



Photo by Theerasak Sakrtraingee



International Council of Women meeting opens in Taipei

The Executive Committee Meeting of the Paris-headquartered International Council of Women (ICW) kicked off November 14 in Taipei, marking the first time the global women's rights organization has staged the assembly in Taiwan.

Hosted by the National Council of Women of Taiwan, Republic of China (NCWT), the four-day event is organized under the theme "Transforming Society through Women's Empowerment" and includes a conference examining women's roles in decision-making, local communities and workplaces. Speakers include politicians, scholars and representatives of rights groups from Egypt, Guatemala, Japan, Marshall Islands, Philippines, Poland, South Africa, South Korea and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Speaking at the opening of the event, President Tsai Ing-wen highlighted Taiwan's successful efforts to boost women's participation in public affairs, pointing out that more than one-third of the country's legislators are female. "As a woman president, I am also evidence of this trend," she added.

Tsai also cited the nation's progress in enacting the provisions of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Taiwan has produced two national reports on the implementation of the CEDAW since the accord was ratified by the Legislative Yuan in 2007, she noted.

The president said that there is still much to be done to achieve true equality and justice in Taiwan, drawing attention to such problems as the gender pay gap and work-life balance issues as well as the low labor participation rate for women over 35. She stressed that the government is working to strengthen family support systems so as to help relieve the burdens faced by women, who often take on the roles of caregivers to children and the elderly.

In her opening address, ICW President Jungsook Kim, from South Korea, praised Taiwan's efforts to promote gender equality through constitutional amendments and legislation. The election of a female national leader "speaks loudly of the progress taking place in your nation and bodes very well for continued movement toward gender equality," she said.

The ICW was established in 1888 as the first group to promote women's rights on the international stage. It enjoys consultative status with the United Nations and sends permanent representatives to such organs as the Economic and Social Council. Consisting of 10 local groups, the NCWT was founded in 1990 and joined the ICW in 1994.

Source: Taiwan Today



President Tsai congratulates Donald J. Trump and Mike Pence on their election as 45th US President and Vice President

On November 9, on behalf of the government and people of the Republic of China (Taiwan), President Tsai Ing-wen conveyed her congratulations to the United States Republican Party's presidential and vice presidential candidates Donald J. Trump and Mike Pence on their election as the 45th President and Vice President of the United States of America.

The United States is the most important democratic country in the world, said President Tsai, and Taiwan's staunchest partner in the international community. She looks forward to working with President-elect Trump and his governing team to further strengthen the Taiwan-US relationship, which will continue to be a cornerstone for peace and stability in the Asia Pacific.

President Tsai would also like to thank the Obama administration for all the support it has given Taiwan on many fronts in the recent years, and hopes that, during the transition period to come, the US will continue to play an important role on regional security.

Upon learning of the election of Donald J. Trump, President Tsai immediately sent

a congratulatory message to Mr. Trump through our Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In her congratulatory message, the president stated that Taiwan and the US enjoy a strong partnership based on values of freedom, democracy, and human rights, as well as shared interests in enhancing peace, stability, and economic prosperity. In recent years, significant progress has been made in our bilateral relations due to close and comprehensive collaboration on issues of mutual concern. President Tsai also reiterated that Taiwan will continue to be a close and reliable partner of the United States in the region and around the world. She is confident that the cordial and mutually beneficial relationship between our two countries will be further strengthened in the years ahead.

Source: Office of the President

Internet of Things pact powers Taiwan's high-tech development

A memorandum of understanding on enhancing Taiwan's Internet of Things, or IoT, ecosystem was inked November 7 in Taipei City by the Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOEA) and high-tech heavyweight Qualcomm Inc. as part of government efforts to build the country into an Asian Silicon Valley.

Under the pact, the US-based chipmaker will set up a Qualcomm partner lab in Taipei. Set to commence operations later this month, the facility will support development of fourth-gen-

eration plus and fifth-generation Internet of Everything products and solutions based on Qualcomm technologies.

Both sides will leverage the flexible produc-



tion prowess of Taiwan's and the United States' high-tech sectors and initiate a strategic alliance involving network service carriers and solutions providers, as well as original design and equipment manufacturers. These measures are expected to capitalize on the global IoT sector's growing demand for high customization and diverse vertical applications.

MOEA Deputy Minister Shen Jong-chin said at the signing ceremony that the backing of Qualcomm is highly welcomed and will assist the government in sharpening Taiwan's advanced R&D capabilities, fostering startups, and helping fast-track development in high-tech sectors including automotive, computing and smart city.

Echoing Shen's remarks, Qualcomm Executive Chairman Paul Jacobs said his firm is

proud to partner with Taiwan. "The lab will serve as a hub for sharing ideas and expertise and collaborating on the development of new solutions to advance Taiwan's IoT technology."

