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TAIWAN INFO

President Ma visits Pengjia Islet near Diaoyutai Islands

President Ma Ying-jeou visited Pengjia Islet near the Diaoyutai Islands April 9, unveiling a monument commemorating the third anniversary of the signing of the landmark Taiwan-Japan Fisheries Agreement.

“This monument serves as testament to the government’s commitment to safeguarding sovereignty and promoting regional stability by turning the East China Sea, South China Sea and Taiwan Strait into three seas of peace,” Ma said.

Arriving on an S-70C helicopter in the afternoon, the president was joined at the ceremony by senior government officials, academics, and members of the media from home and abroad. He also met with Coast Guard Administration personnel based on the islet and inspected a weather observation station and lighthouse. This was Ma’s second visit to Penjia Islet following his first in September 2012.

Ma said the East China Sea Peace Initiative he proposed in August 2012 and consequent fisheries agreement resolved disputes between the two sides over the past 40 years. “The agreement represents a significant achievement as it does not sacrifice sovereignty while greatly enhancing our fishing rights.”

Concluded April 10, 2013, the agreement is the first of its kind to be signed by Taiwan with a neighboring country and is in the spirit of and accords with the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea governing overlapping exclusive economic zones. It protects the rights and interests of Taiwan fishermen operating in a 74,000-square-kilometer zone south of 27 degrees north latitude and north of Japan’s Yaeyama Islands and Miyako Islands.

In 2012, Japanese authorities interfered with the operations of 18 Taiwan fishing boats in the area. After the signing of the agreement, the number fell to one in 2013 and zero in 2014 and 2015. The fish catch of both sides also increased dramatically.

According to the president, the East China Sea Peace Initiative is highly welcomed by the international community and lauded as an effective way of fostering regional peace. Its basic principle is that although sovereignty over national



territory cannot be compromised, natural resources can be shared. All parties are encouraged to engage in discussions on the feasibility of joint development in the spirit of peace and cooperation.

Building on this success, Ma said he proposed the South China Sea Peace Initiative in May 2015 and urged interested parties to settle dispute through peaceful means. This saw the inking of an agreement on bilateral cooperation in fisheries law enforcement between Taiwan and the Philippines in



November the same year.

Situated around 30 nautical miles north of Keelung City in northern Taiwan and

76 nautical miles west of the Diaoyutai Islands, Pengjia Islet is the nation's territory closest to the Diaoyutai Islands. In 2012, Japan unilaterally declared to nationalize three of the Diaoyutai Islands, raising tension in the

East China Sea.

This prompted President Ma proposed the East China Sea Peace Initiative and visited Pengjia Islet the first time to assert the country's sovereignty over Diaoyutai Islands.

Taiwan's medical diplomacy boosts ties with partners

Growing public and private sector efforts have seen Taiwan emerge as a significant provider of international humanitarian assistance and medical aid around the world.

Medical diplomacy plays an important role in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MOFA) efforts to strengthen relations with partner nations. In recent years, the ministry has diversified cooperation with local health care institutions so as to further enhance the quality of its international projects.

A standout achievement in this regard is the post-baccalaureate medical school program offered by southern Taiwan's I-Shou University to international students. By the end of 2015, a total of 108 students from 17 of the nation's diplomatic allies had benefited from this program. To date, 283 foreign students have come to Taiwan to pursue advanced studies in public health and medical care.

Furthermore, the nation has dispatched mobile medical missions, donated equipment and established a referral system for



diplomatic allies to enhance the effectiveness of its health care assistance.

According to the MOFA Department of International Cooperation and Economic Affairs, last year 16 mobile missions traveled to the ROC's six Asia-Pacific allies as well as Fiji and Papua New Guinea. "These are in addition to three long-term medical missions in Burkina Faso, Sao Tome and Principe, and Swaziland. Similar medical aid, counseling and training projects have also been conducted in allied nations in Latin America," a MOFA official said. Such efforts are complemented by training programs in Taiwan for health care professionals from partner countries. The International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF), which organizes the courses, said 32 trainees from 13 nations received instruction last year alone. Participants become seed instructors once they return to their home countries.

