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International scholars visit Taiping Island



Amb. Benjamin Liang, Amb. Hasjim Djalal, Mr. Chia-jung Ku, Mr. Nigel N.T. Li, and local and foreign scholars on Taiping Island

A group of experts on international law and political science from Taiwan and abroad toured Taiping Island in the ROC's Nansha (Spratly) Islands (15 April) to gain a better understanding of the island's conditions.

The visit, at the invitation of the ROC government, came a day after the scholars had taken part in the International Conference on South China Sea Disputes and International Law at Soochow University in Taipei, where they were addressed by President Ma Ying-jeou.

After conducting a survey of the island's infrastructure, natural resources and vegetation, the scholars were provided with lunch prepared from locally resourced ingre-

dients. Staff also demonstrated how the natural resources on Taiping Island are sufficient to sustain human habitation.

The Scholars toured the island's wharf, lighthouse, solar power system, and hospital, all of which were constructed for humanitarian purposes.

Following the inspection, the ROC government reiterated that Taiping Island can sustain human habitation and an economic life of its own, thus meeting the criteria of an island as defined in Article 121 of UNCLOS.

Academics from the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Indonesia, Greece and Austria were present on the trip.

Taiwan and UK sign prisoners transfer agreement

Taiwan and the United Kingdom have signed an agreement enabling the transfer of prisoners between the two sides, the second such agreement between Taiwan and a European country. The agreement took effect immediately after its signing was completed on 3 May.

Under the terms of the agreement, British prisoners in Taiwan and Taiwanese prisoners held in the UK can apply for transfers to prisons closer to their homes to complete their sentences, making it easier for their families to visit more regularly.

There are currently seven British nationals serving jail terms in Taiwan, while one Taiwanese prisoner is being held in the UK.

The signing of the agreement on prisoner transfers followed a similar pact signed between Taiwan and Germany in November 2013.

Taiwan and the UK reached a consensus on the content of the agreement back in January, following negotiations of more than one year.

Tai Tung-li, Deputy-Director of the Justice Ministry's Department of International and Cross-Strait Legal Affairs, signed the agreement on 15 April on behalf of the government of Taiwan, along with Digby Griffith, director of National Operational Services at the UK's National Offender Management Service.

Cloud Gate heads to London and Birmingham

Taiwan's most acclaimed dance troupe is performing their masterpiece 'Songs of the Wanderers' in London and Birmingham from 4-11 May. Established in the early 1970s, the tour will be the group's last in the United Kingdom, due to the retirement of the group's founder and artistic director Mr Lin Hwai-min.

Songs of the Wanderers is One of Cloud Gate's earliest productions to gain international recognition; taking inspiration from the religious rites and spiritual philosophy found in Asia.

The 90-minute production has been described as both captivating and unique, with meticulous choreography. Golden rice grains shower down on dancers – some in motion, others unmoving – and pile up on stage to form hills, deserts, rivers.

Alistair Spalding, artistic director of Sadler's Wells, also held a public discourse with the Cloud Gate founder in a post-show talk on 4th May.

Cloud Gate will then travel north to join the International Dance Festival in Birmingham, where two further renditions of Songs of the Wanderers will be staged at the Birmingham Hippodrome before the troupe departs for Russia, where they will perform in Saint Petersburg, Moscow, and Yekaterinburg.



Chinese Visual Festival returns to London



From 11 – 20 May the sixth Chinese Visual Festival (CVF) will be held in London. Building upon the success of previous festivals, the CVF will once again bring the best of the cinema and art of the Chinese speaking world to the United Kingdom.

Highlights of this year's CVF include:

- Aboriginal Taiwanese actress, singer and TV presenter **Ado Kaliting** will host the premiere of her film 'The Moving Panway'
- **Jin Huaqing**, will present his latest work The Tibetan Girl along with performer **Gongqiu Zhuoma**, as well as taking part in a Q&A session
- **Cao Fei**, one of the most significant and innovative young artists to emerge on the international scene from mainland China
- **Yang Lina**, an award winning dancer and stage performer soon to embark on a UK tour

CVF will also be giving audiences the chance to catch a number of other impressive films including Pema Tseden's '**Tharlo**' and Li Luo's award-winning '**Li Wen at East Lake**'. While for the fourth year running, CVF is proud to be working with the Cultural Division of the Taipei Representative Office in the UK on the popular Vision Taiwan theme.

The festival will be held at the respective venues of King's College London, BFI Southbank and the Bertha DocHouse screen at Curzon Bloomsbury. This year promises to be the biggest and most exciting yet for Chinese Visual Festival, underlining the festival's growing reputation as a key event in London's cultural calendar.

Tickets for the 2016 Chinese Visual Festival are on sale now. For more details and the full festival schedule visit:

www.chinesevisualfestival.org