

KMT vote-buying rampant: DPP

Written by Taipei Times

Monday, 04 January 2016 07:24 -



From left, Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) legislator-at-large candidate Wellington Koo, DPP Legislator Lee Ying-yuan and DPP Kaohsiung City Councilor Lien Li-jen hold a news conference in Taipei yesterday accusing the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) of vote-buying.
Photo: CNA

The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) yesterday accused the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) of involvement in nationwide vote-buying activities for the Jan. 16 presidential and legislative elections, warning that it might file lawsuits after the elections.

“Election day is only 13 days away, and people around the nation have been tipping off [the DPP] about vote-buying activities, especially in Chiayi County, where vote-buying is committed almost publicly,” DPP spokesperson Yang Chia-liang (楊家良) told a news conference at the DPP’s headquarters in Taipei.

“KMT Chairman Eric Chu (吳敦義) has repeatedly claimed that he will reform the KMT, but not only has the party assets issue not been resolved, vote-buying is still taking place,” Yang said.

The DPP recently received information about a banquet for more than 10,000 people hosted by the KMT’s Hsinchu City Council caucus and an alleged cash-for-votes scheme in Chiayi, said Lien Li-jen (連立堅), executive director of a DPP task force to combat election irregularities, who added that the Changhua County Prosecutors’ Office has launched an investigation into a free tour for voters in Fenyuan Township (芬園) allegedly organized by independent legislative candidate Hsu Yung-chin (許永欽).

Lien said that he also suspects the judiciary has been giving vote-buying suspects affiliated with

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the KMT favorable treatment.

“In the Changhua case, the 400 people who went on the excursion were all questioned and the primary suspect was detained. However, information about the Hsinchu banquet was sent to prosecutors prior to the event, but they did not make a move until images from the event were made public,” Lien said.

In the Chiayi case, Lien said that even though “there were serious charges and cash was found, the suspects were released on bail.”

The Ministry of Justice’s Investigation Bureau detained two individuals, surnamed Huang (黃) and Lin (林), who were suspected of distributing between NT\$500 and NT\$1,000 per vote to people in the county’s Shueishang Township (水尚鄉).

Huang was found carrying NT\$25,000 in cash, and police said she admitted to being involved in vote-buying, while three people admitted to selling their votes.

However, the Chiayi District Court rejected a request by prosecutors to detain Huang, citing insufficient evidence, and allowed her to be released on bail.

Attorney and DPP legislator-at-large candidate Wellington Koo (柯建銘) said the DPP would continue to collect information on election irregularities, adding that if it finds solid evidence of the KMT’s involvement in vote-buying, it would file lawsuits to revoke elections within 30 days of the Jan. 16 elections.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2016/01/04](#)