

Chen warns DPP on Taipei election

Written by Taipei Times

Tuesday, 28 September 2010 08:15 -

Former president Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) yesterday warned the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) not to be too optimistic about its prospects in the Taipei mayoral election in November, saying the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) had yet to launch what he expects to be a “mudslinging campaign.”

In comments published in Neo Formosa Weekly, which resumed publication in electronic format in September last year, Chen said it was unfair to say that the DPP’s candidate for Taipei City mayor, Su Tseng-chang (蘇貞昌), and its candidate for the soon-to-be-renamed Sinbei City, DPP Chairperson Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文), were not committed to their campaigns and had set their sights on the next presidential election in 2012.

“I believe they are both serious about the elections and want to win,” Chen said. “However, it is possible that their dreams may not come true.”

Chen said that based on his own experience, he was serious about his campaign when he was seeking re-election for Taipei mayor in 1998. Despite an 80 percent approval rating, Chen said he still lost the bid, although he won the presidential election in 2000.

The DPP has a good chance of making a clean sweep in the Nov. 27 polls, but it will not be easy, he said.

The likeliest result would be a DPP win in Greater Tainan and Greater Kaohsiung, with losses in Taipei, Sinbei and Greater Taichung, Chen said. However, the margin would not be significant and the DPP was likely to make substantial gains in the overall ballots, far exceeding those of the KMT, he said.

In the capital, Chen said that although Su was currently leading the polls, the election was still too close to call.

“Don’t overlook the city’s special electoral structure,” he said. “The candidate’s governance capability is not the only thing that matters ... I find some pan-green supporters and Su’s camp are overly upbeat. It is very dangerous.”

Chen also said the pan-green candidates should brace themselves for a pan-blue camp smear campaign, adding that the KMT would never abandon such tactics.

Chen said “those who know the ropes” could clearly see that Su and Tsai are using the November elections as their tickets to the presidential election in 2012. Regardless of the result of the November elections, Chen said he believed Tsai stood a better chance of representing the DPP in the presidential poll.

Meanwhile, more than 30 DPP and independent candidates for the municipal council elections

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launched a “one side, one country” alliance at the former president’s office yesterday, where a team responsible for stumping for the candidates was also unveiled.

The former president’s son, Chen Chih-chung (陳智雄), who is running as an independent for city councilor in Greater Kaohsiung, is among the members of the alliance. He said he would work to realize his father’s political ideal of “Taiwan and China, one country on each side of the Taiwan Strait.”

Former minister of foreign affairs Mark Chen (馬英九) is president of the alliance, with Lee Hong-hsi (李鴻禧), honorary professor at National Taiwan University’s College of Law, serving as vice president.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2010/09/28](#)