

ACCUMULATING WEALTH? TAMKANG SUES APPLE DAILY

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“Our delegated lawyers have planned to sue Apple Daily,” remarked University President Dr. Horng-jinh Chang in the press conference for the quarrel on Tamkang Garden on April 6, in response to a report on Apple Daily entitled as “Tamkang accumulating wealth.” President Chang expressed that this report has caused tremendous harm to Tamkang’s reputation.

With the intention to reveal the fact, the press conference has invited major domestic media. President Chang, along with former and current Deans of Student Affairs, Huan-chao Keh and Ding-an Chiang, Secretary General Tung Wan, Director of University Comptroller, Mei-lan Wang, and Chief Ming-yuan Wang of the Department of Higher Education, MOE, made explanation in the conference and invited the media to visit the facilities of Tamkang Garden. With regard to both issues of high rent and punishment due to breaking lease, which have drawn fierce criticism, President Chang indicated that TKU was negotiating with the rental company, hoping to lower down the rent from \$40.000 to \$35.000 NT per year since next semester and find a way to compensate student’s punishment.

As President Chang continued to explain, the fundamental purpose of building Tamkang Garden was to provide a higher education learning environment where freshmen could improve their relationship skills and emotion management through group living experience, especially when they were no longer required to participate in military camps before entering colleges. Recent years, many male freshmen and their parents have been asking for such a living and learning environment. Tamkang Garden project was to satisfy the need for male student dormitory, and it was endorsed by MOE.

With these purposes in mind, Tamkang signed a contract with the construction company to build Tamkang Garden designed especially for male freshmen. The Garden opened last semester, providing a total of 990 beds. The contract required 950 beds occupied by Tamkang students otherwise, the university has to pay a certain amount of fine for compensation. President Chang showed related documents and proved that Tamkang has actually pay more than four million NT dollars, plus more than 1.5 million NT dollars for the expense of tutors, management, and other labor fees. "Accumulating wealth was indeed a false accusation" added President Chang.

As to the "warn" punishment for the 211 students who broke the lease, Dean of Student Affairs, Ding-an Chiang, expressed that the punishment was according to school's related regulations however, students could always appeal if they were not satisfied with the ruling. And yet, no one has appealed so far. He also indicated that school would be considering making a bylaw concerning compensation for wrongdoing. Former Dean of Student Affairs, Huan-chao Keh, added, this bylaw, if passes, can be applied to those who broke the lease at this time.

Chief Ming-yuan Wang of the Department of Higher Education, MOE visited Tamkang Garden and interviewed students after he took part in the entire press conference. In his interview by Tamkang Times, Chief Wang, on behalf of MOE, expressed his concern about student's living environment and believed that this issue will end peacefully. Also, he supported the idea to make a bylaw of compensation and suggested the rent to be reduced. To avoid similar quarrels in the future, he proposed that students should play a role in the process of decision-making.