>American Institute in Taiwan Chairman James Moriarty speaks at National Tsing Hua University in Hsinchu on Nov. 7.
Photo: Hung Mei-hsiu, Taipei Times

The American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) on Thursday posted on Facebook an interview AIT Chariman James Moriarty did with Television Broadcasts Satellite (TVBS), after the channel pulled it from its programming lineup one day after airing.

TVBS conducted the interview with Moriarty in Taiwan last week.

During the interview, Moriarty warned about external forces attempting to manipulate public opinion ahead of the nine-in-one local elections on Saturday.

Unlike most of the station's news reports, which are aired repeatedly throughout the day and sometimes the following day, TVBS broadcast the interview only once — during the 5pm segment on Nov. 9.

The Chinese-language online *Next Magazine* on Friday reported that TVBS shelved the interview in a "forced disappearance," saying that there were hidden reasons why the station decided to stop airing the interview.

TVBS slammed the report as a biased departure from the facts, saying that it was unsubstantiated reporting that disregarded journalistic ethics.

The AIT, the US' *de facto* embassy in Taiwan in the absence of formal diplomatic ties between the two nations, on Thursday posted the interview on Facebook.

The reason the interview was pulled from the lineup can only be answered by TVBS, AIT spokeswoman Amanda Mansour was quoted as saying by the Central News Agency yesterday.

AIT posted the interview to emphasize Moriarty's warning that external forces would attempt to manipulate public opinion regarding the election, a source with knowledge of the matter said on condition of anonymity.

Asked about Moriarty's warning, Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) New Taipei City mayoral candidate Su Tseng-chang (□□□) said that the elections are Taiwan's business alone and embody its democratic values.

The observations by "our friend from the US are a reminder to Taiwanese that they should do more to defend these values and must not let external forces succeed in their goal" of meddling in Taiwan's elections, he said.

DPP Kaohsiung mayoral candidate Chen Chi-mai (□□□) said it is a fact that China has repeatedly meddled in the elections.

Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) Taipei mayoral candidate Ting Shou-chung (□□□) said that voters must be vigilant and resilient against the influence of external forces.

Emphasizing the importance of economic development and quality of life, Ting added that people should vote for candidates who can best provide them with a high standard of living.

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