

## Chen Shui-bian gets life

Written by Taipei Times  
Saturday, 12 September 2009 07:25 -

---



Former president Chen Shui-bian walks behind barbed wire inside the Taipei Detention Center.  
PHOTO: AFP

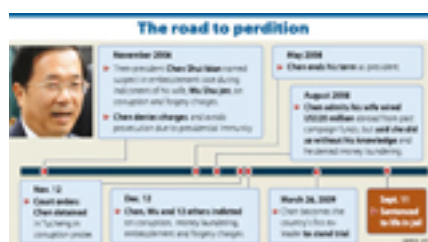
The Taipei District Court yesterday sentenced former president Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) and his wife to life in prison after handing down a guilty verdict in the graft trial against the former first couple and 11 co-defendants.

The verdict makes Chen the first former president in the country's history to be indicted and convicted.

Presiding Judge Tsai Shou-hsun (蔡守訓) began reading from the court's 1,000-page verdict at 4pm. Chen received a life sentence, a fine of NT\$200 million (US\$6.1 million) and had his civil rights annulled for life for violating the Punishment of Corruption Act (貪污治罪條例), Money Laundering Control Act (洗錢防制法) and Criminal Code (刑法).

Chen chose not to attend yesterday's proceedings. Lee Ta-chu (李太斗), deputy warden at the Taipei Detention Center, where Chen has been imprisoned since Dec. 30 last year, said that the former president went about his daily activities as usual.

Lee said the former president was calm after finding out about his sentence through TV news.



## Chen Shui-bian gets life

Written by Taipei Times

Saturday, 12 September 2009 07:25 -

---

The court ruled that Chen, during his term as president, “for selfish reasons ... used his power to create wealth while putting aside integrity and loyalty to the country.”

The ruling states that as president, Chen should have known that “if one person in power developed a greed for the people’s money, the entire country would devolve into chaos.”

The court found Chen and his wife guilty of embezzlement and taking bribes totaling NT\$800 million, some of which was laundered overseas through Swiss bank accounts and paper companies.

Former first lady Wu Shu-jen (吳淑珍) was given a life sentence, a fine of NT\$300 million and also had her civil rights annulled for life. The ruling states that although the court was sympathetic toward her disability, as a former legislator Wu “knows the country’s money comes from its hardworking people,” yet “used her position countless times to obtain large amounts of public funds to be used for personal expenses.”

However, because Wu has been in a wheelchair since an incident in 1985 and needs full-time care, she might be allowed to serve out her sentence in an alternative way, such as house arrest.

In the money laundering case, Chen Shui-bian’s son, Chen Chih-chung (陳智雄), was sentenced to two years and six months, as well as a fine of NT\$150 million, for helping his parents wire money to overseas bank accounts.

Chen Shui-bian’s daughter-in-law, Huang Jui-ching (黃淑晶), was sentenced to one year and eight months and fined NT\$150 million on money laundering charges.

Speaking briefly to reporters after hearing the verdict, Chen Shui-bian’s court-appointed attorney Tseng Te-rong (曾德榮) said he found the life sentence “rather heavy,” but declined to comment further, saying that he would first need to read through the entire ruling.

Cheng Wen-lung (鄭文龍), a former attorney for Chen Shui-bian, said the ruling was a “political ruling” because the court handed down a guilty verdict when there was no proof Chen Shui-bian was guilty.

Lin Chih-hung (林智雄), an attorney for the former first lady, said the sentence was too heavy and would advise her to appeal the ruling.

Yeh Ta-hui (葉大衛), an attorney for Chen Chih-chung and his wife, said he would discuss

## Chen Shui-bian gets life

Written by Taipei Times

Saturday, 12 September 2009 07:25 -

---

whether to appeal the ruling after he receives a copy of it. However, Yeh said that even if they decided to appeal, the young couple would not change their decision to plead guilty in hopes of leniency.

The Supreme Prosecutors' Office said prosecutors would decide whether to appeal after they receive a copy of the ruling.

Two former presidential aides, former deputy secretary-general Ma Yung-cheng (馬雲成) and former Presidential Office director Lin Teh-hsun (林德全), were found guilty of helping the former first family embezzle money from public funds and were sentenced to 20 and 16 years respectively and had their civil rights annulled for 10 and eight years respectively.

The court said the former first family's bookkeeper Chen Chen-hui (陳陳惠) escaped a prison sentence because she showed remorse for her crimes and provided key evidence to prosecutors and judges, including computer records she kept detailing the former first family's official and personal expenses.

The former president and his wife were found guilty of receiving kickbacks from a development company to pave the way for the construction of the Hsinchu Science Park by purchasing a plot of land in Taoyuan County from the company at a price prosecutors argued was unreasonably high.

Former Hsinchu Science Park head James Lee (李俊承) and Wu's friend Tsai Ming-che (蔡明哲) were found guilty of pocketing part of the money and transferring kickbacks to accounts held by family members of Chen Shui-bian and Wu.

Lee was sentenced to six years in prison and had his civil rights annulled for three years. Tsai Ming-che was sentenced to two years in prison and five years probation. His brother Tsai Ming-chieh (蔡明吉) was also found guilty of taking kickbacks and received a two-year prison sentence and five years probation.

The ruling found the former first family guilty of collecting bribes from contractor Kuo Chuan-ching (郭煥景) between 2002 and 2003 to help him win a tender to build the Nangang Exhibition Hall. Kuo was sentenced to six months in jail, of which three months have been suspended.

Prosecutors argued that Kuo won the contract by bribing members of a panel organized by the Ministry of the Interior to assess the bidding after then-interior minister Yu Cheng-hsien (俞正聲) revealed the list of panel members to Kuo at Wu's request.

Tsai Ming-chieh and Kuo early last month pleaded guilty to helping Wu obtain US\$2.73 million in bribes in connection with a land deal in Longtan (龍潭), Taoyuan County.

Yu has also been indicted for allegedly leaking secrets, but the court has not yet passed a verdict in his case because he is not one of the co-defendants in the Chen Shui-bian case.

### BRIBES

The District Court also found Chen Shui-bian and his wife guilty of some of the charges prosecutors added against them on May 5. These include taking NT\$10 million in bribes from former Taipei Financial Center Corp (財團法人台北金融中心) chairwoman Diana Chen (陳董) and NT\$300 million in political donations from former Chinatrust Financial Holding Co (華南商業銀行) vice chairman Jeffrey Koo Jr (辜仲諒).

Members of the former first lady's family and some of her friends also received prison sentences for helping her launder money.

Wu's brother Wu Ching-mao (吳昌茂) and his wife, Chen Chun-ying (陳春英), who pleaded guilty to helping the former first lady launder money through overseas accounts, were each sentenced to two years in prison, five years' probation and a fine of NT\$3 million.

Tsai Mei-li (蔡梅麗), a classmate of the former first lady, is critically ill and has not been sentenced. She allegedly also played a role in the money-laundering schemes.

In related news, the Taipei District Court yesterday said it respected Chen Shui-bian's decision not to appear in court to hear the ruling. The court's decision not to require his presence signals that the detention hearing would be held next week at the earliest, or at the High Court if the appeal is processed before the former president's current term of detention expires on Sept. 25.

### APPEAL?

As Chen Shui-bian and his lawyers do not expect a favorable decision from Tsai Shou-hsun, who has repeatedly ruled that the former president should remain in detention, it is expected that Chen Shui-bian's lawyers would file an appeal as soon as possible.

The former president has denied the charges and says his detention and trial amount to political persecution by the administration of President Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九) and the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT).

Source: [Taipei Times 2009/09/12](#)