

Lawsuit filed against Beijing official

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Falun Gong practitioners in Taiwan yesterday filed a lawsuit against Beijing Deputy Mayor Ji Lin (吉林) — who arrived in Taiwan in the afternoon — for the abuse of Falun Gong practitioners in Beijing.

“Having served in several party and government leadership positions in Beijing since 1998, Ji has played either an assisting or leading role in mass arrests of Falun Gong practitioners in the city,” Taiwan Falun Dafa Association chairman Chang Ching-hsi (張清喜) told reporters outside the Taiwan High Prosecutors’ Office.

“In 2008, when he served on the organizing committee of the Beijing Olympics, he launched another wave of mass arrests of Falun Gong practitioners in Beijing in the name of security, which led to the torture and death of a well-known local musician, Yu Zhou (于舟),” Chang said.

Ji, who the Falun Gong had said would arrive at 11:55pm, arrived in Taiwan at about 3pm, accompanied by a delegation of more than 200 members for meetings on potential cooperation in business and technology.

DISCREPANCY

At press time, the discrepancy in Ji’s time of arrival could not be accounted for.

Falun Gong practitioner and attorney Teresa Chu (朱麗莎) said the legislature adopted a resolution on Tuesday last week requiring government authorities — including the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) and the National Immigration Agency (NIA) — to deny entry into Taiwan to Chinese officials who are known to have been involved in human rights abuses.

The resolution was proposed by Democratic Progressive Party legislators Tien Chiu-chin (田秋堃) and Chen Ting-fei (陳亭妃) and received support from lawmakers across party lines.

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Aside from the legislature's adoption of the resolution, six counties and cities — Kaohsiung, Changhua, Hualien, Miaoli and Yunlin counties, as well as Kaohsiung and Chiayi cities — have adopted similar, albeit separate, resolutions.

PRECEDENT

“Ji is the first Chinese official who has committed crimes against humanity, but who was nevertheless permitted to come into the country since the adoption of the resolution,” Chu said. “This is why we’re filing the lawsuit.”

As knowledge of which Chinese officials were human rights violators was difficult to determine, Chu called on the MAC and NIA to publicize a list of Chinese officials invited to visit “so that we can help the government identify who has committed crimes against humanity and provide evidence.”

Responding to the development, NIA Deputy Director-General Ho Jung-tsun (何俊生) told the Taipei Times by telephone that “the permission for Ji’s visit was issued before the [legislative] resolution on Dec. 7,” which appeared to suggest that the resolution was not retroactive.

“Since prosecutors have taken over the case, we will do our best to assist them and follow whatever they want us to do,” Ho said.

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