Dwindling allies: On the loss of Honduras ties leading to Taiwan's isolation on the world stage

Taiwan is facing pressure as China's relations with the United States deteriorate

By formally **establishing diplomatic** relations with China on March 26, 2023, Honduras has joined a growing list of countries that have recently **switched recognition** from Taipei to Beijing. Taiwan now has only 12 countries, besides the Vatican, with which it has diplomatic ties, including four small Pacific island nations, Eswatini in southern Africa, Paraguay, and six central American and Caribbean nations. **Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang**, who signed the **communiqué** with his Honduran **counterpart** Eduardo Reina, said it showed Honduras made "a choice to stand on the right side of history...". Taiwan has **accused** Honduras of **seeking** financial **assistance** as a **precondition** to continue relations, and President Tsai Ing-wen said, after the switch, that Taiwan "will not engage in a **meaningless contest** of **dollar diplomacy** with China". She also accused China of "**persistently** [using] any and all **means** to **suppress** Taiwan's international participation, **intensify** its military **intimidations**... and **disrupt** regional **peace**".

The switch by Honduras, as well as Taiwan's concerns about its shrinking international space, point to the growing stress on the current status quo across the Taiwan Strait. The status quo has generally served both sides across the strait well, preserving peace against tall odds. In Taiwan, a thriving democracy with a highly developed economy, the status quo remains the popular choice for most people, according to numerous public opinion surveys. A minority support Taiwan declaring independence or unification with China. However, both Beijing and Taipei have been accusing the other of changing this status quo. In Taipei's view, Beijing has **exerted** growing diplomatic pressure to isolate Taiwan as well as stepped up military muscle-flexing, as seen in exercises that surrounded the island last year following the visit of then U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. In Beijing's view, the ruling DPP in Taipei, with the support of Washington, bears responsibility for the tensions by pursuing **de facto** independence. Beijing had **warmer** relations with the previous KMT **regime**, with a **landmark** meeting between leaders Xi Jinping and Ma Ying-jeou in 2015. The Xi government has warned the U.S. that Taiwan remains a red line for China, but with worsening relations between the two countries, Taiwan has yet again emerged as a **friction point**, as seen by the Pelosi visit last year. Beijing continues to refuse to **rule out** the use of force for what it calls **reunification**, should Washington or Taipei cross what it sees as a red line. The tussle between the world's two biggest powers has left the 23 million people of a vibrant and prosperous island caught in the middle. [Practice Exercise]

 Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where 'red' denotes 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'.

Vocabulary

- 1. **Dwindling** (adjective) gradually diminishing in strength घटता हुआ
- Ally (noun) associate, colleague, friend, confederate, partner सहयोगी, मित्र-राष्ट्र
- 3. Ties (noun) connection, link, liaison, attachment, association संबंध
- 4. **Lead** (to) (verb) cause, give rise to, bring about, result in वजह बनना
- 5. Isolation (noun) separation, segregation, setting apart, keeping apart अलगाव
- 6. **Deteriorate** (verb) Worsen, decline, degenerate, decay बिगड़ना
- 7. Establish (verb) set up, determine, create, institute स्थापित करना
- Diplomatic (adjective) involving the management of relationships between countries कूटनीतिक
- 9. Switch (verb) change, alternate, swap, shift बदलना
- 10. **Recognition** (noun) acknowledgement, acceptance, admission, conceding स्वीकृति/ मान्य़ता
- 11. **Communiqué** (noun) official announcement, statement, press release शासकीय सूचना/ विज्ञप्ति

- 12. **Counterpart** (noun) equivalent, opposite number, peer, समकक्ष
- 13. Accuse (of) (verb) blame, indict, charge, implicate आरोप लगाना
- 14. **Seek** (verb) Ask for (assistance) from someone. मांगना
- 15. Assistance (noun) help, support, backing, succor, encouragement सहायता
- 16. **Precondition** (noun) prerequisite, condition, sine qua non, stipulation, requirement ਧ੍ਰਬੇ शर्त
- 17. **Meaningless** (adjective) pointless, irrelevant, senseless, insignificant अर्थहीन/बेत्का
- 18. **Contest** (noun) competition, challenge प्रतियोगिता
- 19. **Dollar diplomacy** (noun) the use of a country's financial power to extend its international influence.
- 20. **Persistently** (adverb) In a persistent manner; continuously. लगातार
- 21. **Means** (noun) way, method, process, measure साधन
- 22. **Suppress** (verb) repress, subdue, stifle, restrain, curb दबाना
- 23. Intensify (verb) escalate, increase, strengthen, heighten, augment तीव्र करना