"These programs leverage the expertise and extensive clinical experience in Taiwan's health care sector," according to the ICDF. "Moving ahead, we plan to deepen cooperation with Asia-Pacific partners



by dispatching on-site medical personnel and helping them tackle their most urgent health problems." Equally significant are the tie-ups between government agencies and nongovernmental organizations. In the wake of the magnitude 7.9 earthquake that devastated Nepal last April, local NGO Taiwan International Health Action was sent to the South Asian nation to evaluate the situation so that Taiwan could

better tailor its medical assistance. The rapid response of Taiwan groups to this disaster is emblematic of the country's efforts to promptly offer assistance when disasters strike overseas. Organizations such as the Buddhist Compassion Tzu Chi Foundation, Buddha's Light International Association, Kaohsiung Chang Gung Memorial Hospital, Red Cross Society of the ROC and Taiwan Root Medical Peace Corps are quick to get boots on the ground in times of need.

Going forward, the MOFA expects to expand such undertakings in order to strengthen its overseas medical cooperation and make further contributions to international health and welfare.

Diplomatic Achievements and the Challenges Ahead

ROC Minister of Foreign Affairs David Y.L. Lin discusses the government's foreign policy and diplomatic goals with the Taiwan Review.

TR: What is the Republic of China's (ROC) foreign policy approach and how is it being enacted?

Lin: In the past, competition between Taiwan and mainland China for diplomatic recognition imposed pressure on our allies and caused concern in the

international community. Hence, since 2008, our ministry has pursued a policy of viable diplo-



Text: Kelly Her, Taiwan Review. Photo: Huang Chung-hsin



macy aimed at improving cross-strait and international relations based on the principles of autonomy, dignity, flexibility and pragmatism.

I want to clarify that the idea of a diplomatic truce refers to putting a stop to our competition with the mainland for diplomatic allies and is just one aspect of the viable diplomacy approach. The policy does not suggest inaction, as we have striven to strengthen our ties with other nations and expand our participation in the international community.

During the Ma administration, we have established new representative offices in Chennai, India; Frankfurt, Germany; Sapporo, Japan; and Surabaya, Indonesia. In addition, two of our diplomatic allies, Kiribati and St. Lucia, set up embassies in Taipei [in 2013 and 2015, respectively], and Myanmar and Papua New Guinea opened trade offices in Taipei [in June and December 2015, respectively].

What results have been achieved through viable diplomacy? What obstacles does the nation still face?

By implementing this practical approach, Taiwan has made significant headway on the domestic and international fronts. The most obvious indicator is that the number of countries and territories granting ROC nationals visa-free entry or other visa privileges has increased from 54 in 2008 to 161 today.

Another indicator is Taiwan's increased global engagement. The country now enjoys formal membership in 37 international organizations and observer or other statuses in another 21. Moreover, President Ma proposed the East China Sea Peace Initiative in August 2012 and the

South China Sea Peace Initiative in May 2015, calling for concerned parties to settle disputes peacefully and cooperate in the exploration of natural resources.

In line with these principles, Taiwan signed a fisheries agreement with Japan in April 2013, and by doing so resolved a 40-year dispute.

We also concluded a fisheries law enforcement pact with the Philippines in November 2015. Taiwan aspires to be a peacemaker through the promotion of regional cooperation and stability.

The main challenge we confront is that mainland China continues to squeeze our international space. Still, we must do whatever we can to expand our international presence in order to safeguard our national interests and citizens' well-being.

What are your views regarding the nation's engagement in foreign affairs?

I've been working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for 38 years. I believe that diplomacy is the art of the possible. It is therefore essential to adopt a practical approach in order to create more opportunities. Over the years, Taiwan has delivered different types of aid including humanitarian and disaster relief to those in need based on its economic and technological expertise.

