

Ex-president confident over legal battle: sisters

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Former president Chen Shui-bian's (陳水扁) sisters visited him yesterday in Taipei Detention Center, and said he remained confident about the legal fight to prove he is innocent of corruption charges.

Chen has been held at the center since Dec. 30, 2008, and the Taiwan High Court earlier this month extended his detention by another two months from Feb. 24.

Accompanied by the secretary of Chen's office, Chiang Chih-ming (蔣志明), Chen's two sisters brought fruit and fish dishes for their brother.

"[Chen] is confident, and we will remain strong," Chen's sister Chen Shui-ching (陳水清) said.

Chiang said the former president remained calm about the High Court's decision to extend his detention, and spent the Lunar New Year holidays reading the book Michael Jackson Conspiracy.

Meanwhile, Chen's son Chen Chih-chung (陳智中) showed up at Kaohsiung's Sanfeng Temple yesterday, accompanied by the Democratic Progressive Party's Kaohsiung branch director, Chen Cheng-wen (陳成文).

Chen Shui-ching would not comment on rumors that he intends to run in the Kaohsiung city councilor elections in December and said he was visiting the temple to pray for his father and family.

Both Chen Shui-bian and his wife, Wu Shu-jen (吳淑珍), were sentenced to life in prison on Sept. 11 last year by the Taipei District Court and fined NT\$200 million (US\$6.13 million) and NT\$300 million respectively on several counts of corruption, including embezzling money from a discretionary state affairs fund and taking bribes from local businessmen.

The High Court has extended the former president's detention on three occasions. The first was from Oct. 24. to Dec. 24 last year, and the second was from Dec. 24 to Feb. 24.

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