

China's sniping of Taiwan-US ties slammed

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FBI Director Christopher Wray testifies before a US Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee hearing on threats to the US on Capitol Hill in Washington on Nov. 5 last year.

Photo: Reuters

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday strongly condemned the Chinese government for meddling with US officials' interactions with Taiwan after FBI Director Christopher Wray revealed China's efforts to discourage US officials from visiting Taiwan.

The greatest long-term threat to the US' information security and intellectual property, as well as its economic vitality, is China's counterintelligence and economic espionage operations, Wray told a video event at the Hudson Institute in Washington.

Beijing is engaged in a highly sophisticated and maligning foreign influence campaign, with methods that include bribery, blackmail and covert deals, he said.

Giving an example, Wray said that when a US official plans to visit Taiwan, China would hit back at a company from the official's home state by withholding licenses to manufacture products in China.

In more covert ways, China would approach people close to the official to act on its behalf as intermediaries to influence the official, he said, adding that some of the intermediaries might not even realize that they are being used as pawns.

The Chinese Communist Party also pressures US media and sports giants to ignore or suppress criticism of China's ambitions regarding Taiwan or Hong Kong, he said.

The FBI opens a new China-related counterintelligence case about every 10 hours, Wray said,

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adding that of the nearly 5,000 active FBI counterintelligence cases under way across the US, almost half are related to China.

To protect the US' economy, data, academia and innovation, the FBI is using a broad set of techniques ranging from traditional law enforcement to intelligence capabilities, he said, adding that it is working more closely with partner agencies at home and abroad to investigate China's crimes.

Asked for comment, ministry spokeswoman Joanne Ou (歐安) said the ministry strongly condemns Beijing's ill-natured intervention in foreign governments' interactions with Taiwan.

China has used every possible means to suppress Taiwan and its friends on the global stage, which does not benefit cross-strait relations and intensifies Taiwanese dislike of China, she said.

Taiwan's achievements in democracy, freedom, human rights and the rule of law have won global acclaim, a fact that Beijing cannot suppress, she added.

The ministry calls on the global community to face China's intention to subdue Taiwan and show the moral courage to reject its irrational requests, Ou said.

The issues of Taiwan, Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet are pertinent to China's sovereignty and security, for which China does not allow any foreign intervention, Chinese Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Le Yucheng (樂玉成) said at a video forum cohosted by the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs and the Asia Society of the US.

While the US talks about market economy and fair competition, it actually does not allow other countries to become better or more competitive than itself, he added.

Regarding the future of China-US relations, Le said that while bilateral relations are heavily

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clouded, the sun always rises, and it is an unstoppable trend that the two nations will finally cooperate.

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