- 24. Intimidation (noun) bullying, duress, menace, threat, harassment धमकी
- 25. **Disrupt** (verb) disturb, interrupt, upset, disorder, unsettle बाधित करना
- 26. **Peace** (noun) calm, peacefulness, serenity, tranquility, ceasefire शांति
- 27. **Concern** (noun) Anxiety, worry, apprehension fear चिंता
- 28. **Shrinking** (adjective) diminishing, decreasing, reducing, contracting सिक्इती
- 29. **Space** (noun) room, area, capacity, scope विस्तार
- 30. **Point to** (phrasal verb) indicate, mention, note, highlight, emphasize इशारा करना
- 31. **Stress** (noun) tension, pressure, strain, anxiety तनाव
- 32. **Status quo** (noun) the present situation or condition यथास्थिति
- 33. Taiwan strait (noun) The Taiwan Strait is a 180-kilometer (110 mi; 97 nmi)-wide strait separating the island of Taiwan and continental Asia
- 34. **Preserve** (verb) keep, maintain, save, conserve बनाए रखना
- 35. **Against all odds** (phrase) despite great difficulties, in a difficult situation मुश्किल हालात में

- 36. **Thriving** (adjective) flourishing, prosperous, prospering, growing, developing, संपन्न
- 37. **Numerous** (adjective) many, several, countless, multiple, lot of कई/ अनेक
- 38. **Unification** (noun) integration, merger, consolidation, union एकीकरण
- 39. Exert (verb) –apply or bring to bear (a force, influence, or quality). डालना
- 40. **Isolate** (verb) separate, segregate, detach, sequester, cut off, set apart अलग करना
- 41. **Step up** (phrasal verb) Increase, intensify, improve, maximize, accelerate, boost बढ़ाना
- 42. Muscle-flexing (noun) a public show of military or political power that is intended to worry an opponent
- 43. **Surround** (verb) to be all around or encircle something घेरना
- 44. Following (preposition) After के बाद
- 45. **Ruling** (adjective) governing, in charge, leading, dominant, controlling सत्तारूढ़
- 46. **Pursue** (verb) strive for, push towards; seek, chase पीछा करना
- 47. **De facto** (adjective) existing in fact, actual, real, effective वास्तविक रूप से

- 48. **Warm** (adjective) friendly, cordial, amicable सौहार्दपूर्ण/ मधुर
- 49. **Regime** (noun) government, administration शासन
- 50. Landmark (adjective) Milestone, breakthrough, radical, pioneering, historic, significant ऐतिहासिक/ महत्वपूर्ण
- 51. **Red line** (noun) a boundary or limit which should not be crossed. सीमा
- 52. Worsening (adjective) deteriorating, degenerating, aggravating, impairing बिगइते
- 53. Friction point (noun) area of tension, point of contention

- 54. **Rule out** (phrasal verb) dismiss, reject, exclude, discard, prohibit इंकार करना
- 55. **Reunification** (noun) reunifying, unification पुनर्एकीकरण
- 56. **Tussle** (noun) scuffle, fight, struggle खींचतान, संघर्ष
- 57. Vibrant (adjective) full of energy and life. जीवंत
- 58. **Prosperous** (adjective) Wealthy, affluent, Rich, well-off, flourishing, thriving समृद्ध
- 59. **Caught/struck in the middle** (phrase) a situation where someone or something is caught between two opposing forces or conflicting interests. बीच में फंसना

Practice Exercise

1. Select the INCORRECTLY spelt word

[SSC CGL PRE 2021]

- A. Progress
- B. Mystery
- C. Pilgrim
- D. Symtoms
- 2. The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.

My older brother,/ which you'll / meet later,/ is a dentist.

