

HK removes Tiananmen memory: Tsai

Written by Taipei Times

Sunday, 05 June 2022 05:56 -



A child in Taipei yesterday places candles on a banner commemorating the 33rd anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Massacre.

Photo: Sam Yeh, AFP

Hong Kong is systematically removing reminders of the Tiananmen Square Massacre, President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) said yesterday, the 33rd anniversary of the incident.

Authorities in Hong Kong, where people had held annual candlelight vigils at Victoria Park on the massacre's anniversary for many years, had not received an application for such an event this year, she said on Facebook.

Statues commemorating the massacre, among other expressions of support for democracy, have been removed from university campuses in the territory without an explanation from authorities, Tsai said.

"The collective memory of the Tiananmen Square Massacre is being systematically removed in Hong Kong," she said, adding that such brutish methods would not eradicate people's memories of the incident.

Increasing threats from authoritarian countries against democracies highlight the necessity of upholding democratic values and enhancing collaborations with like-minded international partners, Tsai said.

As authoritarianism is increasingly threatening democracy worldwide, Taiwan and other like-minded democracies must reinforce joint efforts to uphold democratic values, Tsai said, citing as examples of collaboration Japan's donation of 1.24 million COVID-19 vaccine doses last year, as well as vaccine sharing between the US and its European allies.

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We must cherish our democratic freedoms, but at the same time should be cautious when exercising our right to free speech, Tsai said.

Disinformation about COVID-19 might cause social unrest and place a heavy burden on medical personnel, Tsai said, referring to a controversy last month when TV celebrity Anthony Kuo (郭子乾) posted a screenshot on Facebook that he originally said represented a conversation with a medical professional who said that “many children passed away” from the virus in Taiwan.

The government denied that the alleged statement by a doctor represented the truth, causing a large number of people to say that Taiwan is trying to limit freedom of speech.

Tsai said she believes in transparency of information, adding that every member of the public is entitled to voice their opinion.

She said she believes that a diversity of opinions benefits society and that communication can help mitigate conflicts.

Taiwan’s widely praised COVID-19 pandemic response is the result of civilian oversight, while authoritarian governments’ undemocratic efforts to limit pandemic information might lead to the pandemic getting worse, she said.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2022/06/05](#)