

Shieh Ching-jyh files malicious prosecution suit

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Former National Science Council deputy minister Shieh Ching-jyh, center, and supporters hold a press conference in Taipei yesterday after Shieh filed a lawsuit against a prosecutor for malicious prosecution.

Photo: Wang Yi-sung, Taipei Times

Former National Science Council (NSC) deputy minister Shieh Ching-jyh (謝清沂) yesterday filed a lawsuit against a prosecutor for malicious prosecution following his acquittal of corruption charges after a five-and-a-half year judicial ordeal.

Shieh, the first government official from the former Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) administration to be indicted on corruption charges in 2006, filed the lawsuit at the Taipei District Court against the Kaohsiung Prosecutors' Office chief prosecutor, Kao Feng-chih (高鳳池), who was serving in the Tainan Prosecutors' Office when Shieh was indicted.

Shieh told a press conference that he filed the suit so that "those who abused their judicial power would be held accountable."

Shieh, an aerospace engineering expert, was among 10 defendants indicted in December 2006 on corruption charges after Sheus Technologies Corp won a NT\$8.05 billion (US\$262 million) bid for a project to reduce the vibrations caused by high-speed trains that affected the Southern Taiwan Science Park.

He was ruled innocent on July 11 last year after prosecutors failed to provide sufficient evidence to prove his guilt. Shieh was awarded NT\$300,000 in compensation for his wrongful imprisonment, which comes to NT\$5,000 per day for the 60 days he spent in detention.

Every element of malicious prosecution is present in Shieh's case: the manufacturing of charges, witness intimidation, subornation of perjury, leaking investigation information to the media and inappropriate detention, among others, lawyer Wellington Koo (吳勝元) said.

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Lin Yen-hsu (林錫山), who worked under Shieh at the council, said at the press conference that when he had been questioned, Kao had turned off the audio and video recording midway through the session and told Lin that he would be released once he gave testimony against Shieh. Lin said he rejected the deal.

The case is the fourth in a string of lawsuits filed by former DPP government officials or politicians who were acquitted of corruption charges against prosecutors and judges for abuse of power, including former DPP lawmaker Wu Ming-min (吳明敏), former presidential advisor Wu Li-pei (吳麗培) and former Tainan mayor Hsu Tain-tsair (許添财).

The lawsuits are part of a bid to highlight the need for judicial reform being made by a group of self-proclaimed “judicial victims” who say they have been the targets of a campaign of political persecution against former officials of the previous DPP administration.

There have been at least 14 cases in which one or more former officials in the DPP administration have been charged with corruption, but were found not guilty.

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