- A. My older brother
- B. which you'll
- C. meet later
- D. is a dentist
- 3. Select the most appropriate **ANTONYM** of the given word.

Rely

- A. Move
- B. Distrust
- C. Await
- D. Depend
- 4. Select the most appropriate meaning of the given idiom.

To take after

- A. To chase someone
- B. To be similar in appearance
- C. To mock someone
- D. To change sides often
- 5. Select the option that expresses the given sentence in active voice.

Hatred can be overcome by love.

- A. Love can overcome hatred.
- B. Love has overcome hatred.
- C. Love is overcoming hatred.
- D. Love can overcame hatred
- 6. Sentences of a paragraph are given below in jumbled order. Arrange the sentences in the correct order to form a meaningful and coherent paragraph.
 - A. However, when areas in Leh began to experience water shortages, life didn't grind to a halt.
 - B. Ladakh is a cold desert with a low average annual rainfall.
 - C. Thus, glaciers have been the main source of water for the people.
 - **D**. This was because Chewang Norphel, a retired civil engineer came up with the idea of artificial glaciers.

A. CBDA B. BCAD C. DABC D. BCDA

7. Select the most appropriate meaning of the given idiom.

Foul play

A. Unfair or dishonest behaviour

- B. A bad smelling theatre or playground
- C. Unpleasant weather for playing
- D. A drama which is badly produced
- 8. Select the option that can be used as a one-word substitute for the given group of words. **Formally put an end to a system, practice, or institution**
 - A. Stop
 - B. Destroy
 - C. Kill
 - D. Abolish
- 9. The following sentence has been divided into parts. One of them contains an error. Select the part that contains the error from the given options.

He was / late / for school / and punished.

- A. for school
- B. late
- C. He was
- D. and punished

10. Select the most appropriate option to fill in the blank.

- She hardly works on weekends, ____?
- A. doesn't she
- B. is she
- C. does she
- D. isn't she

11. Select the most appropriate option to substitute the underlined segment in the given sentence. If there is no need to substitute it, select 'No substitution required'.

I wish I were listening to my parents

- A. am listening
- B. have listened
- C. No substitution required
- D. had listened
- 12. Select the option that expresses the given sentence in reported speech.

Mother said, "Abhinav slipped while trying to board a bus."

- A. Mother told that Abhinav slipped while trying to board a bus.
- B. Mother said that Abhinav slipped while trying to board a bus.
- C. Mother says that Abhinav slipped while trying to board a bus.
- D. Mother said that Abhinav had slipped while trying to board a bus.
- 13. Select the most appropriate **synonym** of the given word.

DUO

- A. Bond
- B. Pair
- C. Loan
- D. Debt

14. The following sentence has been divided into parts. One of them may contain an error. Select the part that contains the error from the given options. If you don't find any error, mark 'No error' as your answer.

It was a surprising / to receive the gift/ from my brother.

- A. No error
- B. It was a surprising
- C. from my brother
- D. to receive the gift
- 15. The following sentence has been divided into parts. One of them may contain an error. Select the part that contains the error from the given options. If you don't find any error, mark 'No error' as your answer.

The fisheries sector / have grown significantly / in the last one year.

- A. have grown significantly
- B. in the last one year
- C. No error
- D. The fisheries sector

16. The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.

My house / is more / spacious than / my sister.

- A. is more
- B. My house
- C. my sister
- D. spacious than
- 17. Select the option that expresses the given sentence in passive voice.

Do you trust me?

- A. Am I trusted by you?
- B. Do I am trusted by you?
- C. Do I was trusted by you?
- D. I am trusted by you.
- 18. Select the most appropriate **synonym** of the given word.

Paranoid

- A. Convinced
- B. Trustful
- C. Committed
- D. Distrustful
- 19. Select the option that can be used as a **one-word substitute** for the given group of words. **Indifferent to pleasure and pain**
 - A. Cynic
 - B. Stoic
 - C. Prudent
 - D. Lusty
- 20. Select the most appropriate **ANTONYM** of the given word.

Appal

- A. Alarm
- B. Assure
- C. Amaze
- D. Astound

Comprehension:

In the following passage, some words have been deleted. Read the passage carefully and select the most appropriate option to fill in each blank.

