

[China publicizes online pornography cases](#)

Chinese authorities on Wednesday publicized eight cases showing their success in cracking down on online pornography.

The National Office Against Pornographic and Illegal Publications in 2017 launched a new round of a nationwide campaign against the production, sale and distribution of illegal publications and online pornography that could affect juveniles.

The campaign has specially targeted online streaming and the use of instant messaging and cloud storage services to spread pornography, and many criminal suspects were caught and punished.

In one case, Beijing police in January found a company used its app platform to perform obscene live shows, gaining a large sum of illegal earnings. The platform was shut down and the company had its license suspended by the police.

In another case in east China's Zhejiang Province, the local police found some people using cloud storage services to distribute erotic videos. Two suspects were later apprehended, along with more than 10,000 illegal videos. They were found to have grossed illegal gains of more than 100,000 yuan (14,500 U.S.dollars). Endi

[Nation's first Antarctic airfield may see building begin by 2018](#)

Progress continues on China's first airfield in Antarctica, with site selection and a survey completed and plans set for construction to begin as early as year's end, according to a senior scientist.

The airfield, near China's Zhongshan Station, will be able to handle fixed-wing aircraft. Specialists from the nation's 33rd Antarctic expedition recently surveyed a 3-square-kilometer area selected for the airfield, said Sun Bo, deputy director of the Polar Research Institute of China under the State Oceanic Administration.

Sun spoke at a news conference after the welcoming ceremony in Shanghai for the 33rd Antarctic expedition, which ended a 161-day mission and returned to its base in Shanghai on Tuesday morning.

The 328-member expedition conducted a great amount of scientific research and experiments at and around the country's four Antarctic stations—Changcheng, Zhongshan, Taishan and Kunlun—according to the institute. It added that the Xuelong icebreaker and Haiyang 6 scientific survey ship, the two vessels carrying the expedition team, also conducted oceanographic and geological research.

Sun said the construction of the planned airfield will be carried out by the 34th Antarctic expedition, which is set to arrive in Antarctica around the end of this year, adding that the infrastructure project will go through an international environmental protection review.

“At first the airfield will have only one runway, so the construction will be easy—we will only need to flatten the selected area and maintain it. Fixed-wing aircraft will need to be equipped with a pair of runners so they can land,” he told China Daily.

“Next, we plan to build some runways in the same area. They will be flatter than the first runway and will be capable of accommodating large fixed-wing planes that are not equipped with runners,” Sun said.

The airfield will greatly facilitate the nation's Antarctic explorations, Sun said.

There are about 40 airstrips in service in Antarctica with the United States, Australia and Italy being the major operators.

During the 33rd expedition, Chinese scientists used the Xueying 601, the only fixed-wing aircraft used by China for Antarctic research, to perform airborne remote sensing and telemetry operations, which means China is now able to conduct aerial surveys in Antarctica, Sun said.

In another development, Lin Shanqing, deputy head of State Oceanic Administration, said at the news conference that the 33rd expedition completed a survey of possible sites of China's fifth Antarctic station near the Ross Sea, a bay in Antarctica. He said experts inspected and examined five locations before deciding.

Preparation for the new station has been completed and construction will start as soon as 2018, Lin said.

The Ross Sea is believed to be the least altered marine ecosystem on Earth, making it a living laboratory that may provide insights about Antarctica's history.

Address to the National Defence College

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you very much Lieutenant General Mohan for your very warm welcome and for inviting me here today.

We are honoured to be in your company and I want to acknowledge among my party the High Commissioner, Harinder Sidhu, the Australian High Commissioner and of course many other distinguished members of the government including the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Frances Adamson.

It is an honour also to be here and to recognise the long history of Australia's involvement with this great institution.

Australian students have made the pilgrimage to study at the college almost every year dating back to 1966— among them, as Lieutenant General Mohan and I recollected earlier, Australia's current Governor-General, General Sir Peter Cosgrove.

And today, Australia is represented here by Captain Simon Bateman of the Royal Australian Navy and we were discussing earlier that the last time we met was in Nowra, which is a long way from New Delhi, at HMAS Albatross.

For more than a century, Indian and Australian soldiers, sailors and airmen have worked alongside each other, fought alongside each other, in peace and in conflict.

On Anzac Day later this month we will remember the thousands of Indian soldiers who fought alongside Australian troops in every theatre, in Gallipoli, across the Middle East and indeed on the Western Front during the First World War.

