



I, and the South African Government, have enormous appreciation for the contribution that the Government of the Republic of China (Taiwan) has made to the commitment of the Government sector in the economic development in Africa. The ROC (Taiwan) further, made a generous and much appreciated contribution to South Africa's transition to democracy.



Statement by President Nelson Mandela—27 November 1996

President Tsai Delivers Keynote Address at Inaugural PWLC Conference

President Tsai Ing-wen delivered a keynote address at the inaugural Pacific Women Leaders' Coalition (PWLC) Conference in the Marshall Islands, pledging Taiwan's support for advancing gender equality throughout the region.

Female participation in public affairs is on the rise in the Pacific, Tsai said. This reflects the important role of women in societies of Austronesian-speaking people and the number of women in top leadership positions, she added.

Taiwan is ready, willing and able to work with like-minded partners in the region to promote a broader gender equality movement and help women unleash their potential, Tsai said.

According to Tsai, Taiwan is at the forefront globally in achieving gender equality. This is evidenced by the country's score of 91.25, the highest in Asia, in the latest Women, Business and the Law report issued by the World Bank, she said, adding that it is one of only six countries to have eliminated sex-based job restrictions.

This backing of women in the work-



President Tsai Ing-wen (centre) is joined by Marshall Islands President Hilda C. Heine (centre right) and other Pacific leaders and opinion shapers at the inaugural PWLC in Majuro. (MOFA)

place, as well as those seeking to start small businesses, extends far beyond the country's borders, Tsai said. The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Women and the Economy Sub-Fund set up in 2016 with the U.S. is a shining example of how Taiwan can help all members of society fully contribute to attaining greater national prosperity, she added.

As part of this commitment, Tsai said, Taiwan will host the International Conference of the Pan-Pacific and South-

east Asian Women's Association in June and the fourth World Conference of Women's Shelters in November.

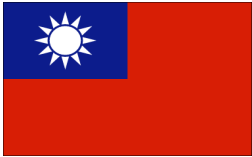
Following the conference, Tsai joined Marshall Islands President Hilda C. Heine in witnessing the signing of a memorandum of understanding on establishing a women's start-up financing fund. The agreement was inked by Taiwan's Minister of Foreign Affairs Jauhsieh Joseph Wu and Marshall Islands Minister of Culture and Internal Affairs Amenta Matthew.

Other activities on Tsai's itinerary during her stay in the Marshall Islands include talks with Heine on expanding bilateral exchanges and attending a state banquet hosted by the leader of the Pacific nation and her husband Thomas Kijiner Jr.

Tsai is on the final leg of her eight-day Oceans of Democracy 2019 Presidential Visit to Palau, Nauru and the Marshall Islands. She returns to Taiwan after a U.S. stopover in Hawaii. **(Source: Taiwan Today)**



Left: The World Taiwanese Chambers of Commerce (WTCC) held its 25th Semi-Annual Conference from 8-10 March at Emperors Palace in Johannesburg, South Africa. Over 600 delegates from around the world attended the conference. **Right:** Delegates at the 25th Semi-Annual Conference of the World Taiwanese Chambers of Commerce (WTCC).



MOHW Minister Stresses Taiwan Can Help realise WHO's Health for All

Taiwan's expertise in disease control and universal health coverage can help strengthen global medical development, and the nation is willing and able to share its experiences at the 72nd World Health Assembly (WHA) May 20-28 in Geneva, according to Minister of Health and Welfare Chen Shih-chung.

In an interview with Taiwan Today, Chen said facilitating Taiwan's meaningful participation in the assembly—the decision-making body of the World Health Organisation (WHO)—will advance the WHO's top priority of achieving universal health coverage.

Ensuring comprehensive access to health services is at the heart of Taiwan's approach, as evidenced by the National Health Insurance (NHI) system and the country's wide-ranging international medical support programs, he added.

"Once a recipient of foreign aid, Taiwan is giving back to the world by providing help where it is needed most," Chen said. Through its outreach, "the nation is making indispensable contributions to the global health network."

Chen cited the Taiwan International Healthcare Training Centre as a prime example of these efforts. Founded in 2002 by the Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW), it offers foreign professionals training in clinical medicine, acupuncture, traditional medicine and health care management, with about 1,500 health professionals from 65 countries and territories completing courses by the end of last year.

Equally impactful is the Global Medical Instruments Support and Service Program. Launched by the MOHW in 2005, it has integrated efforts by hospitals across Taiwan to provide usable equipment to developing nations. More than 5,400 items have been shipped to medical institutions in 33 countries and territories through the program.

Chen said in recent years, a major focus of the ministry's international outreach is deepening cooperation with countries in South and Southeast Asia. Since 2018, the MOHW has commissioned six Taiwan medical centres to extend health care cooperation and provide instructional courses for health care personnel from India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, respectively.

In 2018, a total of 336 medical professionals underwent training in Taiwan through the One Country, One Centre initiative, which was expanded earlier this year to include Brunei and Myanmar.

"These educational programs are tailored for the specific needs of partner hospitals to ensure they achieve real improvements in health care delivery," Chen said. "We also expect participants to become seed trainers upon returning home, deepening the long-term impact of the project."

According to the minister, meaningful participation in the WHO will allow Taiwan to contribute its wealth of experience in building resilient health systems and providing international medical assistance. It would also eliminate a gap in the global disease prevention network, he said.

As a responsible member of the international community, Taiwan is mitigating the impact of its exclusion from the system and protecting the health and welfare of people at home and abroad, he added.

This is spotlighted, Chen said, by the establishment of the National Mosquito-Borne Diseases Control Research Centre in April 2016 in Miaoli County, northern Taiwan, as well as the launch of its branch office the following January in Tainan City, southern Taiwan.