The International Cooperation and Development Fund (TaiwanICDF), for instance, has carried out various projects devoted to the development of animal husbandry, aquaculture, health care and information and communications technology in our partner nations. Taiwan also provides aid through cooperation with nongovernmental groups such as the



Tzu Chi Foundation and World Vision.

The many diplomatic breakthroughs that we have achieved over the last few years are a validation of viable diplomacy

and are due to the hard work and professionalism of foreign service officers. These achievements have not come easy and deserve recognition.

Clouds forecast app popular among photography buffs

A free mobile app that can forecast when an overcast layer of clouds is likely to form titled “StratuSea” has recently emerged as a popular download among photography lovers.

Text: FocusTaiwan, Image: StratusSea



The app was developed by National Chung Cheng University alumnus Wen Ying-tso after four years of research.

In the past, Wen frequently visited the mountains to take photos of an overcast layer of clouds, often referred to as a sea of clouds, but very often he was disappointed.

Four years ago, he began to collect information that could forecast this weather phenomenon, such as visiting the website of the US National Centers for Environmental Prediction to obtain data related to the altitudes of clouds. To share the results of his research with other photography enthusiasts, Wen came up with the idea of developing a mobile app.

The app is now available on the APP Store and Google Play for free download.

According to Wen, “StratuSea” is not only a very helpful app for photography lovers but also a must-see for sky gazers, who can obtain information concerning the positions of clouds from the app as well as ideal conditions for stargazing.

Sticking up for tradition

Master painter Lin Chih-chu played a key role in defending and cultivating a time-honored art form in Taiwan.

From January to May this year, the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts in the central city of Taichung is staging a special exhibition to explore the works and cele-

By Pat Gao, Taiwan Review

Photos courtesy of National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts

brate the life of one of the most influential artists in the country's history. Over the course of his more than half-century career, Lin Chih-chu (1917-2008) earned widespread acclaim for his mastery of glue-color painting, or Eastern gouache painting. A passionate educator, Lin dedicated much



of his life to teaching and promoting the medium, even coining the term now used to describe the genre in Taiwan. In 2005, he received the National Cultural Award, one of the nation's highest honors for lifetime achievement, for both the exceptional quality of his artworks and his efforts to ensure the continuation of the traditional technique.

Though now primarily associated with Japan, glue-color painting originated in China. Artist Tseng Teh-biao, who studied under Lin, points out that the medium traces its origins back thousands of years in the mainland. In the past, glues made by boiling animal skins and bones were used to fix colors to materials such as pottery, silk and stone. Tseng cites the Dunhuang Cave murals, which date back more than 1,500 years, in northern mainland China as early examples of glue-color painting.

