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Taiwan INFO

PRESIDENT TSAI PAYS RESPECTS TO LIU XIAOBO

President Tsai Ing-wen paid her highest respects July 13 to Liu Xiaobo, winner of the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize, who died aged 61 of complications from liver cancer while serving an 11-year prison sentence in mainland China.

In a tweet on her official Twitter account, Tsai praised the “tireless advocate for human rights.” She also expressed her deepest condolences to Liu’s family, particularly his wife Liu Xia who is believed to be under house arrest.

Citing text from Liu’s “No Enemies, No Hatred,” a collection of his essays and poems mainly from 2004-2008, Tsai said Liu firmly believed “China’s political progress will never stop” and that “China will eventually become a country of the rule of law in which human rights are supreme.”

Liu had no enemies because democracy has no enemies, Tsai said, adding that

it is hoped the authorities in mainland China can show confidence by engaging in political reform so the people can enjoy the rights of freedom and democracy.

“If the Chinese dream is democracy, then Taiwan will provide any assistance necessary to achieve this objective. I believe that this is what [Liu] would have wanted.” Born in 1955 in the northeastern city of Changchun, Liu was a renowned literacy critic and writer, as well as one of the most prominent human rights activists in mainland China. He also co-authored “Charter 08,” a manifesto published Dec. 10, 2008 – the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration

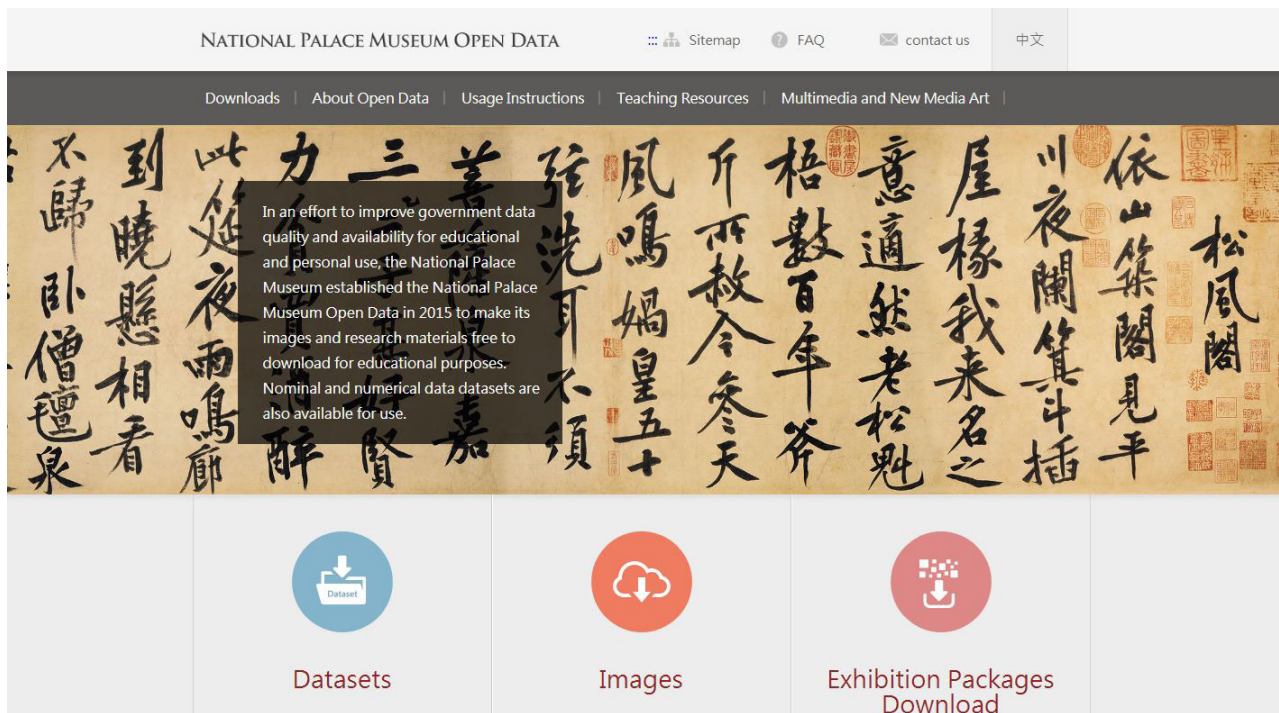
Source: Taiwan Today



of Human Rights, advocating the gradual shift of mainland China's political and legal system toward democracy. Liu was sentenced to 11 years in prison for sub-

version on Christmas Day in 2009, and a year later received the Nobel Peace Prize "for his long and non-violent struggle for fundamental human rights in China."

