

Commandos arrive in Taichung

Written by Taipei Times
Thursday, 03 June 2010 07:25 -

A total of 41 armed officers from the National Police Agency's elite Wei-An Special Police Commando unit arrived in Taichung City yesterday afternoon to help maintain public order following a recent spate of serious crimes in the city.

This was the fifth time since 1999 that the unit was deployed to Taichung.

"We have the necessary gear and are confident we can do something for the city," said Huang Shih-fu (黃士福), deputy lieutenant for the team, which is expected to be posted in the city for the next two months.

The deployment came in the wake of a series of violent crimes in Taichung.

One such case occurred on Friday afternoon, when gang leader Weng Chi-nan (翁奇南) died in a hail of bullets.

While the public was shocked by the incident, an equally -shocking fact came to light on Tuesday — four police officers witnessed the execution-style killing and did nothing.

Two senior officers — Taichung City Police Traffic Chief Lin Chi-you (林奇游) and the Criminal Investigation Corps' Third Division head Lin Wen-wu (林文武) — have been removed from their leadership posts and received a demerit.

The two lower-ranking officers — Shih Chang-hsing (史長興) and Sergeant Tai Chih-hung (戴志宏) — were given warnings as they were reportedly driving their superiors to the gang leader's office.

Shih sustained an injury to one of his toes in the shooting.

Retired Taichung police officer Chen Wen-hsiung (陳文雄) yesterday said he was the one who invited the four to meet at Weng's office, but denied allegations that he was working for Weng or that he was gambling at the scene when the crime occurred.

"That is a malicious lie," he said. "I will consider filing a slander suit against people who accuse me of what I have not done."

"I witnessed the entire crime, so I will definitely work with prosecutors for any future investigation," he said.

Chen said that at the time of the incident, Lin Chi-you and Lin Wen-wu were sitting inside a room with him while Shih and Tai were waiting in the living room.

The remarks, however, contradicted Taichung City Police Commissioner Hu Mu-yuan (胡木元), who said Shih and Tai remained in their vehicle outside the office when the crime occurred, while Lin Chi-you and Lin Wen-wu were inside the office "hiding from bullets."

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The case ignited a public outcry, as the officers at the scene were believed to have been connected to gangsters.

Chen yesterday said the four officers did not intervene because they were off-duty that day and that as they did not carry weapons at the time, they hid while the assailant was firing his gun.

Commenting on the case yesterday, DPP Secretary-General Su Jia-chyuan (蘇嘉元) — the DPP mayoral candidate for Greater Taichung — said that while Taichung City Mayor Jason Hu (胡志強) had political responsibility for the incident, it would not be proper to blame him for the entire affair.

In Taipei, Minister of the Interior Jiang Yi-huah (江宜華) and National Police Agency Director-General Wang Cho-chiun (王卓雄) yesterday apologized for the apparent deterioration of public safety and pledged to do their best to improve social order, including fully mobilizing police forces to root out illegal firearms and violent crimes.

Both governing and opposition party lawmakers yesterday asked Hu Mu-yuan to step down, but Wang said he was not considering letting him go at the moment.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2010/06/03](#)