



**Press Review Taiwan  
Science, Technology and Education**



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## Science

### **Satellite instrument spotlights Taiwan's space research capabilities (Taiwan Today 23.12.2016)**

The successful operation of the Exploration of Energization and Radiation in Geospace (ERG) research satellite, launched on December 20<sup>th</sup> in southern Japan, highlights Taiwan's capabilities in building cutting-edge instruments for space missions, according to the Academia Sinica. Equipped with the Low-Energy Particle Sensor for Electron (LEP-e), a particle analyzer developed by a Taiwan team, the research satellite began transmitting 37 minutes after the liftoff from the Uchinoura Space Center. The mission is expected to last for one year. When the satellite reaches its apogee of 33,200 km from the Earth, it will set a new space travel record for a Taiwan-made scientific instrument.

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## Education

### **20th Taiwan-France Cultural Award presented in Paris (Taiwan Today 1.12.2016)**

The French academic Samia Ferhat and the EU Center at National Sun Ya-tsen University in southern Taiwan's Kaohsiung City are the winners of the prestigious Taiwan-France Cultural Award. It was presented on November 28<sup>th</sup> in Paris by Minister of Culture Cheng Li-chiun. On her first overseas visit in an official capacity, Cheng said that France is a "dear friend", which listens, understands and responds to Taiwan. Ferhat, a scholar at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales and lecturer at the Universite Paris Ouest, was recognized for dedicating more than 20 years of her life to the study of Taiwan's domestic politics.

### **Local universities struggle in international rankings (China Post 02.12.2016)**

The Times Higher Education (THE) has revealed the results of the BRICS & Emerging Economies University Rankings 2017. Taiwan has 25 universities in the expanded ranking of 300 institutions, which is an increase from the 24 last year. Taiwan's universities have struggled to make progress with all but two of the universities dropping places this year. Universities in the five BRICS nations face stronger competition than ever from those in other emerging economies.

### **International conference on Japan studies opens in Taipei (Focus Taiwan 03.12.2016)**

An annual international conference on Japan studies opened on December 3<sup>rd</sup> in Taipei, with the participation of academics and researchers from the United States, France, Japan, Korea and the host country Taiwan. The conference is based on the theme "Japan Studies in the Asia-Pacific New Dynamics" and was co-organized by the Taiwan Society of Japan Studies (TSJS) and the National Sun Ya-tsen University Center for Japanese Studies (NSYSU CJS). It aimed on the promotion of international and cross- disciplinary exchanges of ideas.

### **Survey: Few Taiwan students interested in Southeast Asian languages (Focus Taiwan 07.12.2016)**

As part of its New Southbound Policy, the Taiwanese government is encouraging young people to learn Southeast Asian languages, but a new survey indicates; only a few Taiwanese students are interested in learning the languages of those countries. With 67.3 percent, the respondents picked English as the most important language for the Taiwanese to learn, followed by 13.6, who decided on Korean and Japanese, 10.3 percent chose Chinese, 5.7 percent settled for European languages and whereas only 2.4 percent picked Southeast Asian languages.

### **Taiwan raises to 4th in PISA science rankings (Taiwan Today 08.12.2016)**

According to results released on December 6<sup>th</sup>, Taiwan moved up nine places and ranks now 4<sup>th</sup> in the science category of the 2015 Program for the International Student Assessment, which was implemented by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. With a score of 532, compared to the OECD average of 493, Taiwan trailed only Singapore, Japan and Estonia. It finished ahead of Hong Kong and South Korea in the triennial survey of 72 countries and economies.

### **Taiwan to add Southeast Asian languages to schools' core curriculum (Focus Taiwan 11.12.2016)**

Given the growing population of new immigrants coming from that region, Minister of Education Pan Wen-chung has announced that Southeast Asian languages will be listed as required courses in Taiwan's elementary schools from 2018 onward. He argued that the presence of new immigrants and their children bring greater diversity to Taiwan and opens up opportunities to expand exchanges with other countries in the region. This under the government's New Southbound Policy, which is aimed on seeking deepening ties with countries in Southeast Asia and South Asia, as well as Australia and New Zealand. The Minister believes that the introduction of Southeast Asian languages on the core curriculum will allow greater opportunities to Taiwanese students and children from new immigrant families.

**Taiwanese students sweep Olympiad to finish in first place (China Post 11.12.2016)**

Taiwan got first place at the 2016 International Junior Science Olympiad, coming close to winning all major awards at the competition. The International Junior Science Olympiad is an annual science competition for students aged up to 16 years old and it ended on December 10<sup>th</sup> after 10 days of competition. Held this year in Bali under the theme of "Science for Creative Innovation," students were tested on their knowledge of mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology and earth science. The six students of the Taiwan's team brought home five gold and one silver medals. They also secured the first place overall out of the 48 countries competing.

