

Tourism Bureau trying to revive charm of 'Cinderella Shoe'



Taipei, Sept. 9 (CNA) The Tourism Bureau will launch a series of campaigns to boost travel interest in a "Cinderella Shoe" structure in Chiayi County, a once popular tourist attraction that has been losing its appeal.

The installation art piece, 17 meters tall and made from 320 panes of blue-tinted glass, is shaped like a high-heeled shoe and is sometimes booked as a wedding venue because people associate it with the Cinderella fairytale.

Soon after it was built in February 2016, it reportedly drew 200,000 visitors over the five-day Lunar New Year holiday that year.

Later in the year, the bureau's Southwest Coast National Scenic Area Administration that built and now manages the installation artwork, applied for and eventually gained Guinness World Record certification for the artwork as the world's largest high-heeled shoe shaped structure.

Recently, however, the number of visitors to the site has dropped sharply from an average 200,000 per month in spring to

140,000 in summer, according to the Tourism Bureau.

“It is very surprising to see that the structure has lost its appeal so fast,” Wu Chun-chieh (吳俊吉), an official at the bureau’s Southwest Coast National Scenic Area Administration, told CNA on Friday.

He said efforts to attract private operators have also been unsuccessful.

Even now, with the annual rent set at the rock bottom price of NT\$1.7 million (US\$56,650), there have been no tenders to operate the wedding venue and the 12 shopping booths, Wu said.

As a result, the southwest administration has come up with a plan to upgrade the facilities and services and launch a series of promotions in the hope that interest in the structure will be revived, he said.

The measures include an extension of a temporary projection mapping show to an year-round event, as well as an installation of air conditioning facility inside the building.

Meanwhile, Ocean Hotel, which is about a 15-minute walk from the structure, has not seen any significant drop in business as a result of the waning popularity of the Cinderella Shoe.

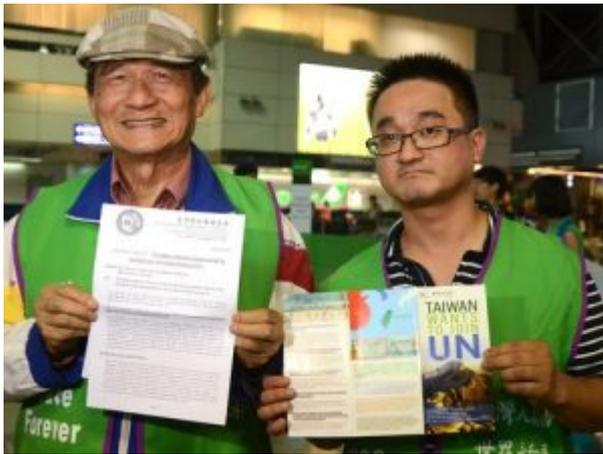
The three-star hotel, once a visitor service center, said it is more worried about slow business on weekdays.

According to the hotel, which will start formal operations in October after a 13-month trial run, it usually has full occupancy on weekends and public holidays, but is only about 30-50 percent full on weekdays.

(By Lee Hsin-Yin)

Enditem/pc

TAIUNA to appeal for Taiwan's desire to join UN in New York



Taipei, Sept. 8 (CNA) The Taiwan United Nations Alliance (TAIUNA) on Friday sent a 25-member team to New York to express Taiwan's desire to join the United Nations (UN).

TAIUNA President Michael Tsai (蔡其昌) said in the interview at the Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport prior to the team's departure that 80 percent of Taiwan's citizens wished for the country to join the UN as Taiwan.

Tsai said the goal of the trip is to help the United States clearly understand Taiwan's appeal.

The delegation will also meet with members of the United States Congress, think tank scholars and officials.

Taiwan has tried without success to re-enter the U.N. since 1993, after losing its seat to the People's Republic of China in 1971.

(By Chiu Chun-chin and William Yen)

Enditem/cs

Former Philippine beauty queen promotes Taiwan tourism



Taipei, Sept. 8 (CNA) Former Philippine beauty queen Maggie Wilson has been invited to shoot travel videos promoting Taiwan as a tourist destination to Southeast Asians, the Tourism Bureau said in its press release Friday.