This year sees the anniversaries of some of the major engagements of World War Two, where in Malaya, Singapore, the Middle East and North Africa, Australian and Indian troops fought together side-by-side.

It also marks 75-years since the war arrived to Australia's shores, starting with the Japanese bombing of Darwin in February 1942.

We remember men like Flying Officer Manmohan Singh, one of the first Sikh aviators of the British Indian Air Force, who became the first Indian war casualty in Australia when his Catalina was downed off Broome in 1942.

Threads like these tie our defence histories together, and create long-lasting bonds that draw our nations even closer together today.

Now Captain Bateman is fortunate to be posted here in India at a time when

the strategic interests of our two nations are clearly converging.

At the Indian Ocean Rim Association in Jakarta last month I discussed why a secure, stable, peaceful and connected Indo-Pacific is vital to the security and prosperity of Australia, as indeed it is for India.

Cooperation on regional stability sits squarely in the interests of both our nations. Our top five trading partners, for example, are all located in the Indo-Pacific and—like India—we depend heavily on the oceans for our trade. More than 98 per cent of our international trade by volume arrives in Australia now by sea.

Today more than ever, our economies rely on the maintenance of free and secure trade routes across the Indo-Pacific.

One of the more significant regional challenges we face, of course, is competing maritime claims in the South China Sea. But we also face common challenges in combatting terrorism and transnational crime.

As like-minded liberal democracies we can work closely together to champion international law, and ensure that challenges like these—and any threat to the rules-based order on which our economies so heavily depend—can be peacefully resolved.

Our bilateral Framework for Security Cooperation is a strong platform for collaboration. But Australia and India also need to engage our friends and partners to form broader habits of cooperation, develop each other's capabilities, and shape the entire region's common strategic outlook.

Our trilateral engagement with Japan is a good example of this, as are our respective bilateral engagements with the United States.

We're both supporters of the ASEAN-backed East Asia Summit, and I know that India engages with a range of Indian Ocean states directly—especially in South East Asia—which we strongly commend.

Prime Minister Modi has described his vision for our Indo-Pacific neighbourhood as Security and Growth for All in the Region—a vision founded on a climate of trust and transparency, respect for rules and norms, sensitivity to each other's interests, and an increase in maritime cooperation.

I share his vision for a stable and prosperous Indian Ocean region and Australia plans to work closely with India and others to make it a reality.

As the Indian Ocean washes at both our shores and our economies are defined by maritime trade, it makes sense that Australia and India's defence links are strongest at sea.

Australia is already a significant Indo-Pacific naval power in its own right. We have one of the largest and most sophisticated naval forces in the region, with nearly 50 commissioned vessels and more than 14,000 personnel.

And we have just embarked on Australia's largest peacetime investment in national security.

Our modernisation of the Australian Defence Force, in particular our nation building shipbuilding plan, will create thousands of new jobs and a sustainable, internationally-competitive sovereign defence industry.

Our defence industry investment is a truly historic national enterprise. It is the most significant modernisation, investment and construction in defence capability since the Second World War.

In particular, it focuses on the importance of our own capabilities right across defence and shipbuilding. Over the next generation we have committed to the construction of 12 future submarines, 9 future frigates, 12 offshore patrol vessels.

Our forces are closely integrated with our allies and our partners. We have much to gain, Australia and India from our navies working together, as we already do.

Our navies have, in recent times, engaged more and more in port visits and short-term passage exercises.

HMAS Perth was in Goa last October, and HMAS Arunta in November. And the INS Sumitra conducted port visits to Sydney and Darwin late last year as well.

In September 2015, our navies conducted their first Bilateral Maritime Exercise in the Bay of Bengal—a great success, which we're aiming to repeat in our next joint exercise off the West Australian Coast in 2018.

The feedback from that first Exercise AUSINDEX showed how well the two navies cooperated. Many Royal Australian Navy personnel commented that when visiting Indian Navy ships they felt very much at home, with very similar shipboard routines, orders and command organisation.

I look forward to providing an opportunity for our Border Force to work jointly with the Indian Coast Guard.

Yesterday Prime Minister Modi and I witnessed the exchange of an MoU that will enhance our cooperation on a range of security challenges, including counter-terrorism, cyber-security, people smuggling and anti-people trafficking.

