

Lifting of NWL asset freeze protested

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Vehicles drive past the National Women's League headquarters on Linsen S Road in Taipei's Zhongzheng District yesterday.

Photo: Chen Yu-fu, Taipei Times

The Taipei High Administrative Court should be held responsible if the National Women's League (NWL) disposes of its assets, the Ill-gotten Party Assets Settlement Committee said yesterday in response to the court's decision on Tuesday to unfreeze the league's assets.

The committee in February declared the league to be an affiliate of the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) and froze its assets totaling about NT\$38.5 billion (US\$1.25 billion).

During the KMT authoritarian period, the league used the party-state system to ask the public for "military donations" and distributed the money through the KMT's social work committee, the committee said, adding that there is clear evidence of its affiliation.

Judges Chen Chin-wei (陳錦偉), Pi Nai-chun (皮耐春) and Chen Hsin-hung (陳欣宏) completely disregarded the evidence and the league can now use the funds as it pleases, it said.

The league applied to unfreeze its assets because it was dissatisfied with the committee's decision to file an administrative suit, sources said.

The decision greatly damages fair competition among political parties and the nation's transitional justice project, makes the sorting and retrieval of ill-gotten party assets more complicated and harms the public interest, the committee said.

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The court in its press release disregarded the fact that transitional justice projects must always race against time and said that lifting the penalty would merely postpone the realization of transitional justice, the committee said.

The court is ignorant of the damage that would be done to the public interest and is essentially telling Taiwanese that there is no need to pursue transitional justice, it said.

Central Investment Co (中興實業) and Hsinyutai Co (新育太) had also applied to end the administrative penalties placed against them, but the Supreme Administrative Court rejected their requests, the committee added.

Tuesday's ruling contradicts the Supreme Administrative Court's ruling, it said.

The Taipei High Administrative Court only urged the league to consider the potential legal risks it might face and to handle its assets in a reasonable manner, it said.

The judges did not put any measure in place to prevent the league from using this opportunity to dispose of its assets, it added.

The league had illegally used about NT\$2.4 million of its assets after it had already been declared a KMT affiliate, for which it was later fined, the committee said.

If the league uses large amounts of its assets and in doing so harms the public interest, the Taipei High Administrative Court should be held responsible, it added.

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