

Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) legislators yesterday said they feared a call by pro-localization groups for voters to support former president Chen Shui-bian's (陳水扁) son in the Greater Kaohsiung City councilor election tomorrow could affect the party's performance.

Calling on voters to act "wisely," DPP Legislator Pan Men-an (潘孟安) said the groups' support for Chen Chih-chung (陳智雄), the former president's son, could hurt the party in the elections.

Chen Chih-chung is running as an independent candidate for the city councilor in Kaohsiung's 10th electoral district of Cianjhen and Siaogang, against four candidates nominated by the DPP, four from the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) and six others.

During a rally for Chen Chih-chung on Wednesday night, Northern Taiwan Society president Janice Chen (陳麗君) told participants it was more important to help Chen Chih-chung get elected than to help DPP Chairperson Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) win the mayoral race in Sinbei City, the soon-to-be-renamed Taipei County.

Pro-localization groups also urged voters to concentrate their votes on Chen Chih-chung even if this meant the DPP loses a seat in the electoral district.

The former president's mother, Chen Lee Shen (陳麗珍), who also attended the rally, called on voters to elect Chen Chih-chung.

A tearful Chen Lee Shen, who is in her eighties, said she could only depend on her grandson now that her son faces 19 years in jail, while her daughter-in-law will also be imprisoned.

In a Nov. 11 ruling, the former president and his wife were convicted of accepting bribes related to a land purchase deal and facilitating a financial appointment.

2010 ELECTIONS: DPP worried over Chen Chih-chung

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Approached by reporters at the legislature yesterday, KMT legislators accused Chen Chih-chung of using his grandmother to sway voters during the rally.

KMT Legislator Wu Yu-sheng (吳育生) said Chen Chih-chung was exploiting Chen Lee Shen, adding that he was trying to establish his own political faction with the support of pro-localization groups.

KMT Legislator Hung Hsiu-chu (洪秀柱) said she felt sorry for Chen Lee Shen, adding that she was being taken advantage of by her grandson.

In related news, prosecutors said they had appealed a Nov. 5 not guilty verdict in favor of Chen Shui-bian in a financial scandal involving two high-profile bank mergers.

“We filed the appeal as the ruling had many flaws ... and as Chen did use his position to interfere with the mergers,” the Supreme Prosecutors’ Office said in a statement.

The former president scored a rare legal victory when the Taipei District Court cleared him of wrongdoing in the financial case earlier this month due to lack of evidence.

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