

Academics, groups call for new constitutional system

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Taiwan Society president Chang Yen-hsien, standing, yesterday speaks during a press conference organized by pro-independence groups in Taipei, calling for a new constitutional system.

Photo: Liu Hsin-de, Taipei Times

Opposition parties and pro-independence groups yesterday called for the elimination of the Control Yuan and the Examination Yuan, with groups advocating the drafting of a new constitution to better fit the nation's needs.

As lawmakers are set to review the qualification standards of the nominees for the two yuans this week and next week in the extra legislative session, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU) said the two institutions are better off being eliminated.

"The separation of the five powers system of the Republic of China [ROC] Constitution, as designed by founding father Sun Yat-sen (孫逸仙), has proven to be a failed system and it is time to adopt a system that separates the three powers, like in most Western democracies," TSU caucus whip Lai Cheng-chang (賴成昌) told a press conference.

The TSU caucus will boycott the review of nominees of the institutions, Lai said.

Seven of the 21 Examination Yuan candidates, including president nominee Wu Jin-lin (吳金林) and vice president nominee Kao Yuang-kuang (高陽光), have either served as high-ranking Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) officials, had close relations with the ruling party or worked for its think tank, DPP Legislator Tsai Chi-chang (蔡其昌) told a separate press conference.

"President Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九) has used nominations for the two institutions as his personal tool to hand out political rewards," DPP Legislator Lee Chun-yi (李俊義) said.

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The People First Party also raised concerns with Ma's nomination, with PFP Legislator Chen Yi-chieh (陳怡池) saying that several Control Yuan member nominees were either "incompetent" former government officials, or politicians with close KMT ties.

"Is a Control Yuan [with such members] capable of being the government's watchdog? It is questionable," Chen said, adding that the Control Yuan's right of investigation could be relegated to the Legislative Yuan.

Another press conference co-organized by pro-independence groups called for a new constitution tailor-made for Taiwan as Taiwan Society president Chang Yen-hsien (張炎憲) also favored a "three-powers" constitutional system.

With Ma's pro-China policy and repeated infringement of the Constitution, Taiwanese would not be able to safeguard the country's sovereignty without a new constitution, Chang said.

Drafted in China in the 1930s, the ROC Constitution does not now meet the contemporary needs of the nation's political and economic development, despite having been amended seven times, said former vice premier Wu Rong-i (吳榮益), who is now president of the Taiwan Brain Trust think tank.

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