Equipped with state-of-the-art laboratories, the centre under the MOHW-supported National Health Research Institutes is strengthening methods of locating mosquito breeding sites and tackling carriers of viruses like dengue and Zika. "Dengue, in particular, is a major public health issue in much of Southeast Asia and Taiwan's experience in fighting the disease is invaluable," Chen said.

Also noteworthy is the country's knowledge in preventing, screening for and treating tuberculosis. According to MOHW statistics, the incidence rate of TB halved in Taiwan between 2005 and 2018 to a total of 37 cases for every 100,000 people.

"This is a significant achievement as there is considerable travel between Taiwan and neighbouring countries and territories with high TB infection rates," the minister said.

According to Chen, the key to these accomplishments is ensuring medical services are affordable and universally accessible. This is why the most important experience Taiwan has to share with the world is the development of the NHI, he added.

"Taiwan has long achieved the WHO goal of universal health coverage," Chen said. "Since the establishment of the NHI, no one in Taiwan faces bankruptcy due to medical bills."

The system offers access to a comprehensive range of services spanning Western and traditional Chinese medicine as well as dental care. It helped raise average life expectancy to 80.4 years in 2017 from 74.5 in the year of its launch in 1995.

To ensure fairness, NHI premiums are set as a proportion of an individual's income. This figure is currently 4.69 percent, with insured workers, employers and the government contributing 30, 60 and 10 percent of this amount, respectively. There is also a 1.91 percent surcharge on supplementary earnings like bonuses and stock revenues.

The number of treatments and medications covered by the NHI has been consistently expanded over the years. Among the recent additions is an antiviral drug for hepatitis C. Its inclusion is expected to significantly boost public well-being as the illness, a major cause of liver cancer, affects up to 400,000 people in Taiwan, according to the MOHW.

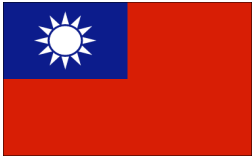
This year, the government has allocated NT\$6.54 billion (US\$211.4 million) to roll out the drug to all hepatitis C patients in Taiwan. The government's aim is to eradicate the disease locally by 2025, five years ahead of the WHO target for eliminating viral hepatitis worldwide.

According to Chen, Taiwan's commitment to universal health coverage is underscored by the scope of the NHI. The system covers more than 99 percent of the population, including prisoners, foreigners studying, working and residing in Taiwan, and newborns of non-nationals.

"Our ministry leaves no one behind," Chen said. "It also promotes the prevention and control of contagious diseases since treatment is provided to all who need it."

In a survey conducted by the MOHW last year, 86.5 percent of respondents expressed satisfaction with the NHI. "It can serve as an important reference for other nations in the development of world-class universal health care systems," Chen said.

"Taiwan is seeking professional, pragmatic and constructive participation in the WHA, as well as technical meetings and activities of the WHO, so it can share this knowledge and give back to the world," Chen said. "With Taiwan's involvement, I believe the international community will be far better prepared to meet global health challenges." **(Source: Taiwan Today)**



Taiwan-US Stage GCTF Anti-Corruption Workshop in Taipei



MOFA Deputy Minister Hsu Szu-chien, MOJ Minister Tsai Ching-hsiang, AIT Director Brent Christensen and JTEA Chief Representative Mikio Numata (front, seventh left) at the GCTF workshop in Taipei City. (Courtesy of MIIB)

An international training workshop on anti-corruption in the public and private sectors kicked off in Taipei City, bringing together 30 law enforcement officials from 20 countries and territories to share information and best practices.

Staged under the Taiwan-U.S. Global Cooperation and Training Framework (GCTF), the three-day event is jointly organised by the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Ministry of Justice (MOJ) Investigation Bureau, American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) and Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association. This marks the first time that Japan has co-hosted a GCTF event.

Speakers include officials from the MOJ's Agency Against Corruption, Investigation Bureau and Department of Prosecutorial Affairs; U.S. Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation; and Malaysia Anti-Corruption Commission, as well as Japanese experts in the field. Discussions are set to span such areas as promoting clean governance, preventing corporate espionage and preserving national competitiveness through trade secret protection.

MOFA Deputy Minister Hsu Szu-chien said at the opening ceremony that this year marks the 40th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act, and the GCTF serves as a prime example of the enduring partnership and shared values developed between Taiwan and the U.S. over the past four decades.

The latest workshop under the platform also underscores their commitment to working with like-minded partners in the Indo-Pacific in combating corruption and strengthening democracy, Hsu added.

AIT Director Brent Christensen described the forum as a clear manifestation of Taiwan's leadership in promoting rule of law throughout the region. Shared values bind Taiwan and the U.S. together, he said, adding that the U.S. is extremely fortunate to have a mature democratic partner like Taiwan to help advance good governance in the Indo-Pacific.

Launched in June 2015, GCTF is a Taiwan-U.S. platform for expanding collaboration on global and regional challenges. A total of 16 international workshops have been organized under the initiative in areas like e-commerce, energy, environmental protection, media literacy and public health, with about 300 representatives from 33 countries and territories attending these events, according to the MOFA. **(Source: Taiwan Today)**

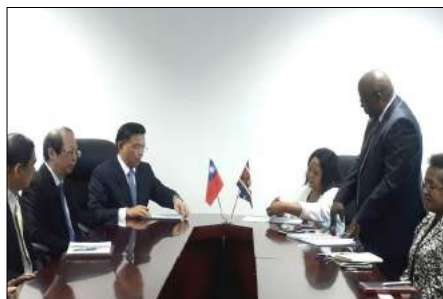
Taiwan, Eswatini Ink 6-Year US\$12.7 Million MOU on Health Care Improvement

Taiwan and Eswatini concluded a six-year US\$12.7 million memorandum of understanding on health care improvement in the African nation, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA).