An old man lived in the village. He was one of the (1) _____ unfortunate people in the world. The whole village was tired (2) _____ him; he was always gloomy, he (3) _____ complained and was always in a bad mood. The (4) _____ he lived, the more vile he was becoming and the more (5) were his words.

21. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 1.

- A. maximum
- B. utmost
- C. most
- D. main

22. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 2.

- A. from
- B. of
- C. by
- D. at

23. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 3

- A. mostly
- B. commonly
- C. cyclically
- D. constantly
- 24. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 4.
 - A. long
 - B. lengthy
 - C. longer
 - D. longest

25. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 5.

- A. fatal
- B. mortal
- C. poisonous
- D. toxic

Passage:

By formally establishing diplomatic relations with China on March 26, 2023, Honduras has joined a growing list of countries that have recently switched recognition from Taipei to Beijing. Taiwan now has only 12 countries, besides the Vatican, with which it has diplomatic ties, including four small Pacific island nations, Eswatini in southern Africa, Paraguay, and six central American and Caribbean nations. Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang, who signed the communiqué with his Honduran counterpart Eduardo Reina, said it showed Honduras made "a choice to stand on the right side of history...". Taiwan has accused Honduras of seeking financial assistance as a precondition to continue relations, and President Tsai Ing-wen said, after the switch, that Taiwan "will not engage in a meaningless contest of dollar diplomacy with China". She also accused China of "persistently [using] any and all means to suppress Taiwan's international participation, intensify its military intimidations... and disrupt regional peace".

The switch by Honduras, as well as Taiwan's concerns about its shrinking international space, point to the growing stress on the current status quo across the Taiwan Strait. The status quo has generally served both sides across the strait well, preserving peace against tall odds. In Taiwan, a thriving democracy with a highly developed economy, the status quo remains the popular choice for most people, according to numerous public opinion surveys. A minority support Taiwan declaring independence or unification with China. However, both Beijing and Taipei have been accusing the other of changing this status quo. In Taipei's view, Beijing has exerted growing diplomatic pressure to isolate Taiwan as well as stepped up military muscle-flexing, as seen in exercises that surrounded the island last year following the visit of then U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. In Beijing's view, the ruling DPP in Taipei, with the support of Washington, bears responsibility for the tensions by pursuing de facto independence. Beijing had warmer relations with the previous KMT regime, with a landmark meeting between leaders Xi Jinping and Ma Ying-jeou in 2015. The Xi government has warned the U.S. that Taiwan remains a red line for China, but with worsening relations between the two countries, Taiwan has yet again emerged as a friction point, as seen by the Pelosi visit last year. Beijing continues to refuse to rule out the use of force for what it calls reunification, should Washington or Taipei cross what it sees as a red line. The tussle between the world's two biggest powers has left the 23 million people of a vibrant and prosperous island caught in the middle.

1. What is the main reason Taiwan accuses Honduras of switching diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing?

- A. Honduras was seeking better trade relations with China.
- B. Honduras was offered military support by China.
- C. Honduras sought financial assistance as a precondition to continue relations.
- D. Honduras wanted to strengthen political ties with China.
- 2. What did Taiwan accuse Honduras of seeking as a precondition to continue relations?
 - A. Military support
 - B. Financial assistance

- C. Technological cooperation
- D. Cultural exchange
- 3. What has been the popular choice for most people in Taiwan according to numerous public opinion surveys?
 - A. Declaring independence
 - B. Unification with China
 - C. Maintaining the status quo
 - D. Engaging in dollar diplomacy with China
- 4. According to the passage, which of the following is a reason for the growing stress on the status quo across the Taiwan Strait?
 - A. Taiwan's aggressive pursuit of independence
 - B. Beijing's diplomatic pressure to isolate Taiwan and military muscle-flexing
 - C. The previous KMT regime's warmer relations with Beijing
 - D. Nancy Pelosi's visit to Beijing
- 5. What tone does President Tsai Ing-wen use when describing Taiwan's approach to diplomacy with China in the passage?
 - A. Combative
 - B. Conciliatory
 - C. Resigned
 - D. Defiant
- 6. According to the passage, what is a primary concern for Taiwan as more countries establish diplomatic relations with China?
 - A. The potential for increased military conflict
 - B. A decline in Taiwan's economic growth
 - C. The shrinking of Taiwan's international space
 - D. A shift in domestic political preferences

