

Taiwan to bar Chinese human rights violators

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The government is to ban Chinese human rights violators from entering the nation following hostile behavior by Beijing and the sentencing of Taiwanese democracy advocate Lee Ming-che (李明哲) for subversion of state power by a Chinese court, sources have said.

In a bid to uphold human rights, a committee of members of the National Immigration Agency (NIA), Mainland Affairs Council and other government agencies has denied entry to at least three Chinese nationals and groups that were found to have persecuted Falun Gong practitioners in China, said the sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Officials from China's Taiwan Affairs Office whose duties include providing services to China-based Taiwanese will not be banned, as it might prompt criticism, the sources said, adding that the officials make several visits to Taiwan every week.

However, the officials would be prohibited from engaging in four types of activities in Taiwan: making political comments, giving media interviews, promoting unification and meeting with Aborigines in private, the sources said.

The NIA and other government agencies would inspect their visits to investigate if visiting Chinese officials have made any unscheduled trips, the sources said.

To manipulate cross-strait exchanges, China has unilaterally restricted the number of officials and academics visiting Taiwan, disrupting the balance in bilateral visits, the sources said.

In addition to restricting Chinese tourists and students from visiting Taiwan, China has denied or delayed entry to Taiwanese academics and officials, with General Association of Chinese Culture Deputy Secretary-General Chang Tie-chi (常天錫) being denied entry to Hong Kong last week, the sources said.

Cross-strait exchanges should be reciprocal to develop an orderly and constructive relationship, they said.

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China has established the 610 Office as a central government agency to deal with unorthodox religions and the office has ordered Chinese government agencies to suppress Falun Gong practitioners, the sources said, adding that Chinese local governments have also set up similar offices.

Taiwan's Falun Gong group has given the committee a list of names to be blacklisted and non-governmental organizations have also proposed blacklists targeting Chinese human rights violators.

The committee would deny entry to people who are blacklisted, the sources said.

At least 5,000 people are on the group's blacklist, which was ignored by the administration of former president Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九), Taiwan Falun Gong spokeswoman and attorney Theresa Chu (朱雪蘭) said, adding that the group had to file lawsuits against Chinese human rights violators visiting Taiwan.

It has sued a total of 10 people, including former Beijing mayor Guo Jinlong (郭金龍), former Anhui Province governor Wang Sanyun (王三運), former Guangdong Province governor Huang Huahua (黃華華) and Hubei provincial party committee deputy secretary Yang Song (楊松), who led Hubei Province's version of the 610 Office, Chu said.

However, a prosecutor from the Taiwan High Prosecutors' Office asked the group to withdraw the lawsuits, Chu said.

"Those people were invited by Ma. How can the office process the charges?" Chu quoted the unnamed prosecutor as saying.

President Tsai Ing-wen's (蔡英文) administration's ban on human rights abusers is encouraging, Chu said, adding that the group submitted its blacklist to the US Department of State in October.

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