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## 1. The Jingmei Human Rights Cultural Park

Located in New Taipei City's Xindian District, the 3.64-hectare Jingmei Human Rights Cultural Park was once the place where many political victims were held in custody, prosecuted, tried, and imprisoned. Its historical background is as follows:

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### 1) 1949~1987:

#### Taiwan under martial law

Martial law was implemented in the Taiwan area of the Republic of China on May 20, 1949, and many incidents of human rights violation occurred during the 38-year "White Terror" era before martial law was lifted on July 15, 1987.

Under martial law, military commanders and authorities in Taiwan were given supreme authority, including the power to prohibit public assembly and to dissolve associations; the power to restrict freedom of speech and to censor school lectures and the press; the power to ban all religious activities; the right to check private correspondence such as letters and telegrams, and the right to enter any private building or dwelling.

In particular, Article 8 of the Martial Law Act stipulated that military authorities "may try by themselves or send to district courts for trial" those who committed such crimes as offense of sedition or treason; offense against order, public safety, or personal freedom; offense of counterfeiting currency or securities; as well as forgery, homicide, robbery, piracy, and other crimes listed in the Criminal Code.

In other words, martial law suspended Article 9 of the Republic of China Constitution, which stipulated that "except those in active military service, no person should be subject to trial by a military tribunal." Military authorities were able to court-martial those who committed specific offenses listed in the Criminal Code and special criminal laws because the transgressions were considered "political offenses."

The ever-increasing number of "political offenders" led the Ministry of National Defense to establish the Military Law School in the early 1950s to help train more military law experts.

### 2) 1957~1967:

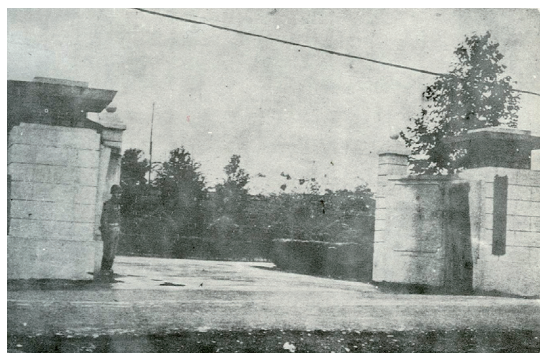
#### Military Law School

After the Republic of China government relocated to Taiwan in December 1949, the Ministry of National Defense began to organize Military Law Personnel Training Classes in 1954. They were first held at No. 128 Zhongzheng Road in Taipei City and then relocated to the site of the Jingmei Human Rights Cultural Park beside the Hsiulang Bridge in Xindian during November 1955.

Because there was a deficit of military law personnel, the Ministry of National Defense issued an order in 1957 to reorganize the Military Law Personnel Training Classes into the Military Law School to cultivate military law personnel by recruiting senior high school graduates for a special 4-year training.

Most Military Law School buildings were single-storey wooden houses when the school was founded and some of the original buildings, including student dormitories, the Zhongzheng Hall, and a reading room, still stand at the park site today.

Prior to the expansion of the Hsiulang Bridge, the school's front gate was located next to where the Jingmei Human Rights Cultural Park now stands. However, the school stopped using the Jingmei site in 1967 after it was incorporated into the School for Political Warfare Officers (now Fu Hsing Kang College of National Defense University).



*Gateway of Martial Law School*

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*Partial view of Detention Center of Taiwan Garrison Command period*

### 3) 1967~1980: The Taiwan Garrison Command Judge Advocate Office & the Ministry of National Defense's Department of Military Law

The land ownership of military properties No. 3 and 7 on Tsingtao East Road in Taipei City were sold by public tender in 1966. Therefore, units such as the Taiwan Garrison Command Judge Advocate Office and the Ministry of National Defense's Department of Military Law had to be relocated.

On April 27, 1967, the Ministry of National Defense's Department of Military Law and the Taiwan Garrison Command Judge Advocate Office were relocated from Tsingtao East Road to the original site of the Military Law School in Jingmei.

Because there were not enough buildings to accommodate the relocated units, the government approved the construction of new buildings such as the First Court, the Military Court, the Judge Advocate Office, and the Department of Military Law detention centers, as well as new office buildings for the Judge

Advocate Office and the Department of Military Law. To strengthen the site's defense and detention capabilities, walls with additional sentry posts were also added.

The Military Court was a single-storey, reinforced-brick building with a flat roof that held two small courts and a large central court. In 1967, the Taiwan Garrison Command Judge Advocate Office began to hold most of its trials here; the identity confirmation and final interrogation of those sentenced to death were also conducted here.

