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PREMIER LAI BACKS SOCIAL ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT IN TAIWAN

Promoting social enterprises in Taiwan is a top priority of the government and the public is urged to support these entities in making them a paragon of private sector success, Premier Lai Ching-te said.

A raft of government measures fostering the development of social enterprises is underway, Lai said, citing the launch last month of Taipei City-headquartered Social Innovation Lab. Overseen by Minister without Portfolio Audrey Tang, SIL is tasked with coordinating related agencies and organizing public meetings nationwide to assist those aspiring to become social entrepreneurs.

The premier made the remarks while opening the Social Enterprise Finance Forum in Taipei. Organized by National Chengchi University and several locally based businesses and nongovernmental organizations under the auspices of Tai-

pei City Government, the inaugural event examines related issues facing Taiwan social enterprises. According to Lai, government funding is key to the long-term viability of social enterprises. This is already taking place through such initiatives as the Small Business Innovation Research program and Small and Medium Enterprise Credit Guarantee Fund administered by the Ministry of Economic Affairs, as well as similar initiatives for startups by the Ministry of Science and Technology and Cabinet-administered National Development Fund, he said. The premier singled out the banking sector as another source of support, highlighting recent



regulatory revisions by the Financial Supervisory Commission making it possible for investment holdings firms to back new social enterprises. A fund valued at NT\$100 billion (US\$3.33 billion) is estimated to be available for such purposes.

At the same time, several pieces of legislation will help create a business environment more conducive to social enterprises, Lai said. These include amendments to the Statute for Industrial Innovation clearing the way for tax incentives, and the act governing the recruitment and employment of foreign professionals. Going

forward, the premier believes the forum will also serve as a valuable platform for exchanging ideas and sharing experiences on enhancing social awareness. It is hoped more individuals will commit themselves to the sector so as to promote innovation and awareness of social issues and sustainable development, he said.



Premier Lai Ching-te outlines government measures promoting social enterprises Nov. 27 in Taipei City. (Courtesy of Executive Yuan)

Source: Taiwan Today

NPM exhibition of Qianlong Emperor treasures kicks off in Taipei

Established in 1965, National Palace Museum (NPM) in is home to the world’s largest collection of Chinese imperial art, boasting 650,000 antiquities spanning 7,000 years from the prehistoric Neolithic period to the end of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911).



The Qianlong Emperor’s square red sandalwood curio box and the artifacts contained within are examined in the “Open the Treasure Box” section of the exhibition. (Courtesy of NPM)

An exhibition highlighting the passion for artworks of the Qing dynasty’s Qianlong Emperor and the advanced storage methods adopted during his 1735-1795 reign kicked off Dec. 7 at NPM in Taipei City. “Story of a Brand Name – the Collection and Packaging Aesthetics of the Qing Emperor Qianlong” runs through March 7, 2018, and features collections of calligraphy, ornaments, rare books and the emperor’s custom-made artwork con-

tainers. According to NPM, the exhibition examines the ruler’s exquisite collections and storage measures from the modern context of brand creation and identity, offering visitors a unique perspective on the priceless antiquities.

NPM Director Lin Jeng-yi said the exhibition spotlights the institution’s new approach to strengthening its profile at home and abroad. Through examining its ancient treasures from contemporary

Source: Taiwan Today



Dating from the Spring and Autumn period (770-476 B.C.), the Zhutaizai bell is enclosed in a red sandalwood frame that was made during the Qianlong Emperor's reign and features handwritten inscriptions by the ruler and his courtiers. (Courtesy of NPM)



A blue glaze vase with bat-shaped handles and white plum-blossom decoration is among the priceless treasures showcased in the "Adored Precious" portion of the exhibition. (Courtesy of NPM)

perspectives, the museum aims to bolster recognition of its collections internationally while fostering fresh appreciation and perceptions of the antiquities among local visitors, he added.

The exhibition comprises four main sections. "Open the Treasure Box" highlights the diversity of artworks in the Qianlong Emperor's collections by studying the 44 pieces contained in his curio box.

"Beloved Antiques" reviews historical research from his reign through displays of antiquities collected and studied

by his court as well as books and scrolls handwritten by the emperor. "Adored Precious" showcases customized storage containers and introduces various preservation methods developed during the period such as binding and reframing techniques. The final section, "The Brand of Qianlong," explores the emperor's desire to foster a connection with the artifacts in his collections through such measures as securing scrolls with identical custom-made ties and stamping his seal on artworks and their duplications.

Taipei ranks 12th among Fodor's must-go

Taipei City ranks 12th in a list of the top tourist destinations worldwide released Nov by New York-based guidebook publisher Fodor's Travel.

