

Editorial

Nothing But the Truth

LAST Thursday, we (*Ming Pao*) published an exclusive report revealing the existence of unauthorised building works in Chief Executive-elect Leung Chun-ying's home. Since then, some media groups and individuals have made some totally ungrounded comments on what we have done, thus damaging our credibility. This is a very serious matter, and our answer to their comments is as follows.

First, last Friday (June 22), *the Hong Kong Economic Journal*, allegedly quoting "highly reliable sources", said while we were still looking into the case of illegal structures in Leung's home, our editor in chief "got in touch with the office of the Chief Executive-elect and made some verbal inquiries about the matter, which had the effect of 'a friendly reminder'. Consequently, the next day, when *Ming Pao's* reporters began a formal inquiry, Leung had already had the illegal structure dismantled." This implies that our editor in chief was **tipping** Leung **off**,

and is a reflection on his character and professional ethics.

The next day (June 23), *the Hong Kong Economic Journal* carried another report of a similar nature, alleging further that "as early as half a year ago, when the race for Chief Executive was still in its early stage, (*Ming Pao*) knew about the illegal structures in Leung's home. Why did they not launch a report into the matter, as they did with the illegal structures in Henry Tang Ying-yen's home?" The implication is that we purposely withheld information in order to influence the results of the Chief Executive election.

Our editor in chief believes that the two reports carried by *the Hong Kong Economic Journal* do not agree with the facts, and constitute a libel against him as well as *Ming Pao*. So, last Saturday, our lawyers wrote to *the Hong Kong Economic Journal* to the effect that they should apologise, retract their allegations, and undertake not to publish similar articles again, or we will consider suing them for libel.

When considering the telephone conversation about the matter between Leung and our editor in chief, the most important point is who made the call. In our announcement "The Hong Kong Economic Journal Fabricates Stories", we point out in **unequivocal** terms that "late at night on Tuesday (June 19), someone from the office of the Chief Executive-elect called our editor in chief, and asked if our reporters were to launch a report into the unauthorised building works in Leung's home. Thereupon our editor in chief asked if such works existed".

Yesterday, Leung said he "agreed with *Ming Pao's* announcement". So there can be no doubt that it was Leung's office that took the initiative in calling our editor in chief.

As regards the existence of illegal structures in Leung's home, we started looking into the matter as early as May 2011, but no discoveries were made till June 15 this year, when Wang Yang, Secretary of the

Guangdong Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, visited Leung at his home. Our colleagues covering the visit took some photographs, in which we found a glass enclosure we suspected to be an illegal structure. After comparing the photographs with the approved building plans of the property and after consulting some experts, we finally got useful clues to the existence of illegal structures in Leung's home.

In **insinuating** that last year we purposely withheld information about the illegal structures in Leung's home in order to influence the results of the Chief Executive election, *the Hong Kong Economic Journal* is obviously ignorant of what constitutes responsible journalism.

Finally, we would like to reiterate *Ming Pao's* belief in independence, objectivity, justice, and fairness. And we will continue to play the part of a watchdog as best as we can.

 **聲檔** english.mingpao.com/critic.htm

不問唐梁，只問真相 不挺唐梁，只挺香港

上週四，《明報》（下稱本報）獨家報道候任特首梁振英的住宅有僭建物。但是連日來，個別傳媒和人物對本報報道此事，盡多惡空捏造之處，對本報的公信力已經構成損害，性質極其嚴重。本報回應如下。

首先，上週五（6月22日），《信報》有報道引述「極可靠消息」，指梁宅僭建仍在採訪查證之際，本報總編輯「口頭向候特辦查詢事件，詢問猶如『溫馨提示』，結果CY在第二日《明報》記者再作正式查詢時，已拆除僭建物」，暗示本報總編輯向梁振英通風報信，這是質疑他的人格和專業道德操守。

翌日（23日），《信報》再有類似報道，還進一步指本報「應早於半年前，即特首選舉初期已知悉

事件，為何沒有如報道唐英年僭建問題般處理」，暗示本報蓄意押後報道，企圖影響選舉結果。

本報總編輯認為《信報》這兩篇報道，不單與事實不符，對他和《明報》亦構成誹謗，上週六向《信報》發出律師信，要求《信報》道歉和撤回報道，亦要承諾不再發表同類言論，否則考慮控告《信報》誹謗。

關於梁振英與本報總編輯就此事的一通電話，誰主動是關鍵所在。《明報》指「《信報》報道無中生有」的聲明，已經明確指出已經明確指出「周二（6月19日）深夜，梁辦人士主動致電《明報》總編輯，查詢《明報》記者是否在進行梁宅涉嫌僭建的報道，《明報》總編輯即時向對方查詢梁宅是否有僭建」。

昨日，梁振英表示「同意《明報》的聲明內容」，所以，梁辦人士主動致電給本報總編輯，已經可以確定。

其次，關於梁宅有無僭建的問題，我們早於2011年5月已經注意，但一直無進展，直到6月15日，廣東省委書記汪洋拜訪梁宅，在場採訪同事拍攝的一些照片，發現一個疑似僭建的玻璃棚，經與核准圖則比對，又請專家協助分析，終於找到梁宅僭建的確切線索。

《信報》的報道暗示本報當日蓄意扣起梁宅僭建的報道，企圖影響選舉結果，徹底反映他們根本不知道嚴謹的新聞工作為何物！

我們再一次嚴正宣示：《明報》恪守獨立、客觀、公正、持平原則，致力做好監察者的角色。

Glossary

tip off

If you tip somebody off, you warn them about something that is going to happen so that they can prepare for it.

unequivocal /iːnɪ'kwɪvəkəl/

expressing your opinion or intention very clearly and firmly

insinuate /ɪn'sɪnjuet/

to suggest indirectly that something unpleasant is true