Signed by ROC (Taiwan) Ambassador Jeremy H. S. Liang and Eswatini Minister of Health Lizzy Nkosi in the capital Mbabane, the pact will see Taipei Medical University Hospital cooperate with various partners in enhancing clinic services, staff training and public health research.

A highlight of the project, which was initiated by President Tsai Ing-wen during her state visit in April 2018 to the Beautiful Kingdom, involves upgrading the skill sets of nearly 100 doctors from Eswatini trained at Kaohsiung City-based I-Shou University in southern Taiwan. This encompasses a series of tailored professional courses aimed at assisting the medicos better serve the communities in which they operate.

During a post-signing ceremony news conference, Liang said the project is a sterling example of the promises made, promises kept philosophy underpinning Taiwan's diplomatic relations. "It also represents a strong step forward in fulfilling His Majesty King Mswati



ROC (Taiwan) Ambassador Jeremy H. S. Liang (left) and Eswatini Minister of Health Lizzy Nkosi sign the MOU on health care improvement in Mbabane. (MOFA)

III's National Development Strategy 2022."

Health care cooperation between Taiwan and Eswatini started in 2008 via the Medical Technical Cooperation Agreement. Over the years, the two sides have implemented a variety of large-scale programs, including the two-phase Maternal and Infant Health Care Improvement Project, the soon-to-be-completed Emergency and Intensive Care Unit at Mbabane Government Hospital, and visits by nongovernmental organizations and volunteer groups.

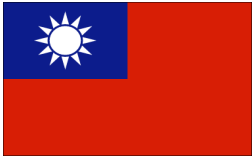
"President Tsai is working tirelessly to ensure

the people of Taiwan enjoy affordable and world-class medical care through the National Health Insurance system," Liang said. "At the same time, she wants the people of Eswatini to benefit from Taiwan's successful experiences and reap the rewards of improved services and a robust public health system."

According to the MOFA, Taiwan and Eswatini established diplomatic relations in 1968. The countries have carried out numerous collaborative projects in such areas as agriculture, education, information and communication technology, rural electrification and women's empowerment.

On Dec. 27, 2018, the Agreement on Economic Cooperation between Taiwan and the Kingdom of Eswatini came into force. Under the accord, priority will be given to developing export processing zones, talent cultivation and technical exchanges, with tariffs on 153 export items from Eswatini immediately reduced to zero or eliminated over time.

(Source: Taiwan Today)



Tsai Vows to Work With Like-Minded Partners in Advancing Religious Freedom



President Tsai Ing-wen (center) is joined by TFD President Liao Fu-te; American Institute in Taiwan Taipei Office Director Brent Christensen; U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom Sam Brownback; Legislative Yuan President and TFD Chairman Su Jia-chyuan; MOFA Deputy Minister Hsu Szu-chien and Ambassador-at-Large Maysing Yang at the Regional Religious Freedom Forum in Taipei City. (Courtesy of PO)

President Tsai Ing-wen said that Taiwan is committed to working with like-minded partners on safeguarding freedom of religion and ending intolerance and persecution.

Religious freedom is under threat around the world amid growing suppression of democ-

racy and human rights, Tsai said. In the face of this challenge, Taiwan stands with those who suffer oppression at the hands of authoritarian regimes, she added.

According to the president, freedom of religion is central to Taiwan's democratic way of life. As a melting pot of people, cultures and faiths, the nation is evidence that diversity and mutual acceptance bind and strengthen societies, she said.

Tsai made the remarks at the opening of the Regional Religious Freedom Forum: A Civil Society Dialogue on Securing Religious Freedom in the Indo-Pacific Region in Taipei City.

Organised by Taiwan Foundation for Democracy, the two-day event is the first of its kind in the region and features academics, experts and officials from more than 10 countries, including U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom Sam Brownback.

The forum is seen as playing a key role in advancing religious freedom while promoting democracy and human rights in the Indo-Pacific. It was inspired by the inaugural Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom hosted by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo last

July in Washington, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said.

According to Tsai, history has shown that when people live free from fear, countries enjoy peace, stability and prosperity. "Whatever your religion, whatever your tradition, whatever your identity, we are gathered here today and called to bring religious freedom to the oppressed, hope where there is despair and light where there is darkness."

The president also highlighted the increasing number of Muslim, Catholic and Hindu residents who have immigrated to the country over the past several years. They have enriched the nation with their culture, food and religions and demonstrated that anyone can contribute a chapter to the story of Taiwan, she said.

Later the same day, Tsai received Brownback at the Presidential Office in Taipei. She expressed gratitude to the former U.S. senator and governor of Kansas for delivering the keynote at the forum, adding that the event underscores the strength of Taiwan-U.S. ties. **(Source: Taiwan Today)**

Taiwan Rated as 'Free' by Freedom House for 21 Years running

Taiwan is rated as "free" in the 2019 Freedom in the World report, the 21st consecutive year for the country to achieve the classification, in the annual assessment produced by U.S.-based non-governmental organisation Freedom House.

Of the 209 countries and territories included in the report, 42 percent—including Taiwan—were rated as "free," 31 percent as "partly free" and the remainder "not free."

With an aggregate score of 93, the same as last year, Taiwan ranked second in Asia behind Japan at 96 and "free." It was followed by South Korea, 83, "free;" Hong Kong, 59, "partly free;" and Singapore, 51, "partly free."

The report evaluates countries and territories on a scale of 1 to 7 in the two main categories of political rights and civil liberties, with 1 being the freest and



7 the least free. Taiwan achieved 1 in both categories for three years in a row.