Qualcomm is committed to assisting local telecom product and solution providers expand their footprint in the global marketplace through its worldwide technical network, he added.

A similar pact was concluded by the MOEA with Microsoft Corp. in October 2015 for the establishment in Taipei of the US tech giant's first IoT development center worldwide.

The IoT-focused Asian Silicon Valley initiative is one of five strategic promotion targets under President Tsai Ing-wen's New Model for Economic Development. The other four are biotechnology and pharmaceuticals, green energy, national defense and smart machinery.



Cultural Gateway

By Kelly Her

Taiwan Review

Photos courtesy of Cultural Affairs Bureau of

Taichung City Government

Taichung City broadens its tourism appeal by organizing diverse festivals and promoting the adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

After two years of renovations, the historic Taichung Shiyakusho building in central Taiwan's Taichung City reopened in February 2016 as a café and arts center. Built in 1911 and used as a municipal office during the Japanese colonial period (1895-1945), the three-story Baroque-style structure was the first iron-reinforced concrete building in the city. An iconic landmark in Taichung's old downtown area, it has welcomed large crowds since being granted a new lease on life, with long lines of cus-

tomers often waiting outside to be seated in Café 1911 on its first floor. "We're a bit surprised to see our establishment drawing so many customers from home and abroad just a few months after its launch," said Daisy Chang, manager of the cafe. "We attribute our runaway success to our efforts to offer an elevated dining experience in a classic setting."

Café 1911 is operated by Rose House Group, Taiwan's largest British tea shop chain. Only the first floor of the building is



The National Taichung Theater is designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Toyo Ito.

used for commercial purposes. The company has turned the second and third stories into an arts center that regularly hosts free exhibitions in fields such as photography, sculpture and installation arts. “Our main objectives are to promote the aesthetic and historical value of this century-old building and spotlight local art,” Chang said.

The Taichung Shiyakusho is among the 102 historic buildings under the jurisdiction of the Taichung City Government. Municipal authorities oversee a further 48 monuments and five cultural landscapes. The city is also home to two national monuments, which are administered by the central government.

In recent years, local authorities have made great efforts to renovate historic structures and promote their adaptive reuse through public-private partnerships, such as the arrangement at the Taichung Shiyakusho. “Our mission is to conserve and revitalize historic sites in order to safe-

guard our region’s cultural assets,” said Tang Kuo-jung, director of the city government’s Cultural Heritage Department. “Adaptive reuse programs can ensure the maintenance and long-term protection of historic buildings as well as boost the local tourism industry.”

Other buildings that have been renovated and repurposed include the Taichung Literature Museum, a former police dormitory complex completed in 1934; the Taichung Broadcasting Bureau, established in 1935 as a relay station and now a cultural and creative center; and the Natural Way Six Arts Cultural Center, built in 1937 as a martial arts compound.

Tang said his department has been able to renovate these and other historical structures thanks to financial support from the Ministry of Culture (MOC) and city government. He noted that, wherever possible, the buildings are restored to their original states using traditional materials and methods.



Tourism Appeal

Citing the results of a 2014 survey conducted by the Tourism Bureau under the Ministry of Transportation and Communications, Tang said cultural and historical attractions are among the top reasons people choose to vacation in Taiwan, with tours of historic sites ranking third behind shopping and trips to night markets as the most popular activities among visitors.

“Cultural tourism, traveling for the purpose of experiencing the art, heritage and unique character of a place, has become increasingly popular,” the director said. “As Taichung is endowed with rich cultural resources, we have an excellent opportunity to expand this form of tourism to our city.”

Wang Chih-cheng, director-general of the Taichung City Government’s Cultural Affairs Bureau, said the city has abundant intangible cultural assets such as traditional crafts, festivals, rituals and performing arts, in addition to its physical attractions. These resources, he said, are playing an important role in enhancing the city’s international appeal and visibility.

“The trend toward globalization is irreversible. However, before pursuing globalization, it’s important to emphasize localization, to identify and highlight a region’s unique cultural characteristics,” he said.

As part of its efforts to showcase the region’s artistic environment and heritage, the Cultural Affairs Bureau organizes a variety of festivals throughout the year. Annual events organized by the bureau include the Taichung Traditional Arts Festival in February; the Taichung Mazu International Festival from March to May; the Taichung Light Festival in June and July; the Rock in Taichung Festival in September; the Taichung Jazz Festival in October; and the Taichung Arts Festi-

val in November. Though they focus on different fields, these occasions all typically feature live performances, bazaars, interactive activities, firework displays and parades.

