



CHINA REFORM MONITOR

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April 3, 2023 **Joshua Eisenman**

Related Categories: Cybersecurity and Cyberwarfare; Intelligence and Counterintelligence; Military Innovation; Public Diplomacy and Information Operations; Science and Technology; China; North America; Taiwan

TAIWAN CHARGES EX-MP AND FORMER ADMIRAL WITH SPYING FOR CHINA

Taiwan has charged retired rear admiral Hsia Fu-hsiang and ex-MP Lo Chih-ming with setting up meetings between dozens of former senior military officers and PRC intelligence operatives. Between 2013 and 2018, prosecutors say, the two arranged 13 free trips to China for 48 former officers, who are now witnesses. Both have been detained since January and face up to five years in prison if convicted of violating the national security law. "We urge retired military officers to exercise caution regarding unreasonable benefits when they go to events in China to avoid falling into the traps," prosecutors said. Numerous former high-ranking Taiwanese military officials have been accused of aiding Chinese intelligence. In January, for instance, a retired air force major general was found guilty of accepting meals and trips from a Hong Kong businessman acting on Beijing's behalf. His sentence was suspended after he showed remorse. (BBC, March 17, 2023)

CHINA TO REOPEN TO TOURISTS, RESUME ALL VISAS

Last month, China reopened its borders to tourists and resumed issuing all types of visas to help revive the nation's economy following a three-year pause during the COVID-19 pandemic. China is the last major country to reopen its borders, an announcement that came only after it declared a "decisive victory" over COVID-19 back in February. A Foreign Ministry spokesperson said that China had "optimized measures for remote testing of people coming to China from relevant countries," allowing pre-boarding antigen testing instead of nucleic acid testing. The relaxation of visa rules follows China's approval of outbound group tours for Chinese citizens. (Associated Press, March 14, 2023)

TAIWAN UNVEILS NEW DRONES

Taiwan has unveiled five new indigenous unmanned military aerial vehicles (UAVs) to boost the island's defense capabilities against China. The new drones are different sizes and have either combat or surveillance capabilities, said Eric Chi of the National Chung-shan Institute of Science and Technology. "In response to the new global war trends, our military has been actively building asymmetric warfare capabilities," Chi said. As a result, the island has been working to develop core technologies "to fully implement the national policy of defense self-sufficiency." Among the drones on display was the Albatross II UAV, which has a maximum range of 300 km and surveils enemy ships using AI. The portable Cardinal III UAV, which can take off and land vertically, is used to monitor activities along the coastline. The Loitering Munition UAV has the ability to carry a warhead and can target people and vehicles. Taiwan's military is testing the new drones, which will enter production this year. In October, Taipei increased its annual defense spending by 13.9% and expanded the conscription period for its military from four to twelve months. (CNN, March 14, 2023)

CHINA'S SECRET POLICE STATIONS TARGET CANADA'S CHINESE RESIDENTS

Chinese Canadians are being targeted by two PRC-run overseas police stations in Quebec, according to Sgt. Charles Poirier of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). The RCMP's Integrated National Security Team has opened investigations into the stations in Montreal and Brossard. Canada will not tolerate the intimidation, harassment or targeting of diaspora communities, Poirier said. China has scores of such stations around the globe, including in the U.S., which it uses to threaten targets and pressure them to return to China for persecution. Foreign Minister Melanie Joly said foreign interference prompted Canada to refuse a diplomatic visa to a PRC operative. "We've known about the Chinese police stations across the country for many months, and we are making sure that the RCMP is following up," Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has said. In response, a PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson criticized Canada for "sensationalizing and hyping the matter" and "smearing China." (Associated Press, March 10, 2023)

TRUDEAU ORDERS PROBES INTO CHINESE POLITICAL INTERFERENCE

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has announced that the country's National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians will study China's interference in the 2019 and 2021 elections, and the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency will review how the country's intelligence services handled the threat during the elections. "We're taking even further action to protect our democratic institutions, to defend their integrity, and to uphold and strengthen confidence in our democracy. We will always take foreign attempts at undermining our democracy very seriously," Trudeau said. He will also appoint an "eminent Canadian" who will have powers to make recommendations on "protecting and enhancing" democracy in Canada. Opposition parties have criticized the approach, however, saying the probes would be secretive and insufficient. (Globe and Mail, March 7, 2023)