Answers

1. D 2. B 3. B 4. B 5. A 6. B 7.A 8. D 9. D 10. C 11. D 12. D 13. B 14. B 15. A 16. C 17. A 18. D 19. B 20. B 21. C 22. B 23. D 24. C 25. C [Practice Exercise]

Answers of Passage

1. C 2. B 3. C 4. B 5. D 6. C **Explanations**

1. Symptom – Indication, sign, indicator, warning, sign লक्षण

- Progress Development, growth, advancement, improvement प्रगति
- Mystery Secrecy, anonymity, obscurity, ambiguity, inscrutability रहस्य
- Pilgrim Traveller, hajji, tourist, visitor, wayfarer तीर्थयात्री
- 2. 'which' के बदले 'whom' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि verb या preposition के object के रूप में 'Who' के बजाय 'whom' का प्रयोग किया जाता है !
- 3. **Rely** Trust, depend on, bank on, count on भरोसा करना

Antonym:- Distrust संदेह करना

- Move progress, relocate, redeploy, change, shift चलना
- Await expect, anticipate, wait for, wait on, look forward to प्रतीक्षा करना
- Depend be contingent, hinge on, rest on, be subject to निर्भर होना
- 4. To take after (phrase) To be similar in appearance सदृश होना
- 5. Love can overcome hatred
- 6. **BCAD**

Ladakh is a cold desert with a low average annual rainfall. Thus, glaciers have been the main source of water for the people. However, when areas in Leh began to experience water shortages, life didn't grind to a halt. This was because Chewang Norphel, a retired civil engineer came up with the idea of artificial glaciers

- 7. Foul play (phrase) Unfair or dishonest behaviour ढकोसला, धोखा
- Abolish (verb) Formally put an end to a system, practice, or institution समाप्त करना, उन्मूलन करना
- 'And' के बदले 'So' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि दिए गए संदर्भ में 'So' का अर्थ है 'जिसके परिणामस्वरूप; इसलिए !
- 10. 'Does she' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि एक सकारात्मक कथन (i.e. positive statement) के बाद एक नकारात्मक Question tag का प्रयोग होता है।
- 11. 'Were listening' के बदले 'had' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि Wish + Past perfect tense का उपयोग खेद व्यक्त करने के लिए किया जाता है, या हम चाहते हैं कि अतीत में एक स्थिति अलग हो !

- 12. Mother said that Abhinav had slipped while trying to board a bus.
- 13. **Duo** (noun) Pair, twosome, couple, duet, double act जोड़ी
 - Bond (noun) Promise, pledge, oath, word; Tie, link, connection, union गहरा संबंध
 - Loan (noun) Advance, credit, finance, mortgage उधार
 - Debt (noun) Obligation, duty, responsibility; Liability, debit, bill, money owing ऋण
- 14. 'it was a surprising' के बदले 'it was surprising ' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि हम Article का प्रयोग singular countable noun के साथ करते है और यहाँ पर 'Surprising' एक 'adjective' के रूप में प्रयोग हआ है ना की 'Noun'.
- 15. 'have' के बदले 'has' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि दिए गए वाक्य में 'Sector' Main subject है। और यह singular है। इसलिए, 'singular helping verb' का उपयोग किया जाना चाहिए।
- 16. 'my sister' के बदले 'my sister's ' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि adjective 'Spacious' हमें बताता है कि मेरी बहन के घर (my sister's) की तुलना में मेरे घर में अधिक 'spacious' है ! The Adjective 'Spacious' tells us that my house, compared with my sister's, had more of the quality of spaciousness.
- 17. Am I trusted by you?
- 18. **Paranoid** (adjective) Suspicious, distrustful, fearful, mistrustful, obsessed, unreasonable चित्तविक्षेपी
 - Convinced (adjective) Persuaded, influenced, swayed, converted, induced कायल
 - Trustful (adjective) having or marked by a total belief in the reliability, truth, or ability of someone. विश्वासी, विश्वासशील
 - Committed (adjective) Dedicated, loyal, devoted, steadfast, unswerving, faitful समर्पित
- 19. Stoic (noun) Indifferent to pleasure and pain साध्, बैरागी
 - Cynic (noun) a person who questions whether something will happen or whether it is worthwhile. निंदक, मानवदवेषी
 - Prudent (adjective) acting with or showing care and thought for the future विवेकी
 - Lusty (adjective) healthy and strong; full of vigour. मोटा- ताजा
- 20. Appal (verb) Horrify, shock, disgust, dismay, sicken, outrage, scandalize, distress भयभीत