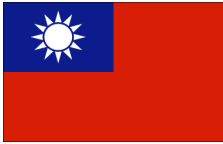
Taiwan scored 37 out of 40 in political rights given its strong performances in the subcategories of electoral process, political pluralism and participation, as well as functioning of government.

The country's head of government, chief national authority and legislative representatives are all elected through free and credible elections, while its electoral laws and framework are fairly and impartially implemented.

In addition, the people have the right to organise in different political parties, with various segments of the population—including ethnic, religious, gender and other groups—having full political rights and electoral opportunities.

Regarding civil liberties, Taiwan scored 56 out of 60 for freedom of expressions and belief, association and organisation rights, rule of law and personal autonomy and individual rights.

The report also highlighted areas of concerns for Taiwan. These include "not free" China's ongoing efforts to influence policymaking, the media and the democratic infrastructure, foreign migrant workers' vulnerability to exploitation and disputes over the rights of LGBTQ groups. **(Source: Taiwan Today)**



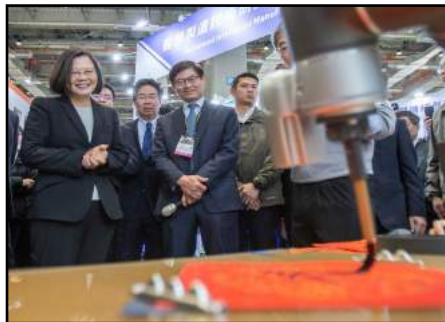
Taipei International Machine Tool Show Kicks off With Record Number of Exhibitors

The Taipei International Machine Tool Show (TIMTOS) kicked off, with a record 1,230 local and overseas exhibitors showcasing the latest manufacturing technologies at about 7,000 booths, according to co-organiser Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA).

The show is taking place at four venues across the city including the newly completed Taipei Nangang Exhibition Centre Hall 2. The extra space makes TIMTOS the third largest trade fair of its kind in the world, TAITRA said, adding that more than 60,000 buyers from home and abroad are expected to attend.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, President Tsai Ing-wen said the biennial show spotlights Taiwan's industrial prowess and key role in global supply chains for manufacturing devices.

According to Tsai, the country's machinery exports rose 7.2 percent to US\$27.4 billion in 2018. This is testament to the effectiveness of government initiatives



President Tsai Ing-wen (left) observes a robotic arm writing calligraphy at the opening of the Taipei International Machine Tool Show. (Courtesy of Office of the President)

such as the five-plus-two industrial innovation program aimed at fostering economic revitalisation and technological upgrading, she added.

Among the highlights of the 27th edition of TIMTOS are an augmented reality system revealing the internal structure of Taiwan-developed smart machines; a robotic lathe created by state-backed Industrial Technology Research Institute

that is twice as efficient as comparable devices; and new grinding machines designed for aircraft component production.

The event also features a series of forums at Taipei International Convention Centre on topics spanning automotive and aviation machine tools and additive manufacturing, an emerging field incorporating such technologies as 3-D printing, artificial intelligence and Internet of Things. Keynote speakers include representatives from industry heavyweights like Airbus, Bosch Rexroth and Dassault Systemes.

In addition to smart manufacturing, the government's five-plus-two industrial innovation program targets the high-growth sectors of biotechnology and pharmaceuticals, green energy, national defence and IoT, as well as two core concepts: the circular economy and a new paradigm for agricultural development.

(Source: Taiwan Today)

Tsai Inaugurates Driverless Vehicle Testing Center in Tainan

President Tsai Ing-wen said that the opening of a driverless vehicle testing site in southern Taiwan's Tainan City marks a milestone in efforts to foster technological development in the key emerging sector.

Speaking at the launch ceremony for the Car Lab at Shalun Green Energy Science City, Tsai said that the government is leaving no stone unturned in helping Taiwan companies explore the potential-laden industry. The testing site will help local manufacturers close the gap on global market leaders and carve out positions in future autonomous vehicle supply chains, she added.

Overseen by the Ministry of Science and Technology, Car Lab is capable of replicating real-world traffic conditions from various nations. It also enables research on a host of vehicles ranging from cars to medium-sized buses and RVs.



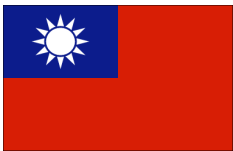
President Tsai Ing-wen (left) takes a ride in a self-driving vehicle at the Car Lab testing facility at Shalun Green Energy Science City in southern Taiwan's Tainan City. (Courtesy of Office of the President)

According to Tsai, driverless technology requires advanced capabilities in areas spanning artificial intelligence, Internet of Things and remote sensing and computing. Strengthening the nation's expertise in such fields is a core goal of the government's five-plus-two innovative industries initiative, she said.

Other government measures to support the development of self-driving vehicles include legislation by the Ministry of Economic Affairs to promote related R&D and a Ministry of the Interior program to compile high-quality 3-D road maps of major metropolitan areas.

Tsai said that the Ministry of Transportation and Communications and Cabinet-level Financial Supervisory Commission are also working on regulations in areas like traffic models and insurance in preparation for the real-world implementation of related technologies.

With central government agencies working in tandem to lay the foundations for this industry, it is anticipated that Taiwan's driverless vehicle sector will experience rapid growth in the near term, she added. **(Source: Taiwan Today)**



NTU Math Professor Wins Taiwan Female Science Award



Lee Yng-ing displays her Taiwan Outstanding Women in Science Award during the presentation ceremony in Taipei City. (CNA)

A mathematics professor from Taipei City-based National Taiwan University (NTU) is winner of the 2019 Taiwan Outstanding Women in Science Award (TAWOS) for her research in geometric analysis.

Lee Yng-ing is recognised as a leader in the fields of symplectic and Riemannian geometry, which paved the way for Einstein's future work on relativity, as well

as Lagrangian and other submanifolds.