In the company's Go List 2018, Taipei was lauded as one of Asia's most flourishing and progressive cities. It earned praise for its diverse events, delicious street food and commitment to cultural preservation, as well as for striking a balance between natural scenery and urban de-

velopment. Marrakesh, Morocco, topped the 52-strong list, followed by Cook Islands and Salar de Tunupa, Bolivia. The other destinations in the top 10 are Split, Croatia; Kuwait; Memphis, Tennessee; Armenia; Mongolia; Dublin, Ireland; and Belize, in that order.



Longshan Temple is a prominent example of Taipei's rich heritage, a key reason for the city's 12th place ranking among global destinations, according to guidebook publisher Fodor's Travel. (Staff photo/Huang Chung-hsin)

According to Fodor's, Taipei's mix of tradition and modernity is highlighted by the large number of temples that dot the metropolis, with prominent examples of the city's rich cultural heritage including centuries-old Longshan Temple.

Taipei's forward-thinking vision will be on full display in 2018 at Taiwan Cycling Festival and Guandu Flower Festival, the publisher said, adding that these events provide visitors with great opportunities to explore the city's extensive riverside bike paths and floral fields. The metropolis also caters to tourists of diverse tastes,

as demonstrated by events like Taipei International Tattoo Show and Music Festival, Fodor's said. For its insider tip, the publisher encouraged visitors to head to one of the city's numerous night markets to sample local culinary treats like coffin toast, pig blood cake and stinky tofu. Taipei has welcomed a growing number of international visitors in recent years. According to the Mastercard Global Destination Cities Index released in September, the city recorded 7.35 million international overnight arrivals in 2016, up 500,000 from the previous year.

Source: Taiwan Today

A LITERARY WORLD OF TAIPEI – A LOOK AT THE OLD CITY'S ELEGANCE

There are many reasons to fall in love with Taipei – embracing Taipei's history and falling in love with her being one of the most “in fashion”! Taipei is an endlessly progressive city home to magnificent architectural structures, luxury commercial office buildings, fashionable shopping plazas, and

comprehensive transportation and telecommunications systems. However, this progress has not come with a price of wanton destruction. In addition to the process of construction and innovation, the world is provided with a full view of Taipei's cultural and historical depth.



Article: Xu Ciqian Photos: Shi Chunhui, Wang Nengqun, Source: Taipei City Government



In recent years, the Taipei City Government has engaged in vigorous revitalization efforts in the older sections of the city. As one example, the Zhongxiao Bridge elevated highway has been demolished, restoring the Beimen (North Gate) Plaza to unfettered view. These initiatives enable more intimate contact between residents and the old city's elegance, and provide foreign visitors with an inclusive experience of Taipei's colorful beauty. Most touching is how, in lifting the veil of time and digging into the deep historical roots of this place, people achieve clarity and understanding of this city's life experiences, embracing all her beauties and sorrows.

TAIPEI, UNDER THE PEN OF AKIRA HIGASHIYAMA

The different eras and different historical atmospheres of the city of Taipei have provided creative inspiration for many writers over the years, from Pai Hsien-yung and his Taipei People short stories in an earlier times to today's Akira Higashiyama and his novel Ryu. The story of Ryu, which means "flow," strongly recreates detailed imagery from the collective memory of many of Taipei residents.

For numerous Taipei residents who grew up in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s, Ryu is far more than just a lyrically descriptive youth novel. The scenes depicted are vivid and personal. For example, the beloved China Plaza, now long gone, was a grand bazaar of regional Chinese foods and homestyle flavors. It was a favorite destination for homesick military personnel and dependents who had come to Taiwan with the Nationalist government in the late 1940s. Students also came here to have their school uniforms made and student ID number em-

broidered. As described by Akira, the China Plaza's Huxian ("Fox Fairy") Temple served as a bridge between devotees from mainland China and Taiwan, and this now-disappeared icon has been given an air of mystery.

Akira lived on Taipei's Guangzhou Street when he was a youngster. As he grew older, his horizons expanded outward through Wanhua and Ximending. These neighborhoods, which stood directly outside the old walled city, have in recent years become hubs of transformation as the city government has worked to revivify its oldest sections. The messy, cacophonous world depicted in Ryu is today a Taipei "renaissance" base, both a place of celebrated nostalgia for middle and older generations and a stage for showcasing the creative talents of the young.

WANHUA AND XIMENDING

In the novel, a preferred hideaway where sweethearts could talk of love was the Taipei Botanical Garden, today still a key central-city green oasis for residents. Akira spends a good deal of time here, describing the joys of love's genesis and clues about the strange and disturbing death of the protagonist's grandfather. The scenery and character descriptions give us a vivid window



into the lives of Taipei's people in days past. Since its earliest days, Dadaocheng was a key center of activity and influence in the old city. Akira specially recommends exploring this community if you want to understand Taipei and experience its charms. Travel through time and space in Taipei along the road recorded by Akira, winner of the prestigious Naoki Prize. Ryu shall be your guide for sailing the seas of youthful memory, and discovering sweetness in sorrow.