More than half of the troupes and musical acts that perform at the festivals are



The historic Taichung Shiyakusho building in central Taiwan’s Taichung City has been converted into a cafe and arts center.

based in Taichung. By promoting the participation of local groups, the city government hopes to foster their artistic development and improve their chances of gaining international recognition.

Faith and Artistry

Among the most celebrated of the city’s annual events is the Taichung Mazu International Festival. Mazu, known as the Goddess of the Sea or the Queen of Heaven, is the most revered deity in Taiwan. There are estimated to be more than 10 million Mazu worshippers and 2,300 temples dedicated to the goddess around the nation.

The highlight of the festival is a nine-day pilgrimage held in celebration of the goddess’ birthday. The procession starts and ends at Taichung’s Dajia Jenn Lann Temple, which organizes the pilgrimage, and draws millions of participants every year. One of the largest annual reli-



gious events in the world, it was listed in 2008 as a national intangible cultural heritage by the Council for Cultural Affairs, now the MOC.

To help visitors explore the long history and diversity of Mazu worship in Taichung, the city gov-

ernment organizes a wide variety of activities around the procession. Twelve of the Mazu temples in Taichung are more than 100 years old, among them Dajia Jenn Lann Temple. To highlight these historic sites, the Cultural Affairs Bureau stages an event called A Century of Magnificent Mazu Temples, a series of traditional performances in genres ranging



The Taichung Light Festival is held at historic sites throughout the city in June and July.

from Taiwanese opera to folk drumming at the 12 places of worship.

“Mazu worship is not simply a religion but a blend of various cultural beliefs and economic activities,” the director-general said. “With huge numbers of people

gathering in celebration, the festival brings abundant commercial opportunities for businesses such as hotels, food vendors and producers of Mazu-related cultural and creative products.” The Mazu festival, he added, excellently demonstrates how cultural tourism can foster international understanding of time-honored local traditions.

2016 Taiwan Open of Surfing to be held in Taitung

More than 200 surfers from around the world will be taking part in the 2016 Taiwan Open of Surfing to be held in Jinzun Harbor, Taitung County in eastern Taiwan, which boasts stable and beautiful waves that are recognized by the World Surfing League (WSL) as among the best in the world, from November 23 to 27.

Tony Silvagni and Crystal Walsh, who both hold the 2015 champion titles in men's longboard category and women's longboard category respectively, will also be competing in the four-day event.

The WSL Women's longboard champion Rachael Tilly and Japanese leading surfer Matsushi Ohno, who may join the national team



of Japan in the Tokyo 2020 Olympic, will also attend the competitions.

The 2016 Taiwan Open of Surfing, which carries a purse of NT\$2.5 million (US\$78,900), is a recognized

WSF QS1500 event and will be the 48th leg in men's shortboard category, the 9th leg in men's longboard category and the 9th leg women's

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longboard category as part of the WSL.

The WSL has listed the waves off Jinzun Harbor in the same class as those in the United States, Australia, Japan, Malaysia, Bali and Thailand, particularly when seasonal northeasterly winds are blowing.

This year the competitions will also include team longboard division, team shortboard division and junior division.

WSL Australasia Regional Manager Will Hayden-Smith is proud of how far the event has come. "The Taiwan Open of Surfing is one of my favorite events," Hayden-Smith said. "We always get great waves and Taiwan itself is a beautiful place to visit. The event



has developed a lot over the years with the Men's QS being upgraded last year to a 1,500 and the event being webcast live this year for the second year running."

Last year, the competition's live streaming on YouTube and WSL official website had successfully attracted more than 100,000 viewers to watch online, according to the organizers.

As Taiwan's only surfing event that is officially part of the WSL world circuit, it is expected to greatly elevate the level and broaden the horizon of Taiwan's surfing,

the organizers said.

This year's event will be webcast live www.worldsurfleague.com and on the WSL App.

Source: Business Wire, World Surf League, Photos: Taiwan Open of Surfing Facebook

Gaomei wetland

Gaomei Wetland Preservation Area in Qingshui District, Taichung has emerged as the most popular tourist destination Japanese wanted to visit this fall, followed by Schloss Neuschwanstein

(New Swanstone Castle) in Germany, according to an online survey conducted by Japan's H.I.S. travel agency recently. In the survey, H.I.S., one of Japan's leading trav-



el agencies which has operated for over 30 years, asked travel enthusiasts through social media channels to vote for the places they most wanted to visit around the world. Gao-

mei Wetlands is a tidal flat where visitors can catch the sea breeze and watch the beautiful sunset against a backdrop of wind mills, according to H.I.S.

Source: Focus Taiwan, Photo: Courtesy of Taichung City Government

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