

KMT's election woes continue as party suffers more defeats in council elections

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The Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) was dealt another round of setbacks at the local level yesterday after it lost a number of seats that were contested in 17 councilor speaker and vice speaker elections, while three councilors supported by the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) were elected.

The KMT nominated 10 council speakers and eight were elected. In vice speaker elections, the party nominated eight and five were elected.

Political analysts said yesterday that because municipal councils have historically been controlled by the KMT, the results could be seen as a win for the DPP.

All of the 17 speaker seats were controlled by KMT--supported councilors in the last session.

The DPP-supported councilors were elected yesterday in Chiayi City, Chiayi County and Hsinchu County.

In other news, independent -councilors were elected as speaker in Kinmen and Lienchiang counties. The DPP controls a total of 128 county or city council seats in the 17 cities and counties compared with 289 by the KMT.

KMT spokesman Su Jun-pin (蘇俊賓) said the party had a different nomination strategy this time around.

In other words, the party rejected nominating controversial figures, he said. Although the total number was lower than they had before, Su said, it was the price they had to pay during the process of party reform.

Meanwhile, vice speaker of Hualien County Council Lai Ching-kun (賴清坤) was re-elected yesterday but later indicted for vote-buying.

Lai, a KMT member, was re-elected yesterday morning, but may not be in office long.

Hualien prosecutors said if Lai was found guilty, he would be removed from his post.

Lai was charged with vote buying for allegedly bribing voters with NT\$2,000 in cash in December's county's councilor election, prosecutors said they have solid evidence that Lai used money in the election.

Lai has denied the charge.

There are 33 councilors in Hualien County, and Lai garnered 26 ballots in yesterday's election.

In related news, the current speaker of Chiayi City Council Tsai Kuei-szu (蔡啟芳) of the KMT

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was defeated by independent councilor Lin Cheng-hsun (林政雄) by one ballot yesterday in yesterday's speakership election.

Tsai is Hsiao Teng-shih's (蕭騰志) wife. Hsiao is former chairman of the Chiayi Farmers' Association and was arrested on Friday.

Chiayi City Council has 24 councilors.

Police said some councilors had complained of being threatened by gangsters; 19 had police escorts before the election.

Hsiao's arrest was believed to have had an impact on his wife's election.

Source: [Taipei Times 2010/03/02](#)