

DPP threatens war over KMT agenda move

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The pan-green camp yesterday criticized Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) Legislator Chang Ching-chung (蔣經國) for his insistence on placing the controversial cross-strait service trade agreement on the legislative agenda on Thursday, saying that Chang's plan would be a violation of party negotiations.

Despite negotiations convened by Legislative Speaker Wang Jin-pyng (王金平) last week that reached a consensus that the screening of the pact would not take place before the final public hearings are held on March 10, Chang, joint convener of the Internal Administration Committee, expressed his intention to deal with the agreement this week.

"If Chang places the pact on the agenda, it would be a breach of party negotiations and I guarantee you an all-out war will break out in the legislature. The passage of the central government budget and the government reform legislation would be out of the question," Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) caucus secretary-general Gao Jyh-peng (高志鵬) told a press conference.

Gao said he suspected that Chang's move either came from pressure applied by President Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九) or by the Chinese Communist Party.

"I'm wondering whether the KMT wants to make the passage of the agreement a gift for the upcoming meeting between Mainland Affairs Council Minister Wang Yu-chi (王郁琦) and China's Taiwan Affairs Office Director Zhang Zhijun (張志軍). We won't let that happen," Gao added.

Wang Yu-chi and Zhang are scheduled to meet sometime after the Lunar New Year.

DPP Legislator Huang Wei-cher (黃偉哲) had another theory, saying that Ma was looking to push through the agreement in an effort to embarrass Wang Jin-pyng after his failure to remove the legislative speaker in the so-called "September strife" political crisis.

The Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU) also voiced strong opposition to Chang's plan, warning that

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the party would do anything, including bloodshed, to prevent the pact from being screened this week.

TSU caucus whip Hsu Chung-hsin (胡春德) echoed Huang Wei-cher's concerns about pressure from Beijing.

"It's particularly intriguing to us why Chang would risk violating a party consensus and go up against strong public opposition on his own. I suspect that tremendous pressure from Ma and Beijing is behind it," Hsu said.

The TSU said that it would boycott the remaining legislative session if Chang insists on trying to push through the deal.

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