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# China asked WHO to cover up coronavirus outbreak: German intelligence service

Delay cost world 4 to 6 weeks that could have been used for preparation: BND

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By Matthew Strong, Taiwan News, Staff Writer

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China's Xi Jinping (right) v

TAIPEI (Taiwan News) — Chinese leader Xi Jinping (習近平) asked World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus to suppress news about the Wuhan coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, the German intelligence agency BND found, according to a report by German magazine Der Spiegel.

During a conversation on Jan. 21, Xi reportedly asked Tedros not to announce that the virus could be transmitted between humans and to delay any declaration of a coronavirus pandemic.

It took until the end of January before the WHO declared that the coronavirus outbreak needed to receive international attention. Because of China's delay, the world wasted four to six weeks it could have used to better counter the spread of the virus, the BND concluded.

Germany's Robert Koch Institute also said that China failed to reveal all the relevant information at the outset of the epidemic, leading it to turn to the BND for advice, CNA cited a report in the Sueddeutsche Zeitung as saying.

In response to the reports by German media, Chinese diplomats said the opposite was true, arguing that the communist country's handling of the virus had bought time that was then wasted by other governments.

- Wuhan coronavirus
- Xi Jinping
- Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
- WHO
- BND
- Der Spiegel

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