The original Military Law School's basketball court was demolished in 1977 to build the First Court, and the 9-day court martial of the Kaohsiung (Formosa) Incident that began on March 18, 1980 was held at this court.

The First Court, the largest court in the park, was a single-storey, reinforced-brick building with a flat roof, which included a large court space, a pre-interrogation waiting room, and a council chamber. The trial of most major White Terror cases — including the Formosa Incident, the assassination of dissident journalist-writer Henry Liu (Chiang Nan), and the alleged sedition of Yu Deng-fa and his son — were held here. The court is now one of the most important heritage sites in the history of human rights in Taiwan.

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The new detention centers of both the Judge Advocate Office and the Department of Military Law were completed in October 1968 on the south side of the park, which was formerly used as the Military Law School parade grounds.

Military prisoners, felons, and political prisoners were held in the Judge Advocate Office detention center, while servicemen of military units directly under the Ministry of National Defense who were charged with political offenses were held in the Department of Military Law detention center.

Although the park was used by two different organizations, only one wall was built between the two detention centers to prevent prisoners from escaping in the process of being escorted to the court.

The east side of the park, including the space now being used by the auto repair brigade, was the original administrative area. Today, it is still used by the Ministry of National Defense's Department of Military Law for administrative purposes and the Zhongzheng Hall is available for use to all government agencies.

#### 4) 1980~1991: The Taiwan Garrison Command Judge Advocate Office

The Ministry of National Defense's Department of Military Law relocated to Gongguan in 1980, but its court and detention center remained in the park. Four pieces of land on the north side of the park was approved to be expropriated by the Directorate General of Highways in 1987 when the Taipei County Government revised its urban planning projects.

To help widen the Hsiulang Bridge and its connecting roads to 40 meters, the Jingmei site set aside a long strip of land with a width of 12 meters. A wall with a watchtower was built accordingly on the north side of the park, while the park's front gate, sentry post, and reception room were set up near the Hsiulang Bridge.

Afterwards, a two-storey concrete building was constructed while the buildings on the northwest side of the park were demolished for the construction of a badminton court, a basketball court, and an archive room.

After the Formosa Incident at the end of 1979, a small detention center with only four detention cells was built on the west side of the Jen-ai Building. It became the Military Intelligence Bureau's detention center after 1981 due to the bureau's need to escort prisoners.

After the assassination of dissident journalist-writer Henry Liu (Chiang Nan) in 1984, director Wang Hsi-ling of the Ministry of National Defense's intelligence bureau was sentenced to lifelong imprisonment. As instructed by President Chiang Ching-kuo, Chief of the General Staff Hau Pei-tsun ordered the construction of a special prison in the Taiwan Garrison Command Judge Advocate Office for Wang Hsi-ling to serve his prison sentence.

The Judge Advocate Office leveled a small pond and garden to the right of the park entrance to build a single-storey house with walls around it for Wang to serve his prison sentence. The house, which was equipped with a study room, a living room, and a bedroom, was shared by Wang and former deputy director Hu Min-yi of the intelligence bureau.

Hu was moved to a different location three months later and Wang spent three years in solitary confinement. He was then transferred to a military intelligence school on Yangmingshan because he was suffering from arrhythmia and depression.

During Wang's confinement at the intelligence school, his family members were allowed to visit and accompany him. As for the specially built prison at the Jingmei park, it was left unoccupied and no other prisoners were held there.



*Quarter of Wang Shi-Lin house arrest*

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## 5) 1992~2006:

### **The Ministry of National Defense (Three Military Courts & Prosecution Bureaus)**

The Taiwan Garrison Command was dissolved in July 1992 and the Judge Advocate Office detention center became the Coast Guard detention center under the military district command.

After the Code of Court Martial Procedure was revised and passed by the Legislative Yuan in 1999, the Ministry of National Defense established the Northern Local Military Court, the Northern Local Military Court Prosecution Bureau, the Higher-grade Military Court, the Higher-grade Military Court Prosecution Bureau, the Supreme Military Court, the Supreme Military Court Prosecution Bureau, and the Northern Local Military Court Prosecution Bureau detention center in the Jingmei park, which was renamed Xindian Fu Hsing Camp. The Coast Guard detention center was then renamed the Northern Local Military Court Prosecution Bureau detention center.

