

Accidental missile firing 'unforgivable,' Tsai says

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President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) yesterday called the accidental firing of an anti-ship missile on Friday "unforgivable."

"The missile mishap on board the Chingchiang-class corvette was absolutely unforgivable," Tsai said on Facebook. "The armed forces and I are one: When they do well, I would share their glory, and when they make a mistake, I would definitely face it with them."

Tsai said "bold reforms" are needed to earn back the public's trust in the military.

Meanwhile, a survey conducted by the Taiwan Thinktank on Thursday and Friday among people aged 20 and older, and published yesterday, gauged people's opinions on recent incidents, including those implicating military officers.

Of those polled, 74.6 percent regarded the missile incident as an indicator that the armed forces have "a screw loose," while about 17 percent of the respondents disagreed with the statement and about 9 percent declined to state their opinion.

A cross-analysis of the results suggested that both pan-green and pan-blue supporters believed that the incident was proof of lax management in the military, with 77.6 percent of the respondents who said they support the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and 75.9 percent of those who support the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) sharing the opinion.

DPP Legislator Tsai Yi-yu (蔡宜生), speaking at a news conference in Taipei to release the survey results, was asked whether the Tsai administration's refusal to apologize to China over the incident could have significant effects on cross-strait ties.

"The incident is apparently a matter of internal affairs, given that the missile landed in our territorial waters and hit Taiwanese fishermen," Tsai Yi-yu said. "Apologizing to Beijing for it would only make the nation a laughing stock."

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The locally developed Hsiung Feng III missile was launched from one of the navy's 500-tonne Chinchiang-class corvettes at Zuoying Military Harbor in Kaohsiung during a drill at 8:15am on Friday.

It struck a Taiwanese fishing boat, the Hsiang Li Sheng (向利生), operating in waters southeast of Penghu County in the Taiwan Strait, killing its captain, Huang Wen-chung (黃文忠), and injuring three crew members.

The telephone survey also asked people their opinions on last week's killing of a dog by soldiers at a military base, which resulted in disciplinary measures and legal action against the three officers who killed the dog and the punishment of six of their superiors.

Of those polled, 52.3 percent lauded the military's handling of the matter, while 33.1 percent disapproved. About 15 percent did not express an opinion, the poll showed.

The poll collected 1,246 valid samples. It has a confidence level of 95 percent and a margin of error of 2.8 percentage points.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2016/07/04](#)