करना

Antonym: Assure आश्वासन देना, भरोसा दिलाना

• Alarm (verb) – Frighten, terrify, panic, distress, startle डराना, चौंकाना

- Amaze (verb) Astonish, astound, shock, stun, startle, surprise, flabbergast विस्मित करना, अचंभे में डालना
- Astound (verb) Amaze, astonish, surprise, shock, dumfound हक्का बक्का करना
- 21. **Most** (determiner) greatest in amount, quantity, or degree; the majority of; nearly all of. अधिकांश
 - Utmost (adjective) most extreme; greatest. परम
- 22. Tire of someone (phrasal verb) become bored with someone or something से थक जाना
- 23. Constantly (adverb) continuously over a period of time; always. लगातार, निरंतर, हमेशा
 - Cyclically (adverb) in a way that is repeated many times, always in the same order.
 नियमित रूप से
- - The more you study, the more you learn.
 - The more I see her, the more I like her
- 25. The most appropriate word for the given blank is 'poisonous'. दिए गए संदर्भ में इसका अर्थ है

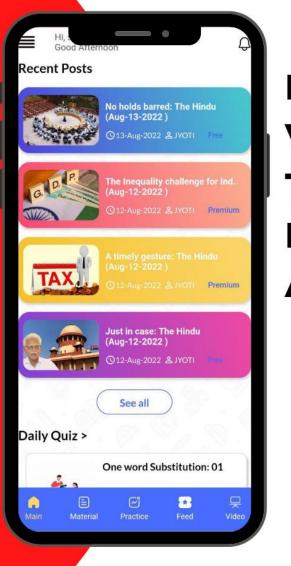
'very unpleasant and unkind' बहुत ही अप्रिय और निर्दयी'

Explanation of PASSAGE

- 1. C) The passage states that Taiwan has accused Honduras of seeking financial assistance as a precondition to continue relations. This implies that financial assistance was the main reason behind Honduras switching diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing.
- B) Financial assistance Explanation: According to the passage, Taiwan accused Honduras of seeking financial assistance as a precondition to continue relations. After the switch, President Tsai Ing-wen stated that Taiwan "will not engage in a meaningless contest of dollar diplomacy with China."
- 3. C) Maintaining the status quo Explanation: The passage states that "the status quo remains the popular choice for most people" in Taiwan, according to numerous public opinion surveys. This suggests that the majority of Taiwanese citizens prefer to maintain the current situation, which has generally served both sides across the Taiwan Strait well and preserved peace. Although there is a minority who support either declaring independence or unification with China, these options are not the popular choice.
- 4. b) Beijing's diplomatic pressure to isolate Taiwan and military muscle-flexing Explanation: The passage states that "In Taipei's view, Beijing has exerted growing diplomatic pressure to isolate Taiwan as well as stepped up military muscle-flexing," which indicates that the growing stress on the status quo across the Taiwan Strait is a result of Beijing's actions to diplomatically pressure and isolate Taiwan, as well as their increased military activity.
- 5. D) Defiant

Explanation: President Tsai Ing-wen uses a defiant tone when describing Taiwan's approach to diplomacy with China, as she states that Taiwan "will not engage in a meaningless contest of dollar diplomacy with China." This statement shows her determination to stand against China's economic influence in the diplomatic arena.

6. C) The shrinking of Taiwan's international space Explanation: The passage highlights that the switch by Honduras and other countries from recognizing Taipei to Beijing is causing concern for Taiwan regarding its shrinking international space. This is evident when President Tsai Ing-wen accuses China of "persistently [using] any and all means to suppress Taiwan's international participation."



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