

Ma questioned over confidence breach

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A protester yesterday wears a mask of former president Ma Ying-jeou's face at a rally outside the Taipei District Prosecutors' Office to urge prosecutors to take Ma into custody.

Photo: Chen Chih-chu, Taipei Times

Former president Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九) was summoned for questioning by the Taipei District Prosecutors' Office yesterday on charges of breaching confidentiality laws.

Former premier Jiang Yi-huah (江宜樺) and former prosecutor-general Huang Shih-ming (黃世明) were also summoned as witnesses against Ma in the lawsuit filed by Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) Legislator Ker Chien-ming (柯建銘).

The office said it was not precluding having the three questioned together to check their statements.

The charges against Ma stem from a high-profile case in September 2013, when Huang leaked confidential information to Ma regarding a then-ongoing investigation into allegations that Ker and then-legislative speaker Wang Jin-pyng (王金平) were involved in improper use of influence.

Huang broke confidentiality laws by bringing the investigation to Ma's attention, and did so again when he informed Jiang of the investigation.

The now-defunct Special Investigation Division had been wiretapping Ker in response to

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allegations that he was involved in a Judicial Yuan mass bribery case when they overheard Ker calling Wang about the judge's decision in a previous case Ker was involved in.

Huang Di-ying (黃迪盈), Ker's lawyer, said that based on the Taiwan High Court's ruling on Huang Shih-ming's case in February last year, three of Ma's actions could be deemed criminal.

He said that Ma breached the law on confidentiality when he shared information revealed to him by Huang Shih-ming during the investigation with Jiang and then-Presidential Office spokesman Luo Chih-chiang (羅智強) on Aug. 31, 2013.

Ma is suspected of soliciting Huang Shih-ming to break confidentiality when he invited the former prosecutor-general to the presidential residence on Sept. 1, 2013, to report on the ongoing investigation, the lawyer said.

Ma is suspected of a second count of soliciting a breach in confidentiality of information on Sept. 4, 2013, when he asked Huang Shih-ming to brief Jiang on the investigation.

Ma is only now being summoned to speak to investigators about the case as he held prosecutorial immunity as then-president of the nation.

The Taiwan High Court sentenced Huang to one year and three months in prison in February last year for breach of confidentiality, which can be commuted into a fine of NT\$457,000.

Additional reporting by CNA

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