

No military role in protests: bureau

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Military spokesman David Lo yesterday denied that National Security Council Secretary-General King Pu-tung suggested that the military should intervene in major demonstrations.

Photo: Taipei Times

The National Security Bureau (NSB) yesterday rejected a report that National Security Council Secretary-General King Pu-tung (金溥聰) suggested that the military should intervene in and handle major demonstrations.

King was accused of overreaching his authority earlier this month when he visited the National Police Agency and the Ministry of Justice's Investigation Bureau.

King, in a meeting with unnamed officials, was reported by the officials as asking police to toughen up in dealing with mass demonstrations, Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) Legislator Chiu Yi-ying (邱毅) said yesterday.

In the face of large protests, the Ministry of National Defense should set up a command center to coordinate security missions, Chiu reported his sources as saying.

King allegedly added that military officials should be able to enter the police agency to direct security tasks.

Agency officials said that the officials at the meeting were surprised at King's remarks, Chiu said.

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“King infringed on the Constitution and now he is turning Taiwan into a military state,” Chiu said, accusing the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) government of regarding the public as enemies.

The bureau rebutted the report in a press statement later yesterday.

It said that suggestions were made by NSB Director-General Lee Hsiang-chou (李祥舟) who accompanied King to the meeting, in light of the incident on Jan. 25 in which truck driver Chang Te-cheng (張德成) allegedly drove his vehicle past barriers and up the front steps of the Presidential Office Building.

The statement said that Lee had suggested police should establish advanced warning, intelligence-gathering, and reporting and communications systems, as well as an inter-departmental coordination system to prevent similar incidents.

King did not say that the military should handle security issues during demonstrations, it said.

The statement reiterated that King’s visits were in accordance with the bureau’s Organic Act (國家安全委員會組織法) and the National Intelligence Services Act (國家安全情報法), which say that the bureau is responsible for directing and supporting intelligence and security agencies.

The police said in a statement that public demonstrations are handled by police in accordance with the Assembly and Parade Act (集會遊行法), and that King did not say that the military should take part in handling rallies.

Military spokesman David Lo (羅文和) said yesterday that the military did not receive such orders as Chiu had reported.

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