

19 December 2025

The Editor
The Financial Times

Dear Editor,

In “Jimmy Lai’s conviction is ominous for Hong Kong” (December 17), your editorial board shows its true partisan colours by making false and misleading anti-China claims while completely glossing over facts in Lai Chee-ying’s criminal case.

In attempting to hoodwink your readers into believing that Lai was little more than “a passionate campaigner for democracy”, you ignored the case’s gravity and the court’s conviction judgment being made strictly in accordance with the law and evidence, with key facts on the trial missing in your editorial: Lai’s trial was held in open court for 156 days; Lai himself testified for 52 days; and the court’s reasons for verdict being 855 pages long and fully open for public inspection.

The case has never been about press freedom. The court clearly pointed out that Lai’s only intent whether pre or post Hong Kong National Security Law (implemented in June, 2020) was to seek the downfall of the Communist Party of China, notwithstanding the ultimate cost of sacrificing the interests of the people of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). These are acts not tolerated in any country, including the UK.

Your support of the UK government’s baseless categorisation of Lai’s conviction as “politically motivated prosecution”, is an obvious attempt to exert pressure on the PRC and the HKSAR. Your suggestion that Lai’s case could be a “useful bargaining chip” in future discussions involving the leaders of the UK and the United States is evidence of your flagrant disregard for the spirit of the rule of law and also an affront to diplomacy.

Last but not least, I should stress that HKSAR’s law enforcement agencies have been taking law enforcement actions based on evidence and strictly in accordance with the law in respect of the acts of the persons or entities concerned, paying no regard to their political stance, background or occupation of the person or organisation involved. At the same time, any crimes, including crimes that exploit the Tai Po fire tragedy to incite hatred and stir up divisions and not mere expression of dissent as suggested in your article, will be dealt with in accordance with the law and will not be tolerated.

Chris Tang
Secretary for Security
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

Ends