E-SOLUTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Taiwan is using its information and communication technology expertise to accelerate development in partner nations.

Francisco Jose Gonzalez, an information technology official from Republic of China (Taiwan) diplomatic ally Belize, was among 28 professionals from 22 countries who visited the nation April 13-26 for the 2017 Workshop on E-government Development. He described his participation in the training program, organized by the Taipei City-based International Cooperation and Development Fund (TaiwanICDF), as an “enriching, once-in-a-lifetime” experience.

Gonzalez said he was more than satisfied with the lectures as they directly applied to what his Central American country is doing or striving to do. Field trips to different organizations were also beneficial, he added, as they provided insights into relevant success stories.

The Belizean official was particularly interested in presentations that touched on cybersecurity and open

data, saying his government is working to develop an internal data exchange platform and national identification system. He said he was also impressed by Taiwan’s digital archiving projects and related technologies during visits to the Center for Digital Cultures

operated by Academia Sinica, Taiwan’s foremost research institution, and the National Archives Administration under the Cabinet-level National Development Council (NDC), both based in Taipei.



A foreign student on an International Cooperation and Development Fund-provided scholarship takes a computer class at Ming Chuan University in Taipei City. (Photo courtesy of International Cooperation and Development Fund)

PARTNERS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Over the years, with its complete information and communication technology (ICT) supply chain and strong research and development capabilities, Taiwan has become one of the world’s leading suppliers of ICT products and services. In addition, it has been promoting e-government infrastructure and applications for more than 10 years, resulting in significant



improvements in the delivery of public services. Capitalizing on Taiwan's strengths and resources in ICT as well as e-government development experience, TaiwanICDF has initiated many technical cooperation projects on digital infrastructure in partner nations over the last decade. These programs aim to bridge the urban-rural digital divide, enhance government efficiency and promote a wide range of applications in different sectors.

"The use of ICT can improve the way businesses, governments and individuals communicate and operate by boosting efficiency and cutting costs," said Liu Shih-hung, deputy director of TaiwanICDF's Technical Cooperation Department. "Our goal is to help partner countries establish viable and sustainable ICT systems to expedite their economic and social development." This is accomplished through various forms of aid including capacity building, funding and technology transfers. "We assist our international partners not only with the installation of hardware and software systems, but

also personnel training so they can operate and maintain the facilities after our projects come to an end," Liu said. "Plus, we work with them in formulating comprehensive ICT solutions for

integrating government databases and services."

TaiwanICDF has also assisted partner countries in employing ICT in other areas such as agriculture, civil and vehicle

Source: Taiwan Review



Participants in a TaiwanICDF-administered workshop visit the Taipei Metro Operation Control Center, Taipei City Traffic Information Center and Taipei Customs Office to learn about information and communication technology systems. (Photo courtesy of TaiwanICDF)

registration, customs services, hospital management, licensing, medical care and police administration.

SERVING THE WORLD

Overseas ICT development projects not only benefit recipient nations but also the Taiwan participants. One such individual is Shawn Hu, who took part in the 2013-2017 cooperative project implemented in St. Kitts and Nevis that seeks to help public hospitals build information systems to replace manual, paper-based processes. Through the program, Taiwan specialists assist local authorities in automating their workflows relating to patient registration, medical records and pharmacy inventory management.



Hu, who holds a master's degree in information management from Yuan Ze University in northern Taiwan's Taoyuan City, participated in the ICT project in the Caribbean country while performing his alternative national service between



TaiwanICDF has launched many technical cooperation projects around the world to boost partner nations' development and foster stronger ties. (Photo courtesy of TaiwanICDF)

October 2015 and August 2016. He helped with the installation and testing of hardware and software as well as staff training.

In Taiwan, all young men must perform national service. While most serve in the military, some are given the option to assist the nation's technical and medical missions. Since 2001, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has commissioned TaiwanICDF to manage the youth overseas service program. A total of 1,265 conscripts had opted for such alternative service as of the end of 2016. "Providing international assistance in ICT infrastruc-

ture and skills development is a demonstration of Taiwan's soft power," the 27-year-old said. "I was excited to participate in this meaningful task."

Through the service program, Hu was able to use his expertise to help others

and at the same time engage with local residents, gaining a deeper understanding of their values and lifestyles in the process. "People in St. Kitts and Nevis appear to live balanced and happy lives at a leisurely pace," he said. "Having learned from them, I aspire to better myself rather than pursue material success." Currently working as a software engineer, Hu said he would encourage other young people to participate in the nation's foreign aid initiatives. "Living abroad forces you out of your comfort zone and makes you more adaptable, confident and independent," he said. "It'll change your life for the better."

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