We're also supporting each other in multilateral exercises—the Royal Australian Navy has been a regular participant in India's Exercise MILAN and Australia encourages India's participation in security, rescue and arms removal exercises in Australian waters.

I acknowledge India's leadership in establishing the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, which has become a vital channel for the frank flow of information between Chiefs of Navy across our region.

While our defence interests are undoubtedly most aligned at sea, Australia is

highly invested in boosting our army and air force cooperation as well.

A modest but significant program of army bilateral training grew last year on the back of reciprocal visits by the Australian and Indian Chiefs of Army.

A growing area of focus for us is our cooperation on countering improvised explosive devices, and I look forward to seeing this cooperation grow.

The relationship between our air forces should also be built up. We will continue to operate common aircraft in the future, giving us the scope to exchange information and ideas.

There's also scope for our air forces to develop humanitarian assistance and disaster relief exercises and with the right focus, this arm of our joint defence capability will be able to accomplish outcomes equally as impressive as our navies and armies.

So that's just a snapshot of our shared undertakings but what it makes clear is that our defence partnerships are experiencing a great deal of positive momentum.

What Australia and India need to do now is to capitalise on that momentum, deepen the engagement, and increase the consistency and complexity of our activities.

The second iteration of our Army Special Forces exercise AUSTRAHIND is scheduled for later this year, and Australia looks forward as I noted, to hosting our next Maritime joint exercise, AUSINDEX, next year.

We are keen to finalise arrangements to better facilitate logistics for combined exercises and training.

And our engagement in materiel, science and technology will continue to progress thanks to the establishment, late last year, of the Joint Working Group on Defence Research and Materiel Cooperation.

Supporting a relationship as active and growing as ours requires the people to keep it moving, which is why we want to increase our defence representation in India over the coming years.

People-to-people links, either through senior-level engagement or education and training opportunities, are absolutely critical to ensure our defence forces develop the familiarity and trust that underpins a close and long-lasting relationship.

Just as our Australian officers have appreciated the opportunity to attend fine Indian training institutions such as this, the National Defence College, Australia has been pleased to host Indian officers at our own institutions.

Australia welcomes students to the Australian Command and Staff College and the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies. I look forward to meeting later today those of you planning to visit Australia on your study tour next month.

Our defence cooperation rests on the commitment and effort of our people and it always has.

Our countries share a history, our democratic heritage and a common love of freedom. We also share an ocean, rapidly converging strategic interests, and a future in this the most dynamic region in the world.

We are natural partners—today more than ever—and the Australian Government will continue to do all in its power to ensure that that partnership continues to flourish.

Thank you very much.

[ENDS]

Doorstop at the India Gate

PRIME MINISTER:

Yesterday we had great discussions with Prime Minister Modi, very productive meetings but also I was thrilled to go on the Delhi Metro. What an achievement. It started in 2002 and they have over 200 kilometres of lines and 159 stations, 27 million passengers. It is a huge achievement and they are still building it. And it was wonderful to join with him in a very relaxed way, getting the train and as you know, I was very impressed by the enthusiastic welcome he received from fellow commuters. I don't get quite the same reception from the commuters on the Sydney train network but it was phenomenal. He's clearly very, very, very, very beloved of the people here.

And you know, his pride in India's achievements and its history is really inspiring. We went to the Akshardham Temple which is a new temple, a new temple complex and Prime Minister Modi's pride in India's ancient histories and culture was just so, you could feel it, you could feel he was bursting with pride as he explained the history and the cultures and the development of India from the Vedic times right up to the present day.

And so you feel with Prime Minister Modi that whether it is on the Metro or at that temple, he is taking India into the 21st century. Innovation, technology, science – all of which offer great opportunities for Australia of course. He's taking India forward but at the same time so proud of and so connected to the ancient cultures of thousands of years that are the foundation of Indian civilization.

We had a very practical discussion also about the CECA, the free trade agreement.

Now, as you know there hasn't been enough progress on that. There is a long

tradition, as I have said, of protectionism in India and the Indian governmental system I would say hasn't been as enthusiastic about it as perhaps we in Australia would've liked, but Prime Minister Modi and I had a very good frank discussion about that and we both agreed that progress hadn't been good enough. We've both directed our chief negotiators to reconvene as soon as possible and we've directed them to set out, to tabulate exactly what the asks are, what the ambitions are in respect of each side so that they can then report back to us and we can see how close, or our far apart the two negotiating teams are and what can be done to bridge those gaps.

