

U.S. IMPOSES SANCTIONS AGAINST CHINA OVER ABUSE OF UIGHURS

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Gina Raimondo

The Biden administration said on Thursday it is imposing new sanctions on several Chinese biotech and surveillance companies and government entities for actions in Xinjiang province, the latest step against Beijing over human rights abuses of Uighur Muslims.

The Commerce Department is targeting China's Academy of Military Medical Sciences and its 11 research institutes that focus on using biotechnology to support the Chinese military.

The move will bar American companies from selling components to the entities without a licence.

"The scientific pursuit of biotechnology and medical innovation can save lives. Unfortunately, the PRC (People's Republic of China) is choosing to use these technologies to pursue control over its people and its repression of members of ethnic and religious minority groups," Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo said. "We cannot allow U.S. commodities, technologies, and software that support medical science and biotechnical innovation to be diverted toward uses contrary to U.S. national security," she said.

The official, explaining the Commerce Department actions, noted that U.S. intelligence has established that Beijing has set up a high tech surveillance system across Xinjiang that uses biometric facial recognition and has collected DNA samples from all residents, aged 12 to 65.

Meanwhile, the Senate gave approval on Thursday to a Bill barring all imports from China's Xinjiang region unless businesses can prove they were produced without forced labour. The Bill now goes to President Joe Biden, who is expected to sign it.

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