NPM OFFERS FREE ACCESS TO IMAGES OF PRECIOUS ARTWORKS



Source: Taiwan Today, Photo: heme.npm.edu.tw

A total of 71,640 images of precious artifacts in the National Palace Museum's (NPM) collections can be downloaded free of charge effective immediately, according to the Taipei-based art institution July 7.

The NPM said the first set of data available online comprises 1,640 medium-resolution images of famed artworks and 70,000 low-resolution images of artifacts, calligraphy and paintings in its holdings.

These include the NPM's signature pieces such as the Jadeite Cabbage

with Insects, Meat-shaped Stone and Mao Gongding, as well as the calligraphy masterpieces "Timely Clearing after Snowfall" by Wang Hsi-chih (303-361) and "Autobiography" by Huai Su (730s-770s). According to the museum, the free licensing service is part of its open data initiative established in 2015



to offer direct access to images of precious artworks and research materials for all purposes, an approach in line with the practices of major museums around the world. The NPM said these images are the results of the National Digital Archive project and should be shared by the general public. It is hoped that the public service will inspire Taiwan's cultural and creative firms to incorporate these images into their product designs while boosting the local sector's global competitiveness, it add-

ed. As part of its public policy, the NPM will continue to expand the content of its open data archive and release 500 new images on a quarterly basis. Established in 1965, the NPM is home to the world's largest collection of Chinese imperial art spanning 7,000 years from the prehistoric Neolithic period to the end of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911). The institution opened a second branch in southern Taiwan's Chiayi County in December 2015 showcasing artifacts from diverse Asian civilizations.

TAIWAN DONATION TO AID HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS IN DR CONGO, IRAQ

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) announced July 7 its donation of US\$100,000 to CARE International, a global nongovernmental humanitarian aid organization, to assist the NGO's efforts in helping civilians affected by conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo as well as Iraq.

According to the ministry, the donation went toward CARE's Emergency Response Fund, which delivers humanitarian and financial resources within 24 hours after a disaster or new peak in an ongoing crisis.

The primary goals of the organization in the DRC are to help meet the needs of the country's most vulnerable people, prevent sexual violence and support health care facilities in areas of massive population displacement. In Iraq, the funds will provide safe drinking water as well as sanitation and hygiene kits in and around the city of Mosul.

This donation reflects the Taiwan people's commitment to helping safeguard human rights around the world, the

MOFA said. The ministry added that the nation attaches great importance to providing medical assistance and health care as well as contributing to international humanitarian efforts to end sexual violence.

Taiwan has a strong relationship with CARE, the ministry said, having collaborated to provide post-disaster relief to those affected by the massive earthquake that struck Nepal in 2015. In addition, CARE Secretary-General Wolfgang Jamann visited Taiwan last year to attend an international forum organized by the Taiwan Alliance in International Development, a humanitarian aid NGO based in Taipei City. Founded in 1945 as the Cooperative for Ameri-



can Remittance to Europe, the Switzerland-headquartered CARE International is one of the largest humanitarian aid agencies in the world. In 1993, the organization was renamed Cooperative

for Assistance and Relief Everywhere. According to CARE's 2015 annual report, its humanitarian efforts support 890 projects in 95 countries and impact more than 65 million people.

June exports return to double-digit growth



Source: Focus Taiwan, Photo: Huang Chung-hsin

Taiwan's exports returned to double-digit growth in June, largely on the back of solid global demand for electronic devices and machinery, the Ministry of Finance (MOF) said July 7.

In June, Taiwan's outbound sales rose 13 percent from a year earlier to US\$25.83 billion after an 8.4 percent year-on-year increase in May and a 9.3 percent rise in April, data compiled by the MOF shows. In March, Taiwan's exports grew 13.1 percent from a year earlier.

