Puyuma driver rejects Executive Yuan reports

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Lawyers Alex Yen, right, and Chen Hsiang-chuan, representing Puyuma Express conductor Yu Chen-chung, listen to a question from reporters during a news conference in Taipei yesterday.

Photo: Fang Pin-chao, Taipei Times

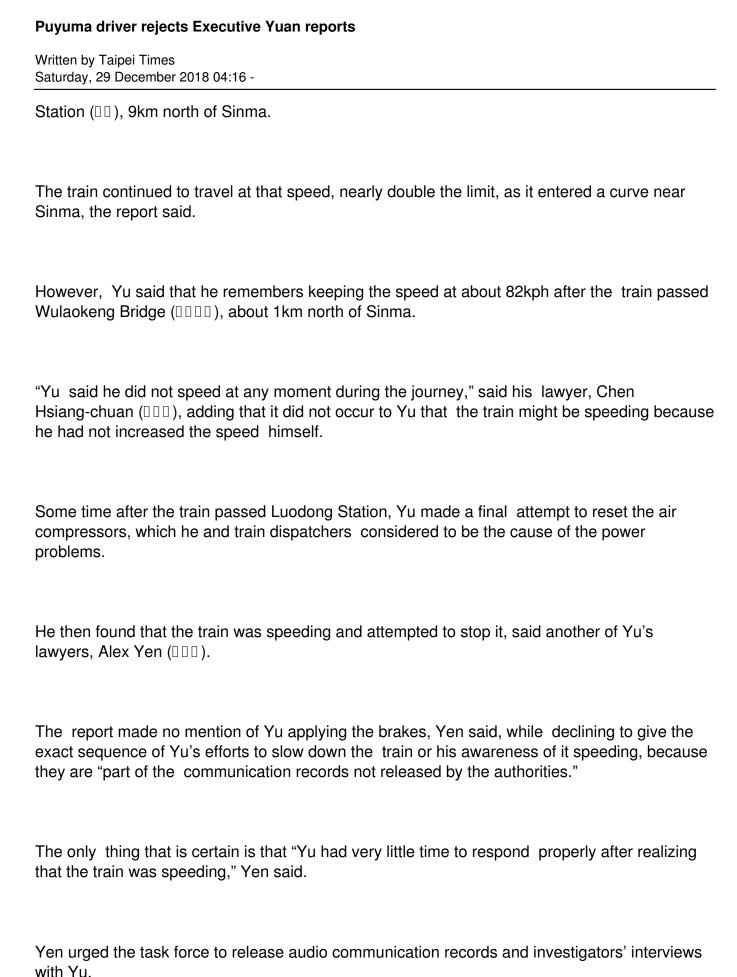
Lawyers representing Yu Chen-chung ([][]]), conductor of Puyuma Express train No. 6432 that derailed on Oct. 21 in Yilan County, yesterday said that Yu rejected the government's claim that his negligence caused the train to speed, which in turn caused the deadly incident.

Yu said that there are differences between his account and two reports released by an Executive Yuan investigative task force last month and earlier this month, which said that a series of mechanical malfunctions on the train and poor troubleshooting by the conductor and the Taiwan Railways Administration (TRA) dispatch control room were to blame for the derailment near Sinma Station (II) that killed 18 people and injured 273.

"I do not accept the charge that human negligence caused the train to speed," a statement issued by Yu through his lawyers read, after the driver was advised by a doctor to avoid further public exposure.

This month's report said that Yu because of power problems turned off the automatic train protection (ATP) system that prevents the train from speeding after it left Dasi Train Station (UU), 44km north of Sinma.

Yu did not deny deactivating the ATP, but said that the report is incorrect in stating that he had been speeding and "left the speed command gear at 140kph" after the train left Luodong



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The report includes text communication records, but no post-accident accounts from Yu.

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