

The Executive Yuan yesterday said Premier Wu Den-yih (吳登益) met Hong Kong politician Leung Chun-ying (梁振英) during his visit to Hong Kong on Sept. 5.

Leung is the convenor of the non-official members of the Executive Council of Hong Kong and has been mentioned in Hong Kong media as a likely successor to Donald Tsang (曾志偉) as the territory's chief executive in 2012.

Citing the timing of the trip — two days before the announcement that Wu would become premier — the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) accused Wu of meeting Chinese officials to discuss his premiership.

Executive Yuan Spokesman Su Jun-pin (蘇俊平) yesterday rebutted the claim as “ridiculous.”

“The Republic of China is a sovereign independent country. Saying that Premier Wu had to report to [Chinese authorities] concerning his appointment was a ridiculous allegation,” Su said.

“Premier Wu has been consistent regarding the purpose of his visit to Hong Kong, which was to exchange ideas on disaster prevention measures,” Su said yesterday. “His accusers have to show proof.”

Su denied that the Executive Yuan had been embarrassed into acknowledging the meeting after Wu's Hong Kong itinerary was made public by a political commentator on a talk show on Sunday night.

Su said Wu had not hidden the meeting from the public but had mentioned when approached by reporters in Kaohsiung County last Thursday that the itinerary of his Hong Kong trip had been “arranged by Dr Leung Chun-ying.”

Chung Nien-huang (鍾年光), a political commentator, said on SET-TV's Dahua News (大華新聞) that Wu had met Leung, citing a story published on Friday in the Chinese-language Hong Kong Economic Journal daily that revealed the meeting.

Wu's trip to Hong Kong on Sept. 5 was first reported on Wednesday, with Wu saying he had gone to learn from Hong Kong's experience dealing with mudslides.

A report in the Liberty Times (the Taipei Times' sister newspaper), cited Wu's secretary as saying that Wu had visited Hong Kong with his wife, newly wedded son and daughter-in-law for a “family gathering.”

His secretary said Wu had also taken the opportunity to learn about measures Hong Kong had taken to combat mudslides.

Wu met pro-Beijing politician in HK

Written by Taipei Times

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Paul Lin (林豐喜), a commentator on Chinese Communist Party (CCP) history, told the Taipei Times yesterday that Leung is an “underground member” of the CCP and well-trusted by Beijing.

Lin said Leung’s close connections with the CCP belied his claims that he is not involved with the party.

Lin said Leung was appointed by Chinese authorities in 1987 as secretary-general of the Basic Law Consultative Committee created in 1984 to gauge public opinion for a draft of the Hong Kong Basic Law ahead of the territory’s handover from Britain to China in 1997.

“The secretary-general was in charge of the commission, which showed his relationship with the CCP. Leung’s predecessor was also an underground member of the CCP,” Lin said.

Lin said Xu Jiatao (徐賈陶), who headed the Hong Kong branch of China’s state news agency Xinhua until 1990, wrote in memoirs published in 1993 that a friend of his knew first hand that Leung was a communist.

Xu, a former CCP member, fled to the US in 1990 after learning of a plan to purge him from the party because of his pro--student stance during the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations.

“There is a high chance that Leung will replace Tsang. In July, when asked whether he would run for chief executive, Leung said he would rather talk about the issue later. [That was] different from the negative answers he had given before,” Lin said.

The DPP caucus yesterday continued to question the purpose of Wu’s trip.

DPP caucus whip Chai Trong-rong (蔡榮榮) alleged that Wu had reported his selection by Ma as premier to Chinese officials in Hong Kong.

“Taiwanese have the right to know [if this is true],” Chai said.

DPP caucus secretary-general Yeh Yi-chin (葉宜津) told a press conference that Wu should make public the details of his activities on Sept. 5.

Yeh said it made no sense for Wu to visit Hong Kong to learn about preventing mudslides because Nantou County — Wu’s own legislative constituency — had suffered frequent landslides over the years.

“Premier Wu, don’t forget that you were a legislator elected by a Nantou constituency,” Yeh said. “Nantou has more experience with mudslides than Hong Kong. It would be better to take an inspection tour of Nantou.”

Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) Legislator Chiu Yi (邱毅) called the allegations nonsense.

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At a dinner banquet hosted by Ma for KMT legislators in Taipei on Friday to solicit support for the new Cabinet and exchange ideas, Ma endorsed Wu's Hong Kong trip, saying he was aware of it beforehand.

Ma said that Wu's visit to Hong Kong to learn about civil engineering there was his idea.

While in Hong Kong, Wu said he had visited the Civil Engineering and Development Department and received information on mudslide prevention.

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