**University of Iowa confers alumni award on local professor (China Post 11.12.2016)**

Alec B. Scranton, dean of the college of engineering, of the University of Iowa, presented an outstanding University of Iowa Alumni Award to Cheng Cheng-kung. According to Mr. Scranton, the Taiwanese students, who came to the United States for their studies, have done a superb job over the past decades. They are in his opinion a main pillar of Sino-American cultural interchange. Cheng, a distinguished professor of the biomedical engineering department and director of Orthopedic Device Research Center at National Yang Ming University, was honored for his major academic contributions and research on December 11<sup>th</sup>.

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**Technology****Finals of hacker wargames kicks off in Taipei (Focus Taiwan 02.12.2016)**

HITCON CTF, one of the largest online hacking wargames in Asia, kicked off in Taipei on December 2<sup>nd</sup> with 13 teams competing for the top prize of US\$10,000. The two-day competition, organized by the Hacks in Taiwan Conference (HITCON) and the government-sponsored Industrial Technology Research Institute (ITRI), allows hackers to challenge the information security systems, in the hope that the results will help to improve them.

**APICTA Awards-call for foreign firms to launch innovative startups in Taiwan (Focus Taiwan 05.12.2016)**

On December 5<sup>th</sup>, President Tsai Ing-wen called for international enterprises and groups to invest in Taiwan and use the country as a base for launching innovative startups. She made the comment while attending the Asia Pacific ICT Alliance (APICTA) Awards ceremony. The Alliance promotes innovation in the Information and Communication Technology field and the awards highlight the excellent examples. Out of the 236 teams representing 16 economies who took part in the APICTA Awards in Taipei from December 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>, 18 Taiwanese teams won in total six gold and 12 silver medals. This number is the highest of this year and in the history of the organization since 2001.

**HTC to kick off Vive X Demo Day for start-ups (Focus Taiwan 06.12.2016)**

Taiwan-based smartphone brand HTC Corp. has intensified their efforts to enter the global virtual reality market. The Vive X Demo Day is part of HTC's Vive X accelerator program, which aims to fund VR start-ups around the world in a bid to build a VR ecosystem that develops both VR hardware and software. They held the Vive X Demo Days, in three different cities in China and Taiwan between December 7<sup>th</sup> and December 16<sup>th</sup>, to demonstrate the achievements of start-ups in VR development.

**Technology, innovation to be industrial growth engines (Focus Taiwan 07.12.2016)**

Premier Lin said during the closing ceremony of the National Science and Technology Conference in Taipei on December 7<sup>th</sup> that Taiwan is striving to stay on top of the latest trends in industrial development and is aiming to achieve industrial growth through the use of technology and innovation. According to Lin, Taiwan's industrial development was facing several challenges for the past 20 years, but if it the country can stay on top of the latest trends, for example e-commerce, online banking, internet of things, smart machinery and biotechnology, it may have a good stance for a strong industrial growth, since these are the industries of the future.

**Acer teams up with HTC, other high-tech giants, to form VR group (Focus Taiwan 07.12.2016)**

Taiwan-based PC brand Acer Inc. has teamed up with Taiwanese smartphone vendor HTC Corp. and several other high-tech giants around the world to set up a virtual reality association, hoping that their efforts will facilitate the pace of development of the VR industry. In a joint statement, Acer said, that they have established the non-profit Global Virtual Reality Association (GVRA), which is expected to develop and share best practices for the industry and foster dialogue between public and private stakeholders worldwide.

**Taiwan, Philippines to boost cooperation in science, technology (Focus Taiwan 09.12.2016)**

Taiwan and the Philippines, through their Joint Science and Technology Commission, conducted a meeting regarding their efforts to boost cooperation in natural disaster prevention and personnel exchanges. During their 5<sup>th</sup> meeting they officially launched three projects to strengthen bilateral cooperation in the areas of volcanoes, oceans, typhoons and earthquakes. According to Philippines' Department of Science and Technology Secretary



Fortunato T. de la Pena, who was visiting Taiwan to attend the meeting, these four areas are the focus of the bilateral science and technology cooperation.

#### **Taiwan's 4G users top 17 million (Focus Taiwan 09.12.2016)**

There are more than 17 million 4G service users in Taiwan. This indicates that a majority of local consumers have adopted the technology, according to the results of a survey released on December 9<sup>th</sup>. The survey, conducted by the Institute for Information Industry (III), revealed that 90 percent of the 4G users owned the popular Line smartphone messaging account, 85 percent of them watched movies or TV programs on their smartphones, and 85 percent said that they used their phones to locate shops.

#### **IT Month in Taipei attracts 950,000 visitors (Focus Taiwan 11.12.2016)**

The 9day 