This marked the second time that Wilson has worked with the travel bureau to help promote Taiwan.

She and another Philippine beauty queen Parul Shah were here earlier this year to film a 30-second-long video.

The new 60-second promotional video will feature some of the island's popular travel spots and recreational activities, including a tour of Taroko Gorge in Hualien County and visits to local indigenous villages.

The film will be made in collaboration with Sony Pictures Television Networks, Asia, and will be available from Nov. 11 on channels including AXN Philippines, SONY and Animax Philippines, according to the bureau.

It said the project is in line with the government's "New Southbound Policy," which aims to enhance Taiwan's relations with countries in Southeast Asia, South Asia, Australia and New Zealand.

The bureau also pointed to statistics which showed that the number of arrivals from the Philippines reached 161,303 from January to July this year, up 73.51 percent from the same period last year.

Among them, 68,186 were here as tourists, it said.

(By Chen Wei-ting and Ko Lin)

Enditem/cs

Taiwan could play role in resolving S. China Sea dispute



Taipei, Sept. 8 (CNA) The Republic of China (Taiwan) could play an important role in resolving the South China Sea dispute as it was the ROC that first claimed sovereignty over

the region and it still has many historic documents on the issue, a visiting UK expert said on Friday.

“I think Taiwan could play a really important role in resolving the dispute. Because of course the claim really started with the ROC in the early 20th century,” said Bill Hayton, an associate fellow at Chatham House, an international policy institute based in London.

In addition, many of the historic archives are still stored in Taiwan, where political openness makes it easier to discuss sovereignty claims than in China or Vietnam, he noted.

By presenting its historic documents on the South China Sea, Hayton said Taipei could demonstrate that the more exaggerated claims made by Beijing are not supported by the historical evidence.

Such an approach could take some of the heat out of the dispute, he told the Central News Agency on Friday.

Hayton also said it is clear Taiwan has occupied Taiping Island or Itu Aba for 70 years, noting “clearly you have the best claim to that feature.”

Hayton said that President Tsai-Ing-wen’s proposal to make the island an international humanitarian relief and resupply base is “a good way and good step to reduce tension.”

However, all claimants still need to have practical discussions on how to realize such a proposal, he added.

Hayton told CNA that to resolve the dispute everybody has to be “realistic” and recognize that no country is going to get 100 percent of what it wants.

He made the remarks on the sideline of a seminar organized by the South China Sea Think Tank (SCSTT) in Taipei on Friday. SCSTT is a Taipei-based non-profit organization that promotes dialogue, research, and education on South China Sea related

issues.

In his lecture titled “The Modern Origins of China’s Claims in the South China Sea,” Hayton argued that the current tensions in the area can be traced back to the origins of China’s claims in the early 20th century. He presented evidence that China’s claim to islands in the South China Sea was made in 1909 and further expanded after 1933.

He argued that the claim is more modern than ancient as often claimed by China and has developed in response to domestic political crises.

(By Joseph Yeh)

Enditem/AW

Taiwan to maintain existing cross-strait policy



Taipei, Sept. 7 (CNA) The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) reaffirmed its position on cross-strait relations on Thursday, noting there would be no shift in policy in the wake of recent personnel changes in the Cabinet.

During a routine press conference, MAC Vice Minister and spokesperson Chiu Chui-cheng (邱淑卿) was asked about the administration's stance on cross-strait relations, given previous pro-independence comments by premier-designate Lai Ching-te (賴清德).

Chiu took the opportunity to reiterate the administration's policy goal of promoting peaceful and stable development of cross-strait ties and maintaining the status quo.

"The government is one body and speaks with one voice," the vice minister said.

He added that the government would handle cross-strait affairs in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of China and the will of the people.

The administration will continue to promote good cross-strait ties while defending Taiwan's sovereignty, dignity and the rights of its people, he continued.

"Such a policy stance is in the best interest of Taiwan and parties in the (East Asian) region," he said.

Chiu was also asked about China's "one country, two systems" policy, reportedly lauded as a good solution for cross-strait peace by former Hong Kong Chief Executive and Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Tung Chee-hwa (董建華).

Chiu responded that Taiwanese society has rejected the idea of "one country, two systems" – as can be seen from repeated polls on the issue as well as statements by major political parties in Taiwan.

