



## China Reform Monitor No. 1442

November 24, 2020 **Joshua Eisenman**

**Related Categories:** China; Hong Kong; Taiwan

### **HONG KONG'S PRO-DEMOCRACY LAWMAKERS RESIGN EN MASSE**

Fifteen pro-democracy Hong Kong lawmakers have resigned after the Hong Kong government disqualified four of their fellow legislators. The expulsion came on the orders of China's National People's Congress, which passed a resolution that any lawmaker who supports Hong Kong independence, disputes China's sovereignty, threatens national security, or asks external forces to interfere in the city's affairs should be disqualified. The departure of the pro-democracy lawmakers will leave Hong Kong's Legislature with only pro-Beijing lawmakers, who can now pass legislation without opposition. "Today we will resign from our positions because our partners, our colleagues have been disqualified by the central government's ruthless move," announced Wu Chi-wai, a leader of the chamber's pro-democracy camp. (Associated Press, November 11, 2020)

### **PRC SHOULD PUBLICIZE ITS "HUMAN RIGHTS STORIES": CPPCC CHAIR**

Wang Yang, chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee, has hosted a seminar emphasizing "the need to fully recognize the historic achievements in China's human rights cause and have a correct understanding of both progress and weaknesses in explaining the country's endeavor in this regard." Wang called for "more efforts to share the stories of China's human rights with people around the world so as to enhance the international community's recognition of the progress of human rights in China." Participants called for "the use of the internet, big data and other technologies in topic selection, content production, translation and promotion. They also stressed the importance of enhancing exchanges with international organizations, foreign political parties, governments, think tanks and non-governmental organizations, among others." (Xinhua, November 13, 2020)

### **POMPEO: "TAIWAN HAS NOT BEEN A PART OF CHINA"**

"Taiwan has not been a part of China. That was recognized with the work that the Reagan administration did to lay out the policies that the United States has adhered to now for three-and-a-half decades," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a recent radio interview. The comments elicited a strong response from Beijing, with China's foreign ministry spokesman saying: "We solemnly tell Pompeo and his ilk, that any behavior that undermines China's core interests and interferes with China's domestic affairs will be met with a resolute counterattack by China." An editorial in the official Global Times further warned: "China needs to guard against its adventurous actions the Trump administration may take during the final weeks, especially military provocations and so-called diplomatic moves toward Taiwan. Once the U.S. makes malicious provocations, China must resolutely strike back." (*U.S. News & World Report*, November 13, 2020; *Global Times*, November 13, 2020)

### **XI HALTS ANT'S FINANCIAL \$37 BILLION IPO**

CPC Chairman Xi Jinping has ordered regulators to investigate Jack Ma's Ant Group, effectively pulling the plug on the company's record \$37 billion IPO. The decision comes after the financial-tech giant's billionaire founder publicly criticized China's financial watchdogs and banks at a summit in Shanghai on October 24th. Ma said China's regulatory system was stifling innovation and must be reformed to fuel growth. Soon after the speech, state regulators started compiling reports on Ant, including one on how the firm had used digital financial products, like the virtual credit card service Huabei, to push poor and young people to accumulate debt. The State Council then prepared a report on public sentiment about Ma's speech and submitted it to Xi and other top leaders. (Al Jazeera, November 12, 2020)

## **GUO CALLS FOR SAFEGUARDING REGIME "SAFETY"**

"Against the backdrop of U.S.-China confrontation, China faces increasing uncertainty and instability in its external environment. Conventional and unconventional security challenges are on the rise, they are now more overlapped, interconnected, penetrating and can be easily magnified." So wrote Guo Shengkun, a Politburo member and head of the CPC Central Political and Legal Affairs Commission, which oversees the police, spy agencies, prosecutors, courts and prisons, in an article covering China's challenges for the coming half-decade. "[We] must firmly safeguard the state's political safety, regime safety and ideological safety," Guo notes in his contribution to the Guidance Reader on CCP Central Committee Recommendations on the Formulation of National Economic and Social Development Targets for the 14th Five-Year Plan and the 2035 Vision, published by the Chinese government's official People's Publishing House. "[We] must defend against and strike hard on sabotage, subversion and 'splittism' by hostile forces." (*South China Morning Post*, November 13, 2020)