The data indicates that Taiwan's exports grew in June for the ninth consecutive month. Taiwan's imports in June meanwhile totaled NT\$20 billion, up 3.7 percent from a year earlier, while the trade surplus stood at US\$5.83 billion, up US\$2.26 billion from last year, the MOF said.



MORE THAN 70 INFO BOOTHS TO AID VISITORS DURING SUMMER UNIVERSIADE

A total of 71 information booths will be set up at locations throughout Taipei for the upcoming Summer Universiade, the largest international sporting event ever staged in Taiwan, the city government announced July 9.



Source: Taiwan Today, Photo: Taipei 2017 Universiade facebook

The booths will provide information such as event schedules, directions to venues and ticket availability. They will also host interactive games, where visitors can win prizes while learning more about the global sporting event.

According to the city government, the information booths will be set up in high-traffic areas including 29 metro stations as well as Nangang and Songshan railway stations. The 71 locations will be assisted by the city's 12 district offices as well as borough chiefs and civic groups such as the Tzu Chi Foundation and Taiwan Rotary Clubs Association, bringing together over 2,000 volunteers.

From July 15 to August 12, the booths will operate on weekends from 9 a.m. to noon and 2-6 p.m. They will provide services all week from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. throughout the Aug. 19-30 games. Also known as the World University Games, the Universiade is an international sporting and cultural festival staged every two years in a different city worldwide. The 29th edition of the games in Taipei involves 7,700-plus student athletes from 153 countries contesting 21 sports at 38 competition venues in Taipei, Hsinchu City, Hsinchu County, New Taipei and Taoyuan cities.



TAIWAN'S AIR FORCE CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF HOME-GROWN JETS

Taiwan's Air Force celebrated the 25th anniversary of taking its first delivery of locally made IDF fighter jets at an air base in Taichung, and pledged to continue to beef up its capabilities in the face of the military threat from China.

Lt. Gen. Hu Kai-hung, deputy commander of the Air Force, said at the July 14 ceremony that Taiwan has faced many difficulties in procuring advanced weapons systems from other countries due to the international situation, meaning that Taiwan has also had to develop home-grown defense capabilities. The development, production, delivery and commission of the IDFs demonstrated Taiwan's defense technology

and manufacturing abilities and its dedication to self-reliance in national defense, Hu at the Ching Chuan Kang air base. He also noted that it was after Taiwan developed its own IDF jets that foreign countries decided to sell Taiwan advanced fighters. The IDFs, the U.S.-made F-16 fighter jets and the French-made Mirage 2000-5 fighters now form the main combat aircraft in Taiwan's Air Force. Taiwan needs to continue to beef up its air defense capabilities and develop weapons systems to create an effective deterrent, he added.

The event featured a flyover by IDFs and stunts performed by IDF fighter pilot Liu Shih-po, including slow and inverted flights.

Source: Focus Taiwan, Photo: Military spokesman facebook

Cycling in Taiwan — Saddle Up and Make the Scene

*Taiwan Panorama
By Chen Chun-fang
Photos courtesy of Chuang Kung-ju*

Taiwan is home to many different terrains, ranging from the plains and sandy beaches of the western part of the island, to the rugged Central Mountain Range, and on to the Hualien-Taitung Rift Valley and deep blue seas of the east. All of these lovely landscapes also change their look with every season, making our little island a wonderful place to explore over and over again.

WILL-POWERED SCENERY

In 2015 the Ministry of Transportation and Communications completed Cycling Route No. 1, which links cycle trails and on-highway bicycle routes around

Taiwan into a connected route, complete with bike repair points and rest and refreshment stops, that makes it even easier for riders to make a circuit of the island.



County Highway 193, which runs 110 kilometers through Hualien County, from Xincheng in the north, through Ji'an and Shoufeng, and all the way down to Yuli in the south, is Taiwan's most revered cycling route. The 23.5-km stretch from Ruisui to Yuli, known as the Lede Highway, is particularly scenic. It runs between the Coastal Mountain Range and the Xiuguluan

River, passing by rice paddies, amid singing birds, and surrounded by flowers that bloom in every season, such as those of the golden rain tree and the royal poinciana.