(By Miao Tzung-han and Kuan-lin Liu)

Enditem/AW

Minister of foreign affairs urges UN not to forget Taiwan



Taipei, Sept. 7 (CNA) Taiwan's Minister of Foreign Affairs David Lee (李顯赫) has urged the United Nations (UN) not to forget the 23 million people of Taiwan.

According to the Taipei Representative Office in the EU and Belgium, Belgium's biggest French language newspaper Le Soir published an article by Lee titled "Taiwan, a Valuable Partner for SDGs – True Universality" on Wednesday.

The article also said that the United Nations Headquarters symbolizes diversity, equality and freedom, but the symbolic imagery is fading as more and more Taiwanese are prevented from entering.

It further points out that Taiwan has made for its nationals visa free arrangements with 165 countries and territories, winning the respect of many in the fields of business and education, but remains ineligible to enter the UN headquarters.

Lee notes that these restrictions are aimed directly at Taiwan

and even extended to not allowing Taiwanese reporters to cover news at the UN.

In the Philippines, The Manila Times, Manila Standard, Malaya, Tonight and People's Journal published seven articles by Lee from Sept. 1-4 in which Lee stressed that Taiwan is an important partner in the joint national Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and called on the UN not to reject Taiwan in order to realize the principle of true universality.

In Burkina Faso, one of the biggest media agencies, French-language newspaper Sidwaya, also published an article by Lee on Wednesday in which he points out that Taiwan has given US\$6 billion for global medical care since 1996 but was left out of the World Health Assembly in May 2017.

He also pointed out that many lives were lost in 2003 to SARS due to inactivity from the WHO in its contacts with Taiwan.

Lee said that Taiwan compares well to any country in terms of human rights and equality and performs better than many.

(By Emerson Lim, Tang Pei-chun and William Yen)

Enditem/AW

Taiwan ranked 4th best place to live for expats



Brussels, Sept. 7 (CNA) Taiwan was ranked the fourth best place for expatriates to live and work, behind Bahrain, Costa Rica and Mexico, according to a recent annual global survey of top destinations for expatriates.

However, although Taiwan remained among the top five places for expatriates, the country lost its top spot from the previous survey by InterNations, the world's largest website to serve expatriates, in 2016.

In the 2016 survey, Taiwan, Malta, and Ecuador were the top three destinations for expatriates but they all slipped down the rankings in the 2017 InterNations Expat Insider Survey. Taiwan remained ahead of New Zealand, Singapore, Germany, Switzerland and Austria, which are generally considered to offer a good quality of life, the Taipei Economic and Culture Office in Austria cited the survey as saying.

In the latest survey, InterNations said Taiwan came second in the Quality of Life index, one of the five individual indexes that make up the survey, and was first in the Health and Wellbeing category of that index as the country has world class healthcare and infrastructure.

Meanwhile, in the Leisure Options category in the Quality of Life Index, Taiwan took 20th place. It was also 24th in Personal Happiness, 6th in Travel & Transport and 15th in Safety & Security, according to the 2017 survey.

Among other indexes in the survey, Taiwan ranked as the 19th best destination on the Ease of Settling In index for expatriates, 12th in the Working Abroad index, 13th in the Family Life index and 14th in the Personal Finance index.

In the Ease of Settling In index, Taiwan took the 46th place in the language skills category, which was said by Business Insider to be a key reason for the fall in the country's overall score in the index.

In the 2017 survey, InterNations took a close look at 65 destinations to see how these countries and areas were rated by their expat residents. The website looked at more than 40 individual factors that influence an expat's experience of living in a foreign country, from family life to finances.

The 2017 survey, conducted from February to March 2017, asked nearly 13,000 expats about their quality of life to get the results.

Following Bahrain, Costa Rica, Mexico and Taiwan, Portugal came in fifth, ahead of New Zealand (No. 6), Malta (No. 7), Cambodia (No. 8), Singapore (No. 9) and Spain (No. 10), the survey showed.

At the bottom of the survey were Turkey (No. 56), India (No.57), Qatar (No. 58), Ukraine (No. 59), Italy (No. 60), Saudi Arabia (No.61), Brazil (No. 62), Nigeria (No. 63), Kuwait (No. 64) and Greece (No. 65), according to the survey.

