

DPP keeps seats, KMT loses one in by-elections

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A man casts his ballot at a voting station at a temple in Tainan's second electoral district in yesterday's legislative by-election.

Photo: Yang Chin-cheng, Taipei Times

The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) yesterday retained two legislative seats, while the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) lost one of the two seats it previously held in legislative by-elections held in four cities and counties.

The DPP's Yu Tian (于天) beat the KMT's Cheng Shih-wei (程世偉) and independent Su Ching-yen (蘇景全) in New Taipei City, and the DPP's Kuo Kuo-wen (郭國文) defeated the KMT's Hsieh Lung-chieh (謝龍介), as well as independent candidates Chen Hsiao-yu (陳孝裕), Wu Ping-hui (吳平輝) and Hsu Kuo-tung (許國棟), in Tainan.

In Changhua County, the KMT's Ko Cheng-fang (柯成芳) bested the DPP's Huang Chen-yen (黃陳彦), the New Power Party's Yang Tse-min (楊澤民) and independent Chi Ching-tang (齊正堂), while independent candidate Chen Yu-chen (陳玉成) claimed victory in Kinmen County, defeating the KMT's Hung Li-ping (洪立平) and independent candidates Chen Tsang-chiang (陳宗強), Tsai Hsi-hu (蔡希湖) and Lu Kuan-yu (盧寬裕), as well as the Kinmen Kaoliang Party's Hung Chih-heng (洪智恒).

The by-elections were held to fill four seats vacated by lawmakers who won public posts in local elections in November last year or were stripped of their office by courts due to corruption.

Political observers had previously said that the by-elections would be a harbinger of next year's presidential election.

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The DPP and the KMT brought party heavyweights during campaigning, with President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) and former premier William Lai (賴清德) lobbying for DPP candidates, and Kaohsiung Mayor Han Kuo-yu (韓國瑜) and former New Taipei City mayor Eric Chu (朱立倫) stumping for KMT candidates.

The KMT was hoping to ride the momentum it created in the local elections when it won a majority of the municipalities, while the DPP suffered a setback, the observers said.

The DPP, on the other hand, was hoping to make a comeback, they added.

At a post-election news conference at party headquarters in Taipei, DPP Secretary-General Luo Wen-jia (羅文嘉) said: “The DPP did not win — we just stopped the bleeding for now. While the outcome is encouraging, we are not calling for celebrations.”

The DPP would continue to build a coalition of individuals, organizations and parties with different ideals, but are united by a common cause, Luo said, before thanking Sunflower movement activist Lin Fei-fan (林飛帆) for stumping for Yu on Friday evening.

Asked whether the results suggested a weakening of the “Han wave,” a term that refers to Han’s reputation for energizing voters for other pan-blue political candidates, Luo said: “The only wave I care about is the democratic wave.”

KMT spokesman Ouyang Lung (歐陽龍) said that the KMT did not capture the three seats it targeted elsewhere, but held the line in Changhua County.

“Now is not the time for the KMT to be proud. We promise to the public that we will do everything in our power to nominate the best candidates for the presidency, vice presidency and lawmakers in the elections next year,” he said.

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