



# Taiwan Newsletter

## Headline News

### Tsai reiterates commitment to upholding ROC military capabilities

President Tsai Ing-wen said Feb. 13 the government remains committed to safeguarding national security, peace and stability as well as the safety of the Taiwan people, adding that maintaining strong military capabilities is of paramount importance. Tsai pledged to make reasonable and steady annual increases to the national defense budget, and to provide access to more advanced equipment. She added that developing the indigenous defense sector is one of the government's top priorities. The nation will remain on alert, never underestimating external military threats, the president said. Taiwan will not provoke confrontation, but will take all necessary actions to guarantee the safety of its people, she said.



Tsai made the remarks while visiting a Republic of China (Taiwan) army base and Navy Fleet Command in southern Taiwan's Kaohsiung City.

## Economic News

### Taiwan's GDP forecast upped to 2.42 percent for 2018

Taiwan's gross domestic product growth forecast for 2018 was revised upward to 2.42 percent, reflecting stronger domestic demand and a recovering global economy, according to the Directorate-General of

Budget, Accounting and Statistics (DGBAS) Feb. 13.

Per capita GDP is projected to reach US\$25,893, while the consumer price index is set to increase 1.21 percent, 0.25 of a percentage point higher than the previous projection, on climbing global commodity and oil prices partially offset by a strong New Taiwan dollar.



According to the DGBAS, goods exports will rise 4.54 percent to US\$331.8 billion. Imports are projected to increase 6.98 percent to \$277.6 billion.

## Domestic News

### Foreign professionals recruitment act takes effect

Legislation to relax requirements for foreign professionals working or seeking employment in Taiwan took effect Feb. 8, spotlighting government efforts to foster the recruitment and retention of top talents and boost the nation's economic development.

According to the Cabinet-level National Development Council, the Act for the Recruitment and Employment of Foreign Professionals aims to fast-track the country's industrial upgrading and transformation through attracting talents in the fields of arts and culture, architecture, economics, education, finance, law, science and technology as well as sports.

Under the act, a four-in-one Employment Gold Card can be issued to qualified foreign professionals, offering greater freedom for talents to work and transfer jobs in Taiwan. Valid for one to three years, the card functions as a work permit, residency

visa, Alien Resident Certificate and re-entry permit, and makes it easier to access the National Health Insurance system.

## Cultural News

### Youth-infused cinema from Taiwan to star at Berlinale

A series of youth-infused cinematic works by up-and-coming directors showcasing the vibrant cultural landscape of Taiwan will take center stage at the Berlin International Film Festival, or Berlinale, Feb. 15-25 in the German capital.

The pieces were selected on the strength of their creativity and captivating portrayal of everyday interactions and relationships, said Hsu Yi-chun, director of the Bureau of Audiovisual and Music Industry Development under the Ministry of Culture.



Two works expected to outperform at the festival are "Xiao Mei" and "14 Apples." The former—a 95-minute drama directed by Maren Hwang—is premiering in the Panorama section, while the latter—an 85-minute documentary helmed by Midi Zhao—is screening in the Forum category. "Xiao Mei" tells the story of a teenage drug addict and is one of 18 entries shortlisted for Berlinale's prestigious GWFF Best First Feature Award.

"14 Apples" follows insomniac Wang Shin-hong on a 14-day Buddhist pilgrimage in Myanmar, Zhao's country of birth. The thought-provoking offering examines the role of traditional religion in the Southeast Asian nation, as well as the grittier aspects of humanity.