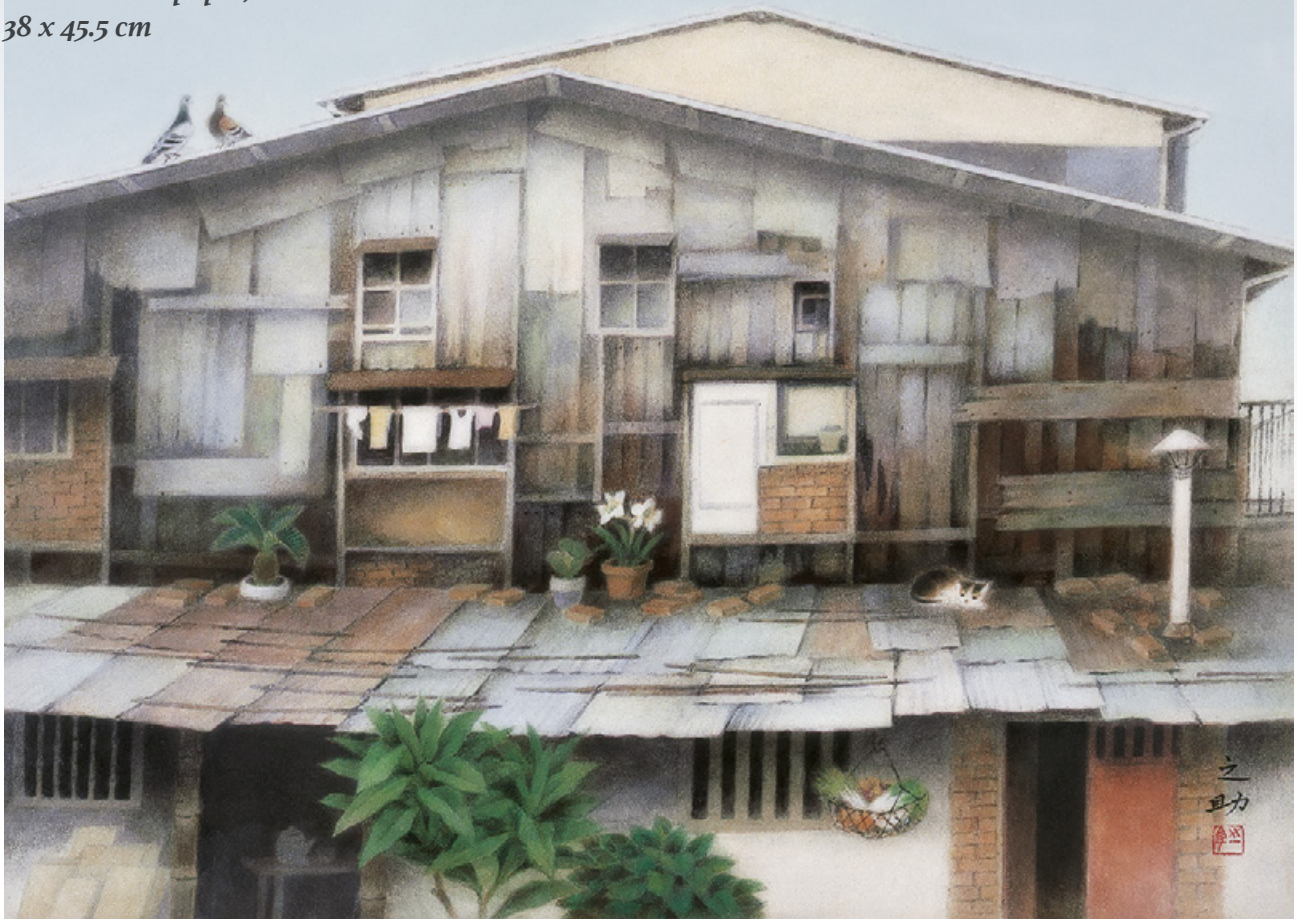
Lin, who completed much of his educa-

tion in Japan, began studying the medium in his teens. Born during the period of Japanese colonial rule of Taiwan (1895-1945), he grew up in an affluent family in today's Daya District of Taichung City. In 1928, while still an elementary school student, he was sent to Japan to complete his education. In 1934, Lin enrolled in a Tokyo art college, today's Musashino Art University, where he studied contemporary Japanese painting. Within a decade, he would gain significant recognition in art circles in both Japan and Taiwan.

Running until May 15, the Lin Chih-chu Centennial Memorial Exhibition at the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts features more than 100 of the artist's paintings, sketches and drawings, with the earliest works dating to the time of his college studies in Japan.

The exhibition was curated by Tseng and Pai Shih-ming, a professor in the De-

Spring Sun
Glue color on paper, 2002
38 x 45.5 cm





partment of Fine Arts at National Taiwan Normal University in Taipei. In his written introduction to the event, Pai highlighted Lin's contributions to sustaining the genre of glue-color painting and shaping it to be the medium "that best represents local identity and native culture in the recent history of fine arts in Taiwan."

Pai notes that Lin was a prominent figure, along with painters such as Chen Cheng-po (1895-1947) and Lin Yu-shan (1907-2004), in the first generation of Taiwanese who received formal training in modern art. Works by these artists often won top prizes at the Taiwan Fine Arts Exhibition, an islandwide competitive event established in 1927, though discontinued in 2006. Lin Chih-chu won first prizes in 1942 and 1943.