At the award presentation ceremony, Lee said mathematics holds the key to understanding the world. Unlike physics or chemistry that require equipment and dedicated facilities to conduct experiments, the study of mathematics is free from such constraints, she added.

In addition to advancing mathematical research, Lee is known for her dedication to promoting math education in Taiwan. She is credited with improving curriculum planning across primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

According to Lee, women possess the right stuff to make a mark in mathematics. She urged more students to follow in her footsteps and overcome the sole barrier to excellence: a lack of self-confidence.

Other 2019 TOWSA honourees are Ren Hao-jia, an associate professor from NTU's Department of Geosciences and Chou Yi-chia, an associate professor from

National Chiao Tung University's Department of Electrophysics in Hsinchu City, northern Taiwan. Both received a Rising Star Award.

Ren was recognised for her research on the impact of human activities and natural factors on the marine nitrogen cycle, while Chou was lauded for her work on phase transformation in solids and low-dimensional nanomaterials.

TOWAS, jointly organised by Taipei-based Wu Chien-shiung Scholarship Foundation, was first presented in 2008 and carries prize money of NT\$600,000 (US\$19,425).

Inspired by the L'Oreal-UNESCO for Women in Science Awards, TOWAS aims to improve the position of women in science by recognising outstanding female researchers who have contributed to scientific progress. **(Source: Taiwan Today)**

Taiwan High School Student Wins Big at Prestigious Italian Science Competition



Chiu Hong-hsiang (second right) proudly displays his I giovani e le scienze gold medal in Milan. (Courtesy of NTSEC)

Taiwan high school student Chiu Hong-hsiang is winner of two awards at the I giovani e le scienze, or young people and science, competition for his Chinese font generation system, according to National Taiwan Science Education Centre (NTSEC).

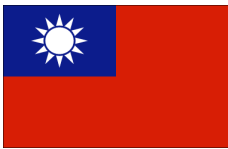
Chiu, a senior at Taipei Municipal Jianguo High School, claimed gold in the prestigious event, as well as a special award from Yale Science and Engineering Association Inc. for his research during the annual competition staged in Milan.

Using the conditional generative adversarial network as a base, Chiu built a deep learning model for Chinese font style transfer. He also analysed the effects of the U-Net—a convolutional neural network—and category embedding methods on the system.

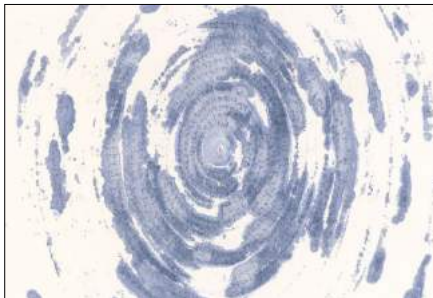
According to Chiu, Chinese font generation is a time-consuming task and usually requires at least four to five years of work to design a new style for each of the 26,000 commonly used characters. The model quickens the process as it requires designers to develop a font for only a fraction of the characters, while the remainder can be transferred to the new font through the deep learning

model, he said.

The NTSEC said Chiu's accomplishment reflects the information and communication technology prowess of Taiwan's young people, and is a vote of confidence in government efforts aimed at spurring creativity. **(Source: Taiwan Today)**



Rubin Museum of Art in New York Exhibits Works by Taiwan's Charwei Tsai



The ink painting "A Supplication" by Taiwan artist Charwei Tsai is on display at the exhibition "The Power of Intention: Reinventing the (Prayer) Wheel" running through Oct. 14 at the Rubin Museum of Art in New York. (Courtesy of MOC)

Two pieces by Taiwan artist Charwei Tsai are on display in an exhibition exploring Tibetan culture and the power to create

positive change at the Rubin Museum of Art in New York, according to the Ministry of Culture.

Supported by Taipei Cultural Centre in New York, the show features two works by Tsai: the ink painting "A Supplication" and installation work "Spiral Incense with Mantras."

Running March 1 to Oct. 14, the exhibition is inspired by the Tibetan religious objects and uses traditional and contemporary artworks to examine the relationship between intentions and actions.

Tsai's "A Supplication" is a large ink painting comprising a spiral that curls outward from the centre of the canvas. According to the artist, it aims to convey the idea of spreading prayers out to the

world.

The installation "Spiral Incense with Mantras" features light patterns and written prayers imitating the coiled emanations of incense at traditional Buddhist temples. This piece seeks to portray core Buddhist concepts and tenets such as serenity.

A multidisciplinary artist, Tsai often highlights Buddhist themes in her paintings, films and mixed-media creations. Solo exhibitions of her works have been staged in cities around the world, including London, Paris, Singapore and Tokyo.

In addition to Tsai's contributions, the New York exhibition hosts works by four other talents from Colombia, France, Nepal and Russia. **(Source: Taiwan Today)**

PO Concert to Spotlight Taiwan's Cultural, Linguistic Diversity



Singer-songwriter Enno Cheng performs at an event to announce the lineup for this year's PO Concert in Taipei City. (Courtesy of GACC)

A total of 10 performances in genres ranging from indigenous music to hip-hop are set to feature in the 2019 Presidential Office (PO) Concert in front of the national-level historic site April 6 in Taipei City, according to the PO.

Organised by the General Association of Chinese Culture (GACC), the two-hour show consists of three sections themed around the beauty of Taiwan's land, people and heart, the PO said. The National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra led by conductor Yang Chih-chin will provide accompaniment for the participating acts.

PO spokesperson Xavier Chang said that

this year's free concert holds particular significance as it coincides with the 100th anniversary of the Presidential Office Building. The show, as well as an ongoing centenary exhibition at the landmark, underscores the creativity and freedom of Taiwan's democratic society, he added.