This has been a very productive outcome and it came out of the private meeting I had with Prime Minister Modi. We discussed it in the private meeting and we went into the bilateral and we gave those instructions to the relevant ministers and negotiators.

I think that is a very important outcome of this visit.

As you know we have entered into a new MoU to enhance our cooperation on counter-terrorism, on human trafficking, on security generally.

I'll be going to the National Defence College in a little while to talk to the cadets and other officials there. We've got a long tradition of exchanging cadets between our various defence colleges and we are going to increase that. Again that is something that Prime Minister Modi and I have agreed to do – that there will be more Australian cadets coming this way and Australian and Indian cadets and officers going the other way.

The better we understand each other, the better we are able to work together and that is clearly a very valuable initiative.

I might say, our Governor-General trained here in India as one of the exchange students in years past. So it is a long tradition but we'd like to see more of it.

Finally, I'd say we're going to have a very important energy roundtable in Mumbai later on today.

Again, Prime Minister Modi and I have a very similar perspective on India, although with very different contexts. Obviously, India has got, hundreds of millions of Indians don't have access to electricity at all so they have a big need to increase their energy production. They have an all of the above approach – coal, nuclear, solar, wind, everything, hydro. We have an all of the above approach, obviously nuclear is not part of our equation in Australia but the rest of it, again, like Prime Minister Modi, we focus on economics and engineering as being the guides to good energy policy.

So this has been a very successful visit. We've really, I think the Prime Minister and I have achieved a higher level of rapport. We got on very well when we first met but to spend this much time together and to be with him when he is so proud of modern India, ancient India and that thread of continuity of extraordinary progress – it's been quite inspiring.

JOURNALIST:

Mr Turnbull, you also met with Mr Adani and his executives yesterday. Barnaby Joyce said this morning that the issue of a loan for the railway line is a tipping point issue. Did Mr Adani make that case to you last night?

PRIME MINISTER:

Mr Adani in our discussions simply noted that his company expects to make an application to the Northern Australia Infrastructure Fund on the basis that we've described several times. That's got an independent board, it will assess the application on its merits and it is obviously going to be dependent on there being other funding as well from the private sector, from external sources to support the railway line. There is no new news on Adani and the railway project. They are entitled to make an application to the Northern Australia Infrastructure Fund, they expect to do so and it will be assessed scrupulously and independently.

JOURNALIST:

There is a bit of a storm back home about Native Title because Mr Adani has asked for those Native Title changes to be made. I think that you are trying to get those changes made. But is that trashing Eddie Mabo's legacy to change Native Title law to help Mr Adani?

PRIME MINISTER:

That is not a fair description, David, with respect.

As you know, the Federal Court had made a decision in the McGlade case which gave an interpretation to the Native Title Act that no-one had anticipated, or outside of the litigators perhaps. It's caused us a lot of problems with many, many agreements right around the country, not least of all in Western Australia where the case arose.

So there is a need to deal with the legislation – that is broadly accepted across the Parliament – and I expect that legislative changes will be made when Parliament gets back.

But the recognition that the McGlade decision would make so many Native Title, so many agreements with Aboriginal Land Corporations and so forth and Native Title owners invalid – it's a decision that can't be allowed in practical terms to let stand and there is very strong support for rectifying it.

JOURNALIST:

Did Mr Adani seek assurance from you that that would be done?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, Mr Adani noted that this is an issue for his development but, frankly, it's an issue for just about every development in Australia where Native Title issues are involved.

It's an issue for the Native Title owners as well because plainly you've got to be able to reach agreements to get the development to ensure that Native Title owners, First Australians get the economic returns and the advancement that they deserve and we all aspire for them to have.

JOURNALIST:

You say that this legislation will pass when Parliament comes back. I understand Mr Shorten has written to you saying that Labor supports the changes but only as applied to the agreements –

PRIME MINISTER:

Yeah, that's right.

JOURNALIST:

And they're saying that the legislation goes beyond that.

