



Headline News

ROC President defends Services Trade Pact

During a press conference on March 29, President Ma Ying-jeou defended his administration's Services Trade Pact with China, saying that it is crucial for Taiwan's future economic development. Students have occupied Taiwan's Legislative Yuan since March 18 demanding a withdrawal of the cross-Strait Trade in Services Agreement that Taiwan and mainland China signed in June 2013 as a follow-up to their Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA). Responding to one of the main demands of the students, Ma expressed his support for a proposal by the protesters that a law be enacted to subject all agreements with mainland China to close scrutiny.



Ma empathized with the students, but said that review of the cross-Strait Trade in Services Agreement should continue in accordance with legislative procedures. He said the government is in favor of an article-by-article review of the pact in the Legislature, but it does not support the protesters' demand that the pact be returned to the Executive Yuan. According to Ma, the pact is an indicator of Taiwan's commitment to further trade liberalization, a process vital for maintaining its competitiveness in the global economy.

EU-Taiwan Relations

Members of European Parliament visit Taiwan

A delegation of members of the European Parliament visited Taiwan

from 25 to 29 March. The visit was aimed at giving the delegation a better understanding of Taiwan's most recent political and economic developments. The delegation members also met with representatives from the Legislative Yuan, the Ministry of National Defense and the Mainland Affairs Council.

The European Parliament has commended Taiwan on its continued efforts to maintain peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said. It has also praised Taiwan's participation in the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), a United Nations specialized agency that promotes safe and efficient air travel.

Technological News

HTC unveils new flagship phone

On 25 March, HTC, one of Taiwan's leading mobile phone and high tech companies, unveiled in London and the US the successor to its popular flagship phone, the HTC One. The new phone, codenamed HTC One M8, is set to challenge leading competitors such as Samsung's new Galaxy S5 and Sony's Xperia Z2. A new and exclusive feature of the M8 is its dual sensor camera, enabling users to focus even after taking a picture and to clip objects from one image into another. The camera also records in high definition and can capture slow motion footage, HTC said in a press release.



BNP Paribas said in a March 18 research note that HTC is emerging from the most difficult time in the company's history and that its new models are expected to boost its

second-quarter consolidated sales by 51.9 percent from the previous quarter. The HTC One M8 will be available in Europe by mid-April.

Local Activities

Taiwan director gives master class

At the screening of his latest award-winning movie *Stray Dogs* on 19 March, Taiwan director Tsai Ming-liang gave a master class to the numerous attendees, explaining to them his vision on film making.



Later that week, on March 21, the world premiere of his video installation entitled *Walker*, which focuses on the life of Buddhist monk Xuan Zang, marked the beginning of a retrospective of 13 of Tsai's movies in Cinéma Galleries. Later this spring, his new stage play will be the focus of the Kunstenfestivaldesarts, as its world debut takes place on 3-7 May.

Pilot calligraphy event at HUB a great success

Over 50 students took part in the calligraphy event organized by the Taipei Representative Office in the EU & Belgium at the Hogeschool-Universiteit Brussel (HUB) on March 20. Participants learned some basic calligraphy techniques such as brush grip, writing sequence and strength and also received an introduction to the meaning behind Chinese characters. The attendees enjoyed practicing their skills and experimenting with writing different characters. Due to the success of the event, the implementation of future cultural activities will be discussed to further enhance Chinese language learning in Belgium.