Curated by Taipei Music Centre Director Ding Dulan and Chien Wen-pin, executive and artistic director of National Kaohsiung Centre for the Arts in southern Taiwan, the concert is designed to showcase the nation's cultural and linguistic diversity.

The opening section will highlight the vitality of Taiwan's natural landscapes through performances by musician Sangpuy Katatepan Mavaliyw from the indigenous Pinuyumayan tribe and rock singer Luntan Ascent.

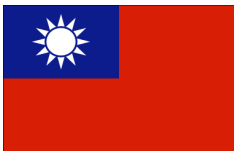
In the second segment on the beauty of Taiwan's people, six acts are set to deliver contemporary takes on the musical traditions of various ethnic groups, including Hakka singer Lin Sheng-xiang, Pinuyumayan vocalist Samingad and Taiwan Smile Folksong Group. The latter will

perform "liam gua," a form of storytelling interweaving talking and singing in the Holo language.

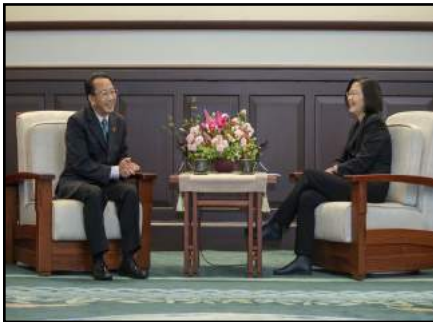
Featuring punk rock band Fire EX and singer-songwriter Enno Cheng, the final section aims to spotlight the nation's collective memory and vision for the future. The concert will be live streamed on various platforms, including the official PO YouTube channel and PTS Plus, an online service operated by Taiwan Public Television Service Foundation.

Launched in 1991 as a show for foreign officials, the PO Concert was converted into a free public event in 2001. After a five-year hiatus, it was relaunched as an annual touring show in 2016, with the previous two editions staged in Pingtung and Changhua counties in southern and central Taiwan, respectively.

GACC, founded in 1967 and headed by President Tsai Ing-wen, works to deepen understanding of local traditions, foster international exchanges and facilitate the development of Taiwan's cultural and creative industries. **(Source: Taiwan Today)**



President Tsai Lauds Contributions of Taiwan Medical Missions



President Tsai Ing-wen (right) shares a lighter moment with MMH Chairman Hu Chih-chiang during a briefing on the hospital's upcoming medical mission to Pacific ally Kiribati at the Presidential Office in Taipei City. (Courtesy of PO)

President Tsai Ing-wen said that the work of Taiwan medical missions in providing services in diplomatic allies and partner nations around the world spotlights the country's commitment to strengthening global health care development.

The dedicated teams of volunteer doctors, nurses and technicians have delivered vital care to those in need and

raised awareness of the country's leading-edge medical expertise, Tsai said.

Their efforts have also helped build international support for the nation's "Health for All—Taiwan Can Help" campaign to gain meaningful participation in the World Health Assembly, the decision-making body of the World Health Organisation (WHO), she added.

Tsai made the remarks while receiving members of a medical mission from Taipei City-headquartered Mackay Memorial Hospital (MMH) at the Presidential Office. Led by MMH Chairman Hu Chih-chiang, the team is scheduled to depart on a weeklong mission to Pacific ally Kiribati.

In addition to offering care, the delegation will ink a memorandum of understanding on clinical training with Kiribati's Ministry of Health and Medical Services and organise a support group for patients with heart disease, according to the MMH International Medical Service Centre.

Tsai expressed gratitude to MMH for its participation in a Ministry of Health and

Welfare (MOHW) initiative launched in 2014 to bolster medical care in allies Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu. This program has further consolidated the robust partnership and warm people-to-people ties with these countries, she said.

Taiwan medical missions such as those organised by MMH play an important role in increasing the nation's soft power, Tsai said. They also clearly demonstrate that Taiwan can help achieve the WHO's goal of universal health care, she added.

According to IMSC, the hospital has been collaborating with the MOHW and Taipei-based International Cooperation and Development Fund (TaiwanICDF) to offer medical support to Kiribati since 2006. Related efforts include the referral of more than 350 Kiribati patients to MMH for advanced treatments like cardiovascular surgery, as well as the establishment of a medical centre at the Pacific ally's Tungaru Central Hospital in 2014. **(Source: Taiwan Today)**

AI Surgical Wound Assessment Smartphone App Unveiled in Taipei

An artificial intelligence Smartphone application that can help evaluate and track patients' postoperative wound recovery was unveiled by researchers and physicians from National Taiwan University (NTU) and NTU Hospital (NTUH) in Taipei City.

AI-SWAS, or Surgical Wounds Assessment System, allows doctors to remotely access images taken by patients on their phones to gauge post-op healing. It can also help physicians check the pictures for evidence of swelling, infection and skin necrosis, and has an accuracy rate of 90 percent, according to the joint NTU, NTUH development team.

Other features of the app include automatic correction of Smartphone images



Dr. Tai Hao-chih (third right), chief of the NTUH plastic surgery division, gives the thumbs-up to the AI-SWAS post-op wound assessment app in Taipei City. (Courtesy of NTUH)

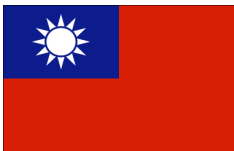
in areas such as brightness and colour saturation to reduce appraisal errors, as

well as regular updating of the wound database to improve AI evaluations.

Dr. Tai Hao-chih, chief of the NTUH plastic surgery division, said that physicians participating in the three-year R&D project used 131 images from 46 patients to develop the baseline for AI wound assessment.