Most of the winning pieces in the competition from 1927 to 2006 are now in the collection of the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, including Lin Chih-chu's *Bathing in the Morning* (1940), which was assigned the status of significant antiquity, the second-highest designation for antiquities as outlined in the Cultural Heritage Preservation Act, by the Ministry of Culture.

Bathing in the Morning features Lin's fiancée in a kimono looking down at a white goat that is gazing back at her, with

the animal said to symbolize the wistful painter. Tseng, a celebrated glue-color painter whose works have won numerous, says that due to the Japanese cultural elements in the work, official recognition came slowly and reluctantly to this masterpiece in Lin's home country.

A former head of the Taiwan Glue-Color Painting Association, which Lin founded in 1981, Tseng notes that he and the master's other glue-color painting pupils studied as private apprentices since the medium did not appear on fine arts programs in Taiwan at that time. This did not change until 1985, when Lin was invited to teach an official course on the genre in the Department of Fine Arts at Tunghai University in Taichung. "Back then, education authorities didn't allow schools to develop specialized subjects," Tseng recalls, "so mediums like glue-color painting were essentially forbidden in Taiwan."

Prior to the 1980s, which saw the gradual liberalization of Taiwanese society, the dominant genre of fine arts was traditional Chinese ink painting. Owing to what Pai refers to in his introduction to the centennial exhibition as the Nationalist government's "de-Japanization" and "re-Sinification" of Taiwan, glue-color painting was dismissed in local art circles as a Japanese medium.



Smoke, 1965
85 x 30 cm



Lin was dismayed by the dispute between ink and glue-color painters. In 1977, in an effort to resolve the disagreement, he penned an article in a local art magazine suggesting the use of “glue-color painting” rather than Japanese or Eastern painting to describe the medium. This term, he noted, follows the naming convention used for other styles of painting such as oil and watercolor by identifying the substance mixed with pigments to create the type of paint used in the genre.

In the same year, Lin organized the first art exhibition devoted exclusively to the medium in Taiwan and used the new term he had created in the title of the event. Some years later, competition organizers created an entirely new section for the genre and used the term Lin had proposed in 1977 as the title of the new category.

Tseng stresses that the decades of antagonism between ink and glue-color painters in Taiwan was absurd since both mediums find their origins in ancient Chinese art traditions. Prior to the Song dynasty (960-1279), a style of painting called “gold and green landscapes,” categorized by the use of heavy glue-based colors and meticulous depictions of natural scenes, was popular in China.

Over time, ink painting came to be viewed as a higher form of art and became the mainstream genre of classical Chinese painting, though the glue-color medium continued to be practiced in Japan until it became primarily associated with that nation. For Pai, Lin’s commitment to preserving and advancing the genre amid a hostile artistic environment sealed his legacy in Taiwan’s art history. In his introduction



to the centennial exhibition, Pai drew attention to the painter's signature theme of birds and flowers during the latter half of his life. According to the professor, the artist's depictions of peaceful natural scenes served as a si-

lent protest against Taiwan's then-authoritarian society and the vexing debates surrounding the definition of its national painting culture. Lin's perspectives on art, Pai says, can best be described in Lin's own words.





Cool Autumn Air
Glue color on silk, 2005
41 x 53 cm



“An artwork’s value consists in its thought, spirit and creativity regardless of whether it was painted using oil colors, watercolors, glue colors or ink.” Training Framework, through which the United States and Taiwan jointly engage regional partners on a broad range of transnational issues, said the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT), which represents US interests in Taiwan in

the absence of bilateral diplomatic ties. The workshop brought together 16 participants from countries such as India, Indonesia, Thailand, South Korea, Myanmar, Vietnam, Peru, Chile and the

Philippines to exchange ideas on how to enhance the role of women and share experiences in their countries, according to Taiwan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one of the organizers.



Taichung Park
Glue color on paper, 1979
41 x 53 cm

Should you have any question, please contact us at taiwaninfo.hungary@tro.hu
TAIPEI REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE, HUNGARY
1088 Budapest, Rákóczi Rd. 1-3./II.
tro.hu, roc-taiwan.org