

New Power Party announces leadership structure

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Huang Kuo-chang speaks at a news conference in Taipei yesterday as his fellow New Power Party board of chairpersons members Huang Hsiu-chen, left, Freddy Lim, second left, and Hsu Yung-ming, right, listen.

Photo: Liao Chen-huei, Taipei Times

The New Power Party (NPP) yesterday announced its new leadership lineup — a seven-member board of chairpersons that it said could prevent abuse of power and encourage participatory democracy — and vowed to win 10 percent of the at-large vote in January's legislative elections.

The chairpersons are the party's three legislative candidates — Academia Sinica researcher Huang Kuo-chang (黃國昌), musician Freddy Lim (林昶佐) and author/playwright Neil Peng (彭明敏) — Soochow University political science professor Hsu Yung-ming (許永明), lawyers Huang Hsiu-chen (黃秀楨) and Lin Feng-jeng (林昶佐) and author Lin Shih-yu (林錫山).

They were elected last week by 427 party members through an online poll, with Huang Kuo-chang topping the poll with a 76.11 percent support rate.

The new board yesterday held its first meeting, during which Huang Kuo-chang was elected NPP executive chairman.

Hsu said the party's Decision-making Committee would consist of the seven-member board and eight members from the party's executive and policy committees, which would prevent authoritarian rule by a single chairperson and encourage direct participation of party members.

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Traditionally, when in office, the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) and the Democratic Progressive Party have had the president also serve as the party's chairperson, which allows the president to interfere with the legislature by manipulating party affairs and reduces the legislature's oversight power, Haung Kuo-chang said.

"I would not become a permanent executive chairperson, as elections for the board of chairpersons is to be held after each major national poll or when one-sixth of the party members demand it," Huang Kuo-chang said.

"There will be another election after the legislative polls next year," he said.

The NPP's executive chairperson is to act as the party's spokesperson, and would not have the power to control the distribution of resources or party administration, he said, adding different policy committees are to be formed along the lines of the Legislative Yuan's committees.

He said the party plans to announce the rest of its candidates for district legislative seats as well as a slate of at-large candidates by the end of the month.

Participation by non-member voters would be factored in the selection and ranking of the NPP's at-large candidates, as candidates have to seek mandate by communicating with local constituents about the NPP's objectives and the priority bills they would push for if elected, before the party conducts an online poll to gauge the various hopefuls' support rates, Haung Kuo-chang said.

That would provide voters with the opportunity to directly participate in the NPP's decisionmaking process, he said.

The NPP has a support rate of about 10 percent in Taipei and New Taipei City, which it expects could translate into votes, he said.

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