

Sean Lien ‘must disclose his relations with Beijing’

Written by Taipei Times

Monday, 24 February 2014 10:15 -

Former Taipei EasyCard Corp chairman Sean Lien (連戰), who is scheduled to announce his bid to run in the Taipei mayoral election today, should disclose his relations with Beijing and whether he holds foreign nationality, former vice president Annette Lu (呂秀蓮) said yesterday.

Lu is among five DPP contenders in the party’s primary for the election, scheduled for November this year, while Lien, one of the sons of former vice president Lien Chan (連戰), is seen as the frontrunner among a number of Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) hopefuls.

“I welcome Mr Lien’s bid in the election as a Taipei City resident and urge him against running his campaign with privilege and excessive campaign funds,” Lu said in a press release.

The Lien family is known for its wealth — which is scattered around Taiwan, China and other countries — and close relations with Beijing officials as the senior Lien, who also served as KMT chairman, has made extensive visits to China after his defeat in the presidential election in 2000.

Lu called for Sean Lien, as well as all aspirants in the mayoral election, to disclose information on whether they held or hold foreign nationality or permanent residence status, their foreign investments and assets, and their relations with Beijing.

With regard to relations with Beijing, all aspirants should disclose how many trips they have made to China, the persons they have met with and what the objectives were, Lu said.

Lu also questioned the ties between National Taiwan University Hospital physician Ko Wen-je (柯文哲), an independent in the race with close ties to the pan-green camp, and China, saying that Ko has to “explain making 18 trips to China.”

Ko said in a recent interview that he had been to China 18 times and understood China better than most DPP politicians.

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Lu has made Ko the primary target of her campaign because the physician has been enjoying the highest support rate among all pan-green camp aspirants and supporters had called for the DPP not to nominate its own candidate to avoid a three-way race that would eventually benefit the KMT.

Writing on Facebook, Lu yesterday raised questions about Ko's party affiliation, saying that "it seems to me that Ko could be pro-green [the DPP], pro-blue [the KMT] or pro-red [the Chinese Communist Party]."

Lu said she raised the issue because Ko was quoted as saying that he did not understand the DPP's Taiwan independence charter at all and could probably accept the "one China" ideology if it was clearly defined.

However, Lu's strategy of questioning Ko's relationship with China has not been well-received among DPP supporters.

Asked about Lu's remarks yesterday, DPP Chairman Su Tseng-chang (蘇貞昌) declined to comment, saying that he has not read what the former vice president said.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2014/02/24](#)