PRIME MINISTER:

Yes, Labor raised a concern that the some of the amendments that have been proposed went beyond simply rectifying the decision in McGlade. And without getting into an argument about the legal drafting, we will ensure that the amendments that are voted on in the Senate when Parliament gets back deal with the McGlade decision and then any further amendments if, you know, interested parties want to advance them can be considered at a future date but the important, the priority in terms of both Native Title owners and development generally is to get the McGlade issue dealt with and I believe that will done as, in line with what Mr Shorten has said.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister notwithstanding the independence of the Northern Australia Infrastructure Fund, do you agree with your Deputy Prime Minister that the rail, the loan for the rail line is a tipping point for the project?

PRIME MINISTER:

Look I'd simply say – I'm not sure that fairly characterises what the Deputy Prime Minister as Acting Prime Minister has said today in Australia – but all I can say is that I know that Adani is going to make, is making an application. They're entitled to make the application. It's well known that they're going to do that and they have got, this a very big project and the NAIF funding were it to be made for part of the, for the railways only a part, in fact a relatively small part of the total capital that's required for the big, for this coal mine and associated infrastructure.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister Natasha Exelby has apparently been allowed to read on the ABC now notwithstanding a quite extraordinary outcry from some very prominent people. Were they right to say that a blooper should not disqualify her from

reading or should the ABC simply be allowed to make those decisions unimpeded?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well as you know I've been here in India with you and I haven't been watching bloopers on the ABC or indeed on any other network, not on yours of course, they don't, they'd never occur.

So I'll leave the commentary on that to those that have been better informed on it.

JOURNALIST:

As you've seen though some of the commentary on the Sydney University academic or indeed academics who are apparently pro Bashar al-Assad and have suggested he's been setup over this chemical attack. Is that a concern to you about what's going on in the university?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well as you know we've been travelling for the last few days, I'm not briefed on the circumstances surrounding this academic but my views on Bashar al-Assad's regime, my views and the Government's views on his horrendous, criminal conduct are very well known and well stated. And as you know we've strongly supported the United States swift and just response to prevent further chemical attacks by that regime.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister Turnbull, are you conscious of the fact that a positive outcome for the Adani project would likely have positive effects for future deals involving Indian companies? And trade as a whole?

PRIME MINISTER:

We want to see more trade and more investment between Australia and India and so does Prime Minister Modi so that's why we're taking, that's why we've taken the initiative yesterday to say to the negotiators get back to the table, work out exactly what each side is asking for so PM Modi and I can see where we are apart.

Now look, neither of us is going to do a trade deal that isn't a good trade deal, Okay? So this is not a deal at any price. But what is not acceptable to either Prime Minister Modi or myself is people not getting together and getting down to tin tacks. So that's what's going, so that's the initiative we took yesterday, it arose out of our private discussion and then we dealt with it in the bilateral meeting. That doesn't guarantee that a deal will be concluded, of course, but what it means is we will get on, we've got to get on with it.

There's a difference between talking about doing a deal and doing a deal and we've got to move into the second part of the equation.

JOURNALIST:

Are you conscious of positive outcome for Adani –

PRIME MINISTER:

Well look, Adani, the challenges that Adani faces are, now that all the environmental approvals have been given, the challenges they face are essentially commercial ones. And they are for Mr Adani and his company to deal with. So it is a, it's gone through many environmental hearings and appeals and considerations at both federal and state level so they've got the governmental green light to go ahead. What they now have to do is secure financing. The company is very confident of that, but that's a matter for them. It is a commercial project.

JOURNALIST:

It shouldn't be dependent on this money for the rail?

PRIME MINISTER:

I'm sorry –

JOURNALIST:

It shouldn't be, the mine shouldn't be dependent on this money for the rail link?

PRIME MINISTER:

You're asking me is the mine dependent on the money for the rail link?

JOURNALIST:

Yep.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well only Mr Adani could give you that answer for sure because he knows what his sources of financing are. They are conducting discussions, they will be conducting discussions with both third party financiers and the National Australia Infrastructure Fund with respect to the rail link, they'll be doing that because it has got to be part of the package. You see under the charter, if you like, of the Northern Australia Infrastructure Fund it can't lend more than 50 per cent of the finance for any project. It has to be a commercial project. It has to have an economic return. It's being judged by an independent board who have got considerable commercial experience.

So this is all, so, it's a long time since I've financed a project myself but I have no doubt that Mr Adani will have a range of options, financing options and a range or alternatives, you know, if one funder doesn't turn up on the terms that he wants he'll have another one to go to.

