

Taiwan Newsletter

Headline News

95-year-old British veteran salutes ROC Army

On June 16, Gerald Fitzpatrick, a British veteran saved by the ROC Army more than seven decades ago, took part in a celebration marking the 90th anniversary of the Republic of China Military Academy. After President Ma Ying-jeou, who presided over the joint graduation of military cadets that coincided with the Military Academy's 90th anniversary, left the reviewing stand, the retired captain remained on the stand, saluting all students and troops present at the ceremony. He was one of the British soldiers trapped in Burma in 1942 by the Japanese Army, after which ROC General Sun Li-jen successfully rescued the allied troops during the Battle of Yenangyaung.



Over the past 70 years, Fitzpatrick has continued to keep this chapter of history alive and went out of the way to travel to Taiwan to pay tribute, as the ROC Military Academy celebrated its 90th anniversary. He has also written a book on the battle, saying it is his "responsibility" to publicise the event and pay tribute to the ROC Expedition Army at the same time.

Cultural News

Cultural treasures going to Japan

A collection of 231 priceless artifacts from the Taipei City-based National Palace Museum is set to go on display for the first time in Japan on June 24, further underscoring the strength of cultural exchanges between the two nations. It is the first time the NPM's signature pieces

"Jadeite Cabbage with Insects" and the "Meat-shaped Stone" will leave the ROC since arriving in Taiwan 65 years ago. The collection will be on display at the Tokyo National Museum before moving to a sister facility near Fukuoka until October. A selection of specially chosen artwork from the vaults of the Museum will take the place of the traveling pieces during their absence.



International News

Former Norway PM wins Tang Prize for Sustainable Development

On 18 June, Gro Harlem Brundtland, a former Prime Minister of Norway, was awarded the first Tang Prize in Sustainable Development in recognition of her "innovation, leadership, and implementation of sustainable development for the benefit of humanity." Brundtland, nicknamed the "godmother of sustainable development," chaired the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) from 1984 to 1987. Nobel laureate Lee Yuan-tseh, Chairman of the Tang Prize Selection Committee, honored Brundtland for her leadership on sustainable development that "laid out the scientific and technical challenges for the global community to achieve a better balance of economic development, environmental integrity, and social equality for the benefit of all humanity." Brundtland received a cash prize of NT\$40 million (US\$1.33 million) and a research grant of up to NT\$10 million.



Apart from the Tang Prize for Sustainable Development, another three Tang Prizes were awarded: Former South African judge Albie Sachs won the Tang Prize for Rule of Law; Chinese American historian Yu Ying-shih was awarded the Tang Prize for Sinology; and James P. Allison from the US and Tasuku Honjo of Japan were named joint recipients of the first Tang Prize for Biopharmaceutical Science. The biennial prize, established in 2012 to honor leaders in these four different fields, takes its name from the Tang Dynasty (618-907 A.D.), a period considered to be the height of classical Chinese civilization.

Economic News

Taiwan's growth forecast over 3% for 2014

On June 17, the Taiwan Research Institute (TRI) adjusted its forecast for Taiwan's economic growth for the whole of 2014 to 3.1%, up from the 2.81% it had previously predicted. The positive revision was attributed to an improving labor market, record low unemployment in recent years and public confidence that the economy is improving. However, the TRI warned that there have been signs of rising prices of international raw materials, which could push the consumer price index higher in the second half of this year. Cathay Financial Holdings Co. said that due to strong economic growth in Europe, a smooth economic recovery in the US and stable economic performance in mainland China, stronger foreign demand is likely to be a major driver of Taiwan's economic growth this year.