China ranked 55th in the 2017 survey, while South Korea and Hong Kong took 31st and 39th place, respectively.

(By Tang Pei-chun and Frances Huang)

Enditem/AW

U.S. has detected, numbered FormoSat-5: project head



Taipei, Aug. 28 (CNA) FormoSat-5, Taiwan's first domestically developed satellite, has been detected and numbered by the U.S. Department of Defense's warfare command center, the director of the satellite project developed by Taiwan's National Space Organization (NSPO) said Monday.

The orbit and height of the satellite have met their expectations, added Chang Ho-pen (張博仁) at Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport upon his return from the United States along with some members of his team and Deputy Minister of Science and Technology Su Fong-chin (蘇峰欽).

The group were in the U.S. for the launch of FormoSat-5, which was taken by the SpaceX Falcon-9 rocket from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California into its 720-km orbit several minutes after liftoff at 2:50 a.m. Friday (Taiwan time).

Chang said that several members of his team remained at the U.S. space center, where they are monitoring the remote sensing satellite and conducting tests and data verification in the hope that the spacecraft can begin operating normally as soon as possible.

At the same time, he went on, the specialists will fine-tune

the parameters so that the satellite can run at its optimum capacity.

FormoSat-5, which was entirely developed and built in Taiwan, is expected to begin providing data that can be used for national security, geopolitical, scientific and academic purposes in about two weeks, according to the NSPO.

At the airport, Su told reporters that FormoSat-5's launch marks the importance of advanced scientific research. "It not only opens an aspect for Taiwan's space technology research, but also looks after people's livelihoods in terms of flooding and disaster prevention and homeland maintenance," he said.

The satellite commences an era in Taiwan's space industry that can create economic benefits, Su said.

(By Chiu Chun-chin and Elizabeth Hsu)

Enditem/J

EVA Air launches new uniforms, bids farewell to Boeing 747-400



Taipei, Aug. 24 (CNA) EVA Air, one of Taiwan's two major airlines, launched its third-generation uniforms in a ceremony that also marked the retirement of the Boeing 747-400, a model which has served the carrier for 25 years.

More than 500 EVA staff, aviation geeks and travel agents burst into cheers when flight attendants strutted onto the catwalk wearing the new uniforms. The ceremony was held in a hangar where EVA positioned its retired jumbo jet as a backdrop.

The new uniforms keep the base color of verdelite like its predecessors, but are more fashionable with color blocks, geometric patterns and streamlined shapes designed to create a professional look with a classical style, explained Wang Chen Tsai-hsia (王陳西亞), the lead designer, who hails from Taiwan's Shiatzy Chen fashion house.

The biggest highlight of the uniforms is the use of scarves, the carrier said, explaining that their colorful pattern was inspired by trees, which symbolizes EVA's continuous development.

"The greatest challenge along the course of developing the uniforms was that we had to make it look fashionable without compromising versatility," said EVA Chairman Steve Lin (林啟昇), adding that the designing process began two years ago.

During that time, the airline arranged for the design team to

visit airports to observe how its staff worked at check-in counters and in VIP lounges. The team also had conversations with the service staff about what they wanted in the new uniforms, Lin said.

The outfits will be worn beginning this November, replacing the current design, which was launched in 2003.

The women's uniforms feature standing collars that convey the idea of flying through the sky, with different colors such as red, pink and light green distinguishing crew members' ranks.

Uniforms for male staff are built around the three-piece business suit, with aircraft wings formed by green or orange dots standing out against the black ties to represent the idea of EVA's global network, the carrier said.

Besides giving an enthusiastic welcome to the new uniforms, the company bade a fond farewell to the decommissioned Boeing 747-400.

"We have flown Boeing 747-400s for almost a quarter of the century and used them to create a glorious chapter in EVA's history," Lin said.

The decommissioning of the planes is part of a global trend to phase out use of the older model of Boeing aircraft and is also part of efforts by EVA to upgrade its fleet.

Sam Lee (李祥) was lucky enough to be one of the 10 fans to win EVA's online lottery that drew more than 1,000 participants vying to attend the ceremony.

