

Police arrest student activist after protest

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Student protester Hung Chung-yen, center, is taken to the Taipei District Prosecutors' Office by police yesterday after being taken to the Taipei City Police Department's Criminal Investigation Division for questioning.

Photo: CNA

National Taiwan University student Hung Chung-yen (洪仲丘) was arrested and handcuffed by police yesterday after he showed up for a protest in front of Zhongzheng First Precinct in Taipei.

Hung was taken to the Taipei City Police Department's Criminal Investigation Division and in the evening was sent to the Taipei District Prosecutors' Office for further investigation.

According to the Taipei District Prosecutors' Office, a warrant for Hung's arrest was issued on Friday after he failed to answer several summonses for questioning about his involvement in a protest at the Zhongzheng First Precinct building on April 11.

Hung was released without bail later last night.

Earlier yesterday, a group of protesters angry at the precinct for seizing a loudspeaker and sound system belonging to the Alliance of Referendum for Taiwan at an anti-nuclear energy rally on April 28 demonstrated in front of the police station and asked the bureau to return the items.

Shortly after the demonstration in which Hung also took part ended, at about noon, two officers

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from the Taipei Police Department's Criminal Investigation Division arrested Hung at the intersection of Guanquian Road and Hankou Street.

The officers also confiscated Hung's cellphone after he informed his family about his arrest.

Later yesterday, the Taiwan Association for Human Rights issued a statement accusing police of violating human rights when they arrested Hung without identifying themselves as police officers.

The statement said that the many recent demonstrations on the streets of Taipei had been caused by the arrogance and incompetence of the government.

Instead of reflecting on what it has done wrong, President Ma Ying-jeou's (馬英九) administration is continually flouting the rule of law and completely disregards people's rights to freedom of assembly and freedom of speech, the statement said.

"The police's unannounced arrest of a student with no criminal record was mafia-like, and is a severe blow to Taiwan's human rights and rule of law," it said.

In addition to conveying concern for Hung's personal safety, the association called on the Taipei City Police Department to remember its responsibility to uphold Hung's legal rights, including ensuring he is not tortured and has a lawyer present during questioning.

If his rights are not upheld, the association said it would rectify the situation using every means at its disposal.

The government should desist from violating human rights and overstepping legal boundaries, the association added, saying that such actions only contributed to conflict, leading society further from rational dialogue and democratic solutions.

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