

Justice commission loses no time

Written by Taipei Times Editorial
Tuesday, 03 July 2018 00:36

The Transitional Justice Commission is off to a good start as initial efforts by its members seem to meet public expectations for transitional justice.

The commission is tasked with opening political archives to the public, removing authoritarian symbols, redressing miscarriages of justice and exonerating victims, establishing historical truth, investigating political persecution and promoting social reconciliation, among other duties.

The commission has made progress since its inauguration on May 31 — an encouraging sign given that the Control Yuan was notorious for sitting idly by as paperwork piled up.

Commission member Hua Yih-fen (華以芬), who is keeping an eye out for remnants of the party-state ideology in education, last month pointed out flaws in the Ministry of Education's new curriculum guidelines for the 12-year national education system, saying that they displayed signs of a lingering authoritarian mindset and practices.

The commission early last month announced that it aimed to complete the preliminary work for redressing miscarriages of justice within two weeks and it on Wednesday last week said that a review of victims of political persecution during the White Terror era could see more than 13,000 people exonerated.

Commission Deputy Chairman Chang Tien-chin (張天欽) said that the commission's work to restore justice has "progressed very quickly."

The commission has also completed drafts for regulations governing the investigation of historical truth about the authoritarian era, which would empower it to open inquiries into historical cases and establish the degree to which perpetrators were responsible for political persecution.

The commission on Sunday said that it is investigating high-profile historical cases, including

Justice commission loses no time

Written by Taipei Times Editorial
Tuesday, 03 July 2018 00:36

the death of Carnegie Mellon University associate professor Chen Wen-chen (陳文成) in 1981 under dubious circumstances on the National Taiwan University campus.

Time is of the essence when restoring justice, as many of the victims are at an advanced age, and their children who can give accounts of the tragedies during the White Terror era are also aging.

In view of the progress they have made so far, commission members certainly deserve praise for working hard in a race against time to uncover and correct the misdeeds of the authoritarian era.

Nevertheless, the members can still do more as they investigate and clarify historical truths.

An example is the name “Chinese Taipei,” which is a grave issue related to transitional justice. The so-called “Olympic model” was agreed upon by Taiwan and the International Olympic Committee in 1981, establishing a ridiculous name under which Taiwanese athletes have since been forced to compete in international sports events.

Taiwan was then ruled by the Chinese Nationalist Party’s (KMT) single-party regime and people had no say on public affairs.

As Taiwan is a democracy now, practices that relate to party-state ideology should be investigated so that the nation’s athletes can have their dignity restored.

Transitional justice has been long overdue in Taiwan. That the commission has received more than 40 letters of appeal from the public over the past month, according to a source, is testament to this.

“These letters show that the public has high hopes for the commission,” the official said.

Justice commission loses no time

Written by Taipei Times Editorial
Tuesday, 03 July 2018 00:36

Commission members are shouldering a serious responsibility. Hopefully, their hard work will bring tangible results to further consolidate the nation's democracy.

Source: [Taipei Times - Editorials 2018/07/03](#)