

The boy who lived to the fullest: Dai Lin

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Dai Lin holds a poster by Banciao's Jiangzicui Station that reads, "FREE HUG. We have all been apathetic for too long. Let's give each other a hug," in an undated photo in New Taipei City to bring love to society after Cheng Chieh's mass murder in Taipei's MRT.

Photo: TAKEN from Facebook

Following the mass murder incident committed by Cheng Chieh in Taipei's MRT metro system in May last year, several members of the public undertook an initiative of free hugs at Jiangzicui Station in Banciao. Among them was Dai Lin, who held a poster that read, "We have all been apathetic for too long. Let's give each other a hug." With real actions, he and his friends brought back some warmth in society. Lin's mother posted a picture of Lin offering free hugs to people by the MRT station on her Facebook page on Saturday last week and wrote ardently, "He was such a kind and passionate kid."

Actress Ouyang Gin, who witnessed the mass murder on the MRT, also posted an article to pay tribute to Lin and thank him for his contributions to society. "Do you still remember the kind-hearted male student who took the initiative to offer free hugs? He was Dai Lin."

Lin's mother said Lin used to get top scores in the sixth grade of elementary school, but in his second year in junior high school he began to think, "You study these things but immediately forget all about them after exams are over. Studying in this way is really meaningless. There are also things that you study but will never be able to use in the future. Studying purely for the sake of passing the examinations is really a waste of life." Knowledge taught in the classroom was no satisfaction to his mind and he always liked to read books that most people cannot read beyond page one, said his mother.

Lin's mother also shared some excerpts of Lin's favorite book, The Sayings of Friedrich Nietzsche (Japanese Edition), stressing, "He did not want to waste precious time on school textbooks, but would rather use time on more valuable things. He devoted all of his life to the abolition of the controversial adjustments to high-school curriculum guidelines."

After Lin passed away, his mother organized the pictures in her son's cellphone in order to

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piece together his life. “Many memories of you will live on in our hearts. I didn’t know you had been living to the fullest, so passionately and relentlessly. I was so wrong when I accused you of wasting time on useless matters.”

Lin played a very important role in the Northern Taiwan Anti-Curriculum Changes Alliance and had contributed many ideas for their campaign to occupy the Ministry of Education building. A student who had worked on the campaign together with Lin said, “He was not only brave, but also decisive.” Another student said he asked Lin a question before they broke into the Ministry of Education, “What if I bring down the campaign?” Lin replied, “You have to have confidence in yourself and in your partners who are fighting this fight with you.”

Lin was a volunteer in the students’ logistics group during last year’s Sunflower Movement and was the director of the Appendectomy Project’s recall campaign at Xinpu MRT Station.

(Liberty Times, translated by Ethan Zhan)

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