Bike routes like this highlight the best of Taiwan's gorgeous scenery. In addition to appreciating the view, riders get to interact with locals, whose smiles and shouts of encouragement add depth to the cycling experience. Holger and Dietmar are German engineers who much prefer the sensory

immediacy of cycling to travel in closed-up motor vehicles. They make cycling tours of islands around the world every year, and this year have come to Taiwan to explore the highways and byways and enjoy sights such as the sunset at Fangshan and the sea at Duoliang.

Mikiwasa Kumazawa was inspired to make his own bicycle circuit of Taiwan by a Japanese television program showing the

golden rice paddies, open landscapes and unspoiled culture of Taiwan's Hualien-Taiung area. The 68-year-old Kumazawa says he hasn't ridden a bicycle since his middle-school days and admits that doing so now is tough. But the gorgeous scenery is worth the price in pain, he says.

A LANDSCAPE OF THE SPIRIT

Huang Ting Ying, who represented Taiwan in cycling at the Rio Olympics,



Penny Chou



comes from a family of athletes. Originally a swimmer, she got into cycling while in the sixth grade. Her talent became clear when she began competing in international competitions as a middle-school student. She started her career as a sprinter relying on speed and explosiveness, but switched to intermediate and long-distance road races in an effort to break away from the pack.

Huang has enjoyed a measure of international success. She finished second overall in the 2016 Tour of Chongming Island World Cup, winning the race's first and third stages and earning the nickname "pink cannonball" for her explosiveness. That performance propelled her into the international professional cycling limelight, and gained her a place on Italy's Servetto Footon women's professional cycling team.

Huang went on to compete in the Giro d'Italia Femminile later last year, and was the first Taiwanese woman to complete the race, a grueling event whose winding

roads and long climbs force many racers to give up.

Downhill mountain biking queen Penny Chou has chosen to push her limits in cross-country mountain biking competitions. Originally a successful track athlete, Chou switched to field events at the urging of her coach, but never developed a passion for them. Unable to compete as well as she wanted, she took a teammate's advice and gave mountain biking a try. The decision marked a turning point in her athletic career.

Chou qualified for last year's Asian Mountain Bike Continental Championships, but had to withdraw after tearing a ligament in her right ankle while training. But the injury hasn't affected her passion for cycling in the least.

A CYCLING LIFE

It isn't just competitive athletes who have taken up cycling. Bike Family's Huang Jinbao is a former steel worker who took up cycling when his doctor recommended it



Cycling offers a unique and personal perspective of the world.



to help rehabilitate years of occupational injuries. He may have started cycling as therapy, but he soon found himself on a surprising new path, taking his wife and children on bicycle circuits of Taiwan and Europe, and then a 400-day cycling trip around the world. Unable to stop cycling, he then founded Bike Family, a company that helps people realize their dreams of cycling around Taiwan.

Bike Family's tour groups include cyclists from all over the world, including Germany, Korea, and Japan. Though the riders begin their trips as strangers, a few days on the road together gets them sharing their cultures and experiences in spite of language barriers.

NO BRAKES!

Fixed-gear bicycles, or "fixies," are an important part of bicycling messenger culture abroad and have become a distinctive feature of the urban terrain. The bikes are named for their single gear with no freewheel, a feature that enables riders to do some unusual tricks with them, like riding backwards or spinning the handlebars. They are also simple to build, which enables fans to build custom bikes using their preferred parts, even down to color-matching the screws. They are particularly popular among young people because they make it easy for riders to flaunt their personal style. "Most people ride fix-



Fixed-gear bicycles, or "fixies," make for fantastic vehicles of self-expression.

ies because they look cool," says Xie Weida, head of Fixed Style, a Taipei fixie club.

Fixed Style is the first fixie club in Taipei that isn't tied to a particular shop or type of bike. Its goal is to create a friendly group riding environment that enables cyclists to enjoy their fixies together. Most fixie riders personalize their bikes with customized paint jobs and other decorations, style themselves with great care, and compete among themselves to show off their skills, making their gatherings fascinating viewing for even casual observers.

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