

China not the only option for Taiwanese

Written by Lau Yi-te 廖亦壯

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In addition to being crowned emperor, Chinese President Xi Jinping (習近平) has announced 31 incentives for Taiwanese. Advocates of adventurism and defeatists alike rushed to praise Xi's move and accuse the Taiwanese government of bringing down Taiwan, as if Taiwanese talent and capital would never return and annexation were just around the corner.

On the other hand, the UN's Sustainable Development Solutions Network has published its World Happiness Report: Taiwan ranked 26th overall and No. 1 among Asian nations. China ranked 86th.

Regardless of whether the 31 incentives are beneficial to Taiwan, China's capitalists and corrupt officials are moving their capital abroad, as is Hong Kong billionaire Lee Ka-hsing (李家豪), while Taiwanese, Japanese and South Korean businesspeople are moving to South Asia, India, Europe and the US.

China is rejecting the advantages offered by other nations in favor of bringing in technology, capital and talent from Taiwan. This helps China solve its economic problems.

Meanwhile, Beijing holds back Taipei politically, making it clear that it is targeting public sentiment in Taiwan.

Talent and capital know no borders in today's world, and as long as conditions are good, people will move, and there is nothing anyone can do about it.

Furthermore, why would talent and capital move to China when, in addition to Taiwan, other options include the US, Southeast Asia and Europe?

If China is the only choice and the only place where they can survive, one cannot help but wonder if all that talent and capital investment is really so clever.

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Apart from wages and capital investment, people must also consider other values if they want to live with respect and dignity — such as freedom, human rights and democracy, and smaller issues like safety, healthcare and education.

Giving up everything for a bit more money and a few more investment benefits in an unpredictable nation is a risky proposition.

To be clear: What Taiwan fears is not the people who want to try their luck in China, but the ones who do not go there and stay in Taiwan, where they enjoy the National Health Insurance, labor pensions and other advantages, while spending their days working with China and holding Taiwan back.

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Translated by Perry Svensson

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