

On the Case of the Taipei MRT Mass Stabbing Spree Attack: The Autopsies

After receiving the information in the afternoon of May 21st, 2014, that a random killing spree happened on a train of Taipei Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) system's Bannan Line at around 4:20 p.m., this Office immediately assigned prosecutors to lead a task force for further investigation. Knowing that careful and effective investigation is needed, Deputy Chief Prosecutor Li Hai-Long assigned Prosecutor Yang Jing-Shun, Wang Xiao-Ning, and Chen Xu-Hua to be in charge of examining the corpses of the four victims.

At around 8:40 p.m. the same day, Prosecutor Yang Jing-Shun, Wang Xiao-Ning, Chen Xu-Hua, along with forensic pathologists, went to Taipei City Hospital's Heping Fuyou Branch, New Taipei City Hospital's Banciao Branch, Taipei Hospital and Far Eastern Memorial Hospital to examine the corpses of victims respectively. In order to determine the causes of death of the four victims, the prosecutors decided that autopsies shall be conducted. After the autopsies, the prosecutors found that:

(1) Mr. Chang (張 O 翰)

By examining the exterior appearance of the body, it seemed that Mr. Chang was stabbed in the upper left chest. After the autopsy, it was revealed that when the suspect pulled the knife out of Mr. Chang's chest, he rotated the knife, cutting Mr. Chang's heart.

(2) Ms. Lee (李 O 雲)

Because of emergency surgery, it was extremely difficult to extinguish the wounds of Ms. Lee at the first sight. The prosecutors and forensic pathologists, therefore, found it impossible to determine the cause of death without autopsy. After the autopsy, however, it was clear that the victim's heart was pierced by a knife and her liver was also stabbed.

(3) Mr. Hsieh (解 O 雲)

It was difficult to determine the cause of death of Mr. Hsieh by only examining the exterior appearance of his body. After the autopsy, it was revealed that a knife had been thrust through his heart, into his diaphragm and also his liver.

(4) Ms. Pan (潘 O 珠)

It seemed that Ms. Pan only got injured to her right shoulder. After the autopsy,

however, it was obvious that she died from massive blood loss after a knife stabbed into her right shoulder, cutting her aorta and vein.

Before conducting the autopsies at 12:00 a.m. May 22nd, the prosecutors had informed family members of the victims that the failure to present causes of death in court might pave the way for the accused to be found innocent. The families, therefore, agreed to the autopsies. After the procedure, the bodies of the four victims were returned to the custody of the families.