

Nation mourns death of great historian

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Taiwan Society president Chang Yen-hsien speaks at a forum in Taipei on Sept. 13.

Photo: Wang Min-wei, Taipei Times

Senior Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) members, friends and fans lamented the death of former Academia Historica president Chang Yen-hsien (張炎憲), who passed away during a research trip to the US on Friday evening Taipei time.

“Thank you, Professor Chang, thank you for what you have done for Taiwan, it was because of your insistence on researching the 228 Incident and White Terror that the younger generation are able to get to know more about this island from a Taiwan-oriented perspective, and write about our own history,” DPP Chairperson Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) said on her official Facebook page. “May you rest in peace, we will always remember you.”

Former DPP chairperson Su Tseng-chang (蘇貞昌) said Chang had made great contributions in academic research and education, as well as building a Taiwan perspective.

Many of Chang’s friends and fans have also posted messages or photographs with him online to remember him.

Taiwan Association of University Professors president Lu Chung-chin (盧中愷) praised Chang as the top researcher in Taiwan’s history, adding that “we could justly say that he has devoted his whole life to history research.”

“May his spirit protect the island and the generations of Taiwanese to come in the mountains as well as on the coast, in the city as well as in the rural areas,” Chang’s friend Liao Kian-tshiau (廖建勳) said as he posted a photograph with Chang on Facebook.

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The messages appeared as the news came on Friday evening that Chang had passed away in the US, where he was conducting interviews for a historic research project.

Chang lost consciousness unexpectedly on Friday last week and was rushed to a hospital emergency room due to myocardial infarction.

Despite efforts to save his life, Chang passed away at 5:55am Philadelphia time.

A historian renowned for his research into Taiwan's history, particularly on the 228 Incident and the White Terror, Chang served as the head of Academia Historica from 2000 to 2008, and made the nation's history a popular subject among academics, as well as the general public.

Prior to 2000, local history had often been overlooked, as education curricula drawn up by the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) often focused on the history of China.

Chang was also a frequent guest speaker at conferences and seminars on Taiwan's history, as well as a prodigious writer.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2014/10/06](#)