endanger national security.

Hong Kong remains a secure, open and dynamic environment that welcomes investors and entrepreneurs from around the world.

Yours faithfully,

Fiona Chau

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