The 13-year-old, who took the High Speed Rail by himself from southern Taiwan's Tainan City to attend the ceremony in northern Taiwan's Taoyuan City, said he has been inspired by the aircraft.

"The jumbo jets are beautiful, and I have been longing to become a pilot because I want to fly in the blue, blue skies,"

Lee said, adding that however, his favorite aircraft model is the Airbus A321.

Over the past 25 years, EVA has operated a total of 18 Boeing 747-400s – seven as passenger aircraft, three as cargo aircraft and eight for dual use.

Known for its stretched double-deck configuration, the jets enabled EVA to lead the industry in launching a fourth cabin class – economy deluxe – which offered passengers a level of service between business and economy class at an affordable price.

The practice was later followed by many carriers.

(By Lee Hsin-Yin)

Enditem/cs

Most Taiwanese in favor of safeguarding cross-strait peace: poll



Taipei, Aug. 24 (CNA) A majority of Taiwanese people support

the government's push for cross-strait peace and believe further exchanges between the people in Taiwan and mainland China will help improve stable relations, according to a poll released on Thursday by the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC).

The survey found that 87.8 percent of Taiwanese support the government's proposal that both sides work to maintain peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, while 84.8 percent believe a healthy exchange between the people on both sides will help improve relations.

Meanwhile, 64.1 percent of those questioned also showed their support for the government to draw up relevant rules and regulations to improve cross-strait exchanges and interactions.

However, the survey found that 75.2 percent of Taiwanese reject China's use of political means to suppress Taiwan on the international stage.

Maintaining a healthy exchange will help promote cross-strait peace and stability, MAC Minister Chang Hsiao-yueh (張曉天) said during a press conference in Taipei.

The government has always stood by the principle that both sides should respect each other and settle disagreements through communication and dialogue, Chang said.

"We are calling for China to help promote positive interactions and exchanges that seek to optimize the benefits for both sides," she added.

Beijing has suspended dialogue and contacts with Taiwan's government since Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) came into office in May 2016 and has taken action to apply pressure on her government. Tsai has refused to accept China's condition that in order for relations to develop, she must embrace the concept that there is only one China, with each side free to interpret what that is.

The survey, conducted from July 31 to August 2 by Taiwan Real Survey, collected 1,079 valid questionnaires by telephone, and has a confidence level of 95 percent and a margin of error of plus or minus 2.98 percentage points.

(By Miao Tsung-han and Ko Lin)

Enditem/cs

China's military activities near Taiwan said to be war preparation



Taipei, Aug. 15 (CNA) Recent frequent incidents in which Chinese military aircraft have flown close to Taiwan indicate that Beijing is preparing for a “partial, limited and non-nuclear war” in the Taiwan Strait, a retired Taiwanese vice admiral said Tuesday.

Kung Chia-cheng (龔齊昌), former head of the Chung-Shan Institute of Science and Technology, said at an event marking the 72nd anniversary of the end of World War II that the recent Chinese military maneuvers show that China is preparing for a scenario

of war in the Taiwan Strait.

Some media reports have described the incidents as a signal from China to the United States and Japan, or part of China's regular training, Kung noted.

"But personally, I feel that China is preparing for a partial, limited and non-nuclear war," he said, warning that Taiwan cannot just look on without doing anything.

He said that China is attempting to keep the U.S., Japan and South Korea focused on dealing with the nuclear issue in East Asia, and will then initiate a war in the Taiwan Strait, in which the U.S. would be unable to intervene and which would be difficult for Taiwan to resist.

Amid the changing dynamics in the international community, if the deadlock in the Taiwan Strait continues, Taiwan will face an unpredictable crisis, Kung said.

At a separate news conference that same day, the Ministry of National Defense said that China's air force has conducted four rounds of long-distance flight training near Taiwan's Air Defense Identification Zone so far this month. This followed four rounds of similar training in July.

The aircraft involved in the incidents included Xian H-6K bombers and Y-8 electronic warfare aircraft.

The ministry said the aircraft were probably attempting to collect intelligence on Taiwan's military, but it assured the public that the military has taken proper measures to protect its data from being intercepted by enemies.

(By Sophia Yeh, Lu Hsin-hui and Elaine Hou)

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