

## Women's league declared KMT affiliate

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Director of the 908 Taiwan Republic Campaign Chilly Chen, second right, and other campaign members protest outside the National Women's League offices in Taipei yesterday, calling on the Ministry of the Interior not to let the league get away with keeping any of its alleged ill-gotten assets.

**Photo: Chien Jung-fong, Taipei Times**

The government yesterday named the National Women's League a Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT)-affiliated organization following its failure to agree to a deal with the Ill-gotten Party Assets Settlement Committee, and froze its assets, which are worth more than NT\$38.5 billion (US\$1.32 billion), with further action to be taken to determine and confiscate the assets.

In a landmark ruling, the committee determined the league is affiliated with the KMT because the party controls the league's personnel management, finances and operations, and the league was severed from the party without having to give up the assets it amassed illicitly.

The league was financed with military taxes and surcharges that the KMT helped funnel to the organization, and it continues to hold on to assets that should be returned to the state, the committee said.

Committee members unanimously passed the ruling, which took immediate effect, committee Chairman Lin Feng-jeng (林豐景) said.

"The recognition of the league as a KMT affiliate is the first stage and the committee is to launch a second-phase investigation to determine which assets are ill-gotten and then confiscate those assets," Lin said.

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The league has four months to declare its assets and failure to meet the deadline would incur a repeatable fine of between NT\$1 million and NT\$5 million.

The assets, including NT\$38.5 billion in cash and a number of properties, have been frozen, and the league has to seek the committee's approval to access its funds, Lin said, adding that the league might be allowed to use the assets to pay employee salaries and for other legitimate purposes.

The freeze does not apply to the four educational and charitable foundations established by the league, but the committee is to launch investigations to determine if those foundations, as well as Cheng Hsin General Hospital and Huaxing School, are still associated with the league, Lin said.

The league on Wednesday refused to sign an administrative contract with the Ministry of the Interior that would have led to its voluntary dissolution and donation of 90 percent of its assets to the state, trashing months-long government efforts to solve the issue of the league's controversial assets.

Immediately following the refusal, committee staff searched the league's headquarters in Taipei after an alleged attempt by league officials to conceal sensitive documents, Lin said.

The committee is to investigate the suspected cover-up attempt and interview the officials involved, he added.

During the search, the league provided part of the financial data requested by the committee and promised to submit all necessary data within two weeks, Lin said.

Asked why the committee withheld its declaration until the league refused to sign the contract, Lin said it was a gesture of goodwill to facilitate negotiations with the league.

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The league is the third organization recognized as a KMT affiliate after Central Investment Co (中投公司) and Hsinyutai Co (新育台) — holding companies which were founded and owned by the KMT.

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