Look he's a very experienced businessman and his company has an all of the

above approach to energy. They have solar investments in Australia and as I said yesterday they have here in India the second largest solar farm in the world, over 2.5 million panels and its around nearly 500 megawatts of capacity, so it's a very, very big solar investment.

The key thing to understand about India and energy is they have got enormous demand for growing provision of energy and Australia by contrast, demand has been relatively flat so our economic growth has decoupled, not entirely, but in large part from growth in energy demand and you are seeing a lot of very significant changes in the energy market. We've talked about solar, we've talked about renewables, more variable demand, more variable supply. These effect India as well but the big difference here is they've got to ramp up supply and that's why they're ticking all of the boxes – whether its nuclear, coal, gas, renewables of every kind.

JOURNALIST:

Mr Adani is a billionaire PM, so what's in it for Australian tax payers to help him out? Why can't he fund it himself?

PRIME MINISTER:

The project, if it is built will create tens of thousands of jobs. It will generate over the course of its life an enormous amount in taxes and in royalties, revenues for federal and state governments, so plainly there is a huge economic benefit from a big project of this kind, assuming its built and it proceeds.

As to the Northern Australia Infrastructure Fund, I just repeat its mission is to support infrastructure which is commercial, it can't be the sole provider, its limited to 50 per cent, no more than 50 per cent of any one project, the projects have to be commercial, they have to assessed on their merits by an independent board and they will be.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister what's the point of it, if it's supposed to be commercial why have a fund at all? Why not leave it to the market?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I hear the point you're making but the reality is that very often a degree of government support albeit limited to a concessional loan, this is still a loan.

What we're talking about here is an approach analogise to that of the Clean Energy Finance Corporation. The Clean Energy Finance Corporation makes a return; it's been profitable for the government but it does provide that bit of extra support that can sometimes make a project happen as opposed to not happen.

So it is an important part. The Northern Australia Infrastructure Fund is an important part of our commitment to development of Australia's north which

is, that is our big economic frontier, a huge opportunity with far too little development and far too little infrastructure and so the NAIF is a way of supporting that.

JOURNALIST:

So coming out of that meeting – can you tell us – are you more confident as a result of your talks with Mr Adani that this will go ahead? Or hasn't he changed your confidence levels?

PRIME MINISTER:

The obstacles or the challenges for Adani in this project are commercial ones. He is very confident, basically because he is building a vertically integrated project so he is going to be producing coal most of which he will be buying himself to fuel his own power stations in India. He is very confident about it commercially but then again time will tell.

It's a long time since I gave commercial appraisals on projects for a living and as Prime Minister, I'm sure you'd like me to, I will leave that to the Mr Adani and as to the NAIF's approach that will be assessed by its independent board. Now I have one more question then I must go.

JOURNALIST:

On North Korea PM, there's a palpable sort of build-up of tensions around that area at the moment. Is that something that is concerning your Government and is it something that came up in discussions with Mr Modi?

PRIME MINISTER:

We discussed the full range of regional security issues. I won't go, naturally into areas of this kind, I won't go into any more detail than we have already provided publicly but can I say to you that the reckless and dangerous conduct of the North Korean regime is threatening peace and stability, not just of the region but of the whole world. We continue to apply, as have other members of the United Nations, sanctions against the North Korea regime and we continue to call on China to exercise the undoubted influence it has over the North Korean regime to pull it back from further reckless conduct.

Thank you all very much.

[ENDS]

[Playing up Taiwan suspect will harm](#)

cross-Strait relations

Any attempt to play up the case of a Taiwan resident under investigation will further harm the “already severe” relations between the mainland and Taiwan, an official said Wednesday.



An Fengshan, spokesperson for the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, speaks at a press conference on April 12, 2017. [Photo/Taiwan.cn]

Lee Ming-che is being investigated for suspected activities “endangering national security,” An Fengshan, spokesperson for the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, said at a press conference.

The mainland-based Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits has entrusted a Taiwan-based NGO to inform Lee’s wife of the case and pass letters from him to his family, according to An.

“Some outside groups in Taiwan have taken the case to attack the mainland, make trouble, and interfere with the investigation,” An said. “They will not have a way to attain their goals.”

“The investigation is being conducted in accordance with the law and the suspect’s legal rights will be protected,” An said, warning that attempts to interfere with the case will only complicate matters and harm Lee’s rights.