There were no major physical changes to the park during this period, although the Ministry of National Defense had planned to construct new buildings in the park to meet the requirements of the new offices. When Vice President Annette Lu Hsiu-lien visited the park in 2001 and learned that the Ministry of National Defense intended to reconstruct the park, she proposed the idea of preserving the park. Hereafter, the Executive Yuan instructed the Council of Cultural Affairs to coordinate with the Ministry of National Defense and the defense ministry's reconstruction plan was suspended.

In a July 2002 meeting, the Human Rights Advisory Panel under the Office of the President decided to maintain and preserve the park. In August 2002, a decision was made to organize the Jingmei military detention center as the Memorial Park of Court Martial During the Period of Communist Rebellion, and the Executive Yuan made it the park's official name on June 21, 2005. The park was renamed the Memorial Park of Court Martial During the Period of Martial Law on November 3, 2005.

## 6) 2007~present:

### **The Council of Cultural Affairs**

In 2002, the Council of Cultural Affairs (which was upgraded to the Ministry of Culture in 2012) began coordinating with the Ministry of National Defense regarding the preservation of the park, and the relocation of the Ministry of National Defense's Military Courts and Prosecution Bureaus and the ownership transfer of the park's buildings and land were completed in 2007.

The Council of Cultural Affairs asked the Taipei County Government to register the park as a historic building in a formal letter on October 1, 2007. The Taipei County Government complied by registering the "Jingmei Military Detention Center in Xindian" as a Taipei County historic building.

The park was named the Memorial Park of Court Martial During the Period of Communist Rebellion when the preservation work began. The repair work was completed in 2007, but before the first series of activities were launched in line with Human Rights Day, President Chen Shui-bian renamed the park as "Taiwan Human Rights Jingmei Park."

The Peng Ming-min Cultural and Educational Foundation was entrusted with the management of the park for one year beginning on November 16, 2007 and held a series of exhibitions and activities on human rights, but the foundation later indicated that it would not seek an extension of the contract. Starting on November 16, 2008, the Council of Cultural Affairs organized a task force to take charge of the management of the park.

To act in concert with the scheduled completion of the park's public opening before the end of 2008, the Council of Cultural Affairs had actively sought external support and assistance in preparations such as writing exhibition introductions, collecting related artifacts and documents, gaining authorization for related documents and relics, planning exhibitions, planning the layout of the park, and designing repair plans for the historic buildings since 2002.

After the second change of the nation's ruling party in May 2008, the Council of Cultural Affairs renamed the park "Jingmei Cultural Park" on February 27, 2009 after much deliberation. The decision incurred opposition from various human rights groups, and a public hearing was held at the park on April 30, 2009 to discuss the renaming of the park.

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After the public hearing, the Council of Cultural Affairs decided to adopt the consensus of the majority of the participants and name the park "Jingmei Human Rights Cultural Park." The decision was approved by the Executive Yuan on June 24, 2009.

After taking charge of the management of the park, the Council of Cultural Affairs adopted the principle of maintaining the original spatial planning. It permitted the Ministry of National Defense's prosecution bureaus to continue using the original entrance following the gradual relocation of the defense ministry's units, and demolished the Archives and badminton court on the west side of the park to build a parking lot.

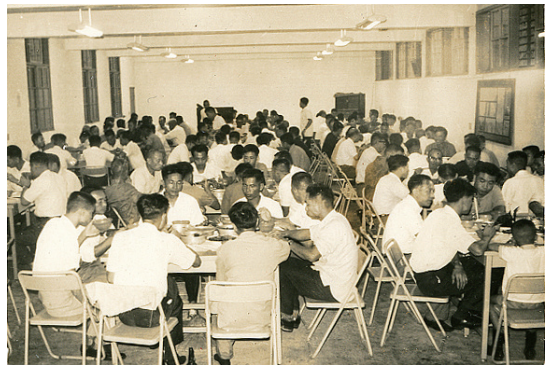
In addition, the sentry post was changed into a guardhouse and the building of the Higher-grade Military Court Prosecution Bureau was converted into an administrative center and a visitor's service center. Along with the White Dove Square and a pool on the former

basketball court to the south, these buildings present a strong imagery of public art at the park entrance.

Minister of Cultural Affairs Emile Chih-jen Sheng announced on July 22, 2010 that the National Human Rights Museum will be established with the Jingmei and Green Island Memorial Parks under its jurisdiction. The objectives for the museum were to preserve the two historic sites and to promote human rights education by fully utilizing the four major functions of museum: to perform studies and research, to handle collection and preservation work, to organize exhibitions and publications, and to educate the public and to promote knowledge.



*Evening performance*



*Dinning Scene*



*Display of restored canteen*



*Display of restored dining room*

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