By facilitating regular updates on post-op recovery, the app can offer patients peace of mind and free up appointment time for doctors, Tai added.

The app has been designed for Android devices, with the iOS version still under development, the R&D team said. **(Source: Taiwan Today)**



VR Short Film 'Mr. Buddha' Flies Flag for Taiwan at 2019 Tribeca Film Festival



Taiwan VR short film "Mr. Buddha" by director Lee Chung is set to be screened at the 18th TFF running April 24 to May 5 in New York. (Courtesy of Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival Committee)

Taiwan virtual reality short film "Mr. Buddha" is set to feature in the 18th Tribeca Film Festival running April 24 to May 5 in New York.

Directed by Lee Chung, the movie depicts a car journey involving four crimi-

nals after the theft of a precious antique. It is available throughout the event as part of Tribeca Immersive, a platform showcasing more than 30 innovative VR, augmented reality and mixed reality works.

According to Lee, "Mr. Buddha" is inspired by the crime thrillers of renowned U.S. filmmaker Quentin Tarantino. Shooting a movie in 360 degrees eliminates any blind spots in the narrative, allowing the viewer to experience the story from a variety of perspectives, he said.

"Mr. Buddha" was co-produced by celebrated Taiwan director Hou Hsiao-hsien through the "5X1" project. Comprising five VR short films, "5X1" is the result of a collaboration between Taiwan-based tech firm HTC Corp., creator of the Vive headset, and Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival Executive Committee.

The annual Tribeca festival was founded in 2002 by cinematic luminaries including actor Robert De Niro to spotlight diverse independent films from around the world.

This marks the second consecutive year for a Taiwan VR film to be featured in the event following the inclusion of "Chalkroom" by mixed-media artist Huang Hsin-chien and U.S. musician Laurie Anderson at the 2018 edition. **(Source: Taiwan Today)**

MOC to Stage Taiwan Film Festival in Iceland



A Buddha statue is seen in a still from "The Great Buddha+," the opening movie of the inaugural Taiwan Film Festival in Iceland running in Reykjavik. (Courtesy of Film Taiwan)

The Taiwan Film Festival (TFF) in Iceland is set to kick off in the capital Reykjavik, marking the first time the Nordic nation has hosted the event spotlighting the country's rich cinematic heritage.

Sponsored by the Ministry of Culture (MOC), the festival comprises screenings of 13 feature-length and short movies. It

is part of a MOC project aimed at deepening international awareness of Taiwan cinema and strengthening connections with overseas talents.

Under the initiative, Taipei Representative Office in the U.K. is working with Film Taiwan, a team led by curator Aephie Chen, to stage a festival in one Nordic country each year through 2023, the ministry said. This is in addition to the annual TFF in the U.K.

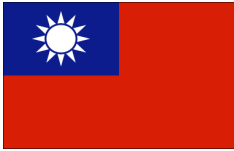
The Reykjavik event will open with Huang Hsin-yao's "The Great Buddha+." The dark comedy follows the exploits of a night security guard and a recyclables collector in a voyeuristic netherworld. It bagged five prizes including best adapted screenplay, cinematography and director at the 2017 Golden Horse Awards, Taiwan's equivalent of the Oscars.

Another highlight will be the Icelandic premieres of two Taiwan box-office smash hits by filmmaker Wei Te-sheng: "Cape No. 7" and "Warriors of the Rain-

bow: Seediq Bale." The former tells the story of a band formed by people from distinct professional backgrounds in the southern county of Pingtung, while the latter depicts an uprising by an indigenous tribe during Japanese colonial rule (1895-1945).

Following the screenings, Huang and Wei will take part in discussions of their works. Wei will also lead a storytelling workshop on his films and Taiwan's history.

According to the MOC, the next TFF in the U.K. is scheduled to be held April 3-14 in London. The program is expected to include screenings of several of director Tsai Ming-liang's works at the Tate Modern. **(Source: Taiwan Today)**



2019 Taiwan Gourmet Cuisine Promotion Launched in Taipei



A macaron infused with liquor made from salted mullet roe is one of tasty local treats set to feature in the 2019 Taiwan gourmet cuisine promotion. (CNA)

The 2019 Taiwan gourmet cuisine promotion was launched in Taipei City, underscoring the commitment of the government to sharing the country's distinct food culture with the world.

Overseen by the Cabinet-level Overseas Community Affairs Council (OCAC), the promotion involves 22 culinary talents organised into 11 teams. They will facili-

tate 149 hands-on sessions and business consultations in 19 countries and 63 cities across Asia, Central and South America, Europe, North America and South Africa from April 9 to Sept. 15.

OCAC Minister Wu Hsin-hsing said the promotion was inspired by the success of last year's Taiwan gourmet banquet at historic Twin Oaks in Washington.

Members of U.S. Congress attending the event organised as part of 130th anniversary celebrations for the official residence of ROC (Taiwan) ambassadors prior to 1978 were deeply impressed by the food, Wu said, adding that they suggested it could be used to help promote the country abroad.

According to Wu, the OCAC quickly assembled a top-flight group capable of flying the culinary flag for Taiwan with aplomb. Ethnicity and language varies from country to country, but love of fine food is a borderless passion and unifying

factor, he said.

The OCAC expects the promotion to pay handsome dividends for Taiwan. These include deepening understanding of the country and its people, as well as generating a raft of potential-laden tourism and trade opportunities.

Established in 1926, the OCAC is responsible for assisting in the development of Taiwan expatriates abroad. It operates 16 cultural centres in countries such as Australia, Brazil, Canada, the Philippines and U.S. **(Source: Taiwan Today)**

Taiwan International Orchid Show Gets Underway in Tainan

Taiwan International Orchid Show kicked off in the southern city of Tainan, showcasing the country's complete supply chain and world-leading cultivation resources.

During the opening ceremony at Taiwan Orchid Plantation in Houbi District, President Tsai Ing-wen said orchids are a tremendous source of pride for the country and one of its most competitive sectors. The government will continue promoting Tainan as the global centre for orchid species development and seedling supply, she added.

Co-organised by Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA) and Tainan City Government, the annual show is expected to attract more than 3,000 buyers and visitors from 40-plus countries and chalk up a record 300,000 visits.

According to TAITRA, some of the heavy-



President Tsai Ing-wen delivers opening remarks at the Taiwan International Orchid Show March 1 in the southern city of Tainan. (Courtesy of Office of the President)

weight buyers are Black Tulip Flowers LLC from the United Arab Emirates, DVP-Deco and debutant Glomitz, from Hungary, and Terra viva Agrifloricultura from Brazil.

Event highlights include a competition involving around 1,200 entrants, an exhi-

bition featuring more than 200,000 orchids drawn from 800 varieties, and a business forum and symposium. At a TAITRA-organised matchmaking session in Tainan, US\$5.14 million in deals were sealed between 14 buyers from nine countries and 30 local orchid suppliers over the course of 236 one-on-one meetings.

Established in 2005, the event ranks alongside the Asia-Pacific Orchid Conference and the World Orchid Conference as the largest of its kind in the world. Taichung City in central Taiwan is set to host the next WOC in March 2020.

Statistics from the Cabinet-level Council of Agriculture reveal that Taiwan's orchid exports hit US\$192 million in 2018, up 8 percent year on year and accounting for nearly 92 percent of all flower shipments. **(Source: Taiwan Today)**



Tour de Taiwan Kicks Off in Taipei



Cyclists compete in the opening stage of the 2019 Tour de Taiwan in Taipei City. (Courtesy of Tour de Taiwan)

Tour de Taiwan, the nation's top professional cycling event and part of the Union Cycliste Internationale Asia Tour, kicked off in Taipei City.

Nearly 120 cyclists from 30 countries and territories representing 20 teams, including six locals competing for Team Taiwan, are battling it out over the five-stage, 717.94 kilometre north-south

route.

The 83.2 km first stage, comprising eight laps of Taipei, was won by Colombia's Bryan Gomez Penalzoa of Team Manzana Postobon in a time of 1 hour, 45 minutes and 16 seconds. Jonathan Clarke of Australia, racing for Floyd's Pro Cycling, came home first in the 118.88 km second stage through the northern city of Taoyuan, finishing in a time of 2 hours, 45 minutes and 20 seconds.

For the third stage, the cyclists are set to compete along a 156.5 km section of Taiwan Romantic Route 3 through Hakka villages in the northern counties of Hsinchu and Miaoli as well as the central city of Taichung.

The 166.56 km fourth stage will be held in central Taiwan's Nantou County, passing by popular scenic locations such as

Sun Moon Lake. The final stage takes the racers along a 192.8 km route through the southern county of Pingtung ending in Dapeng Bay.

Established in 1978 by King Liu, founder of Taiwan-based bicycle-maker Giant Manufacturing Co. Ltd., Tour de Taiwan was first included in the UCI Asia Tour in 2005.

Since 2003, the Tour has climbed from the lowest 2.6 grade on the UCI scale for international cycling competitions to its current position as a 2.1 race, one level below the UCI Continental Circuits in Africa, America, Asia, Europe and Oceania and two below the UCI World Tour events, such as the prestigious Grand Tours in France, Italy and Spain. **(Source: Taiwan Today)**

Top Prize at IOC Women and Sport Awards Goes to Taiwan Umpire Liu Po-chun



Taiwan baseball umpire Liu Po-chun delivers her acceptance speech after receiving the World Trophy at the IOC Women and Sport Awards at U.N. headquarters in New York. (Courtesy of IOC)

Liu Po-chun, Taiwan's first professional female baseball umpire, received the World Trophy at the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Women and Sport Awards held at U.N. headquarters in New York.

According to the IOC, Liu was recognised for her staunch advocacy of female empowerment in sport. Co-founder of a Taipei City-based women's baseball advocacy group, she has worked to promote women's participation in the game as play-

ers, official scorers and umpires, and was named on Forbes' 2018 list of the most powerful women in international sports.

"Throughout her sporting journey, she has refused to let gender discrimination stand in the way," the IOC said. "Her determination saw her go from being a volunteer in the Little League to becoming the first female baseball umpire" in Taiwan.

In her acceptance speech, Liu said that overcoming gender bias is never easy, especially for women striving for leadership positions. "We cannot just be good; we have to be much better."

According to Liu, a full-time social worker, the IOC honour will inspire her to redouble her efforts in helping young girls take charge of their lives and realise their full potential.

Since becoming a professional umpire in 2006, Liu has officiated in top-level international tournaments at home and abroad, including World Baseball Softball Confederation events in Venezuela, South Korea and the U.S.

In 2017, Liu was selected as one of 17 participants in the annual Global Sports Mentoring Program, an initiative launched by the U.S. Department of State and espnW to train emerging leaders in advancing women's rights worldwide through sports.

Established in 2000, the IOC Women and Sport Awards confer the World Trophy and five continental prizes on individuals or organizations for contributions to the development, encouragement and reinforcement of women's and girls' participation in athletic events.

This year's award ceremony was held in partnership with U.N. Women on the sidelines of the 63rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The regional prizes went to Djatougbe Noameshie from Togo, Africa's first international volleyball referee; sports administrator Morana Palikovic Gruden from Croatia; sporting events organizer Saada Al-Ismaili from Oman; Costa Rica National Olympic Committee's Women and Sport Commission; and Vanuatu Volleyball Federation. **(Source: Taiwan News)**