

National Women's League told to account for spending

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The National Women's League still needs to provide an account of how it used proceeds from a "military benefits tax," the Ministry of the Interior said yesterday.

"It needs to produce an account of how the military benefits tax proceeds were used, along with declaring any relationship with league assets," Civil Affairs Department director Lin Ching-chi (林清奇) said.

The tax on imported goods from 1955 to 1989, described by the league as a kind of "patriotic donation," provided most of its early funding, drawing criticism that the league profited from ties to the then-Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) government.

Chiang Kai-shek's (蔣介石) wife Soong Mayling (宋美齡) founded the league and headed it for decades.

Following repeated requests, the league on Friday filed a detailed account of its budget, income and assets, while at the same time announcing plans to donate nearly NT\$28 billion (US\$909 million) of its NT\$38.1 billion in outstanding assets to government agencies and charities.

"It should have been providing reports every year and although it has met requirements for this year, it is still unclear what happened to proceeds from the military benefits tax over the years," Lin said. "The issue is the relationship between its current capital and tax proceeds. If the money is from tax gains, it needs to return it all to the nation."

"What is important is opening up league finances and sourcing all of its current assets," New Power Party Legislator Huang Kuo-chang (黃國昌) said. "It should not use promises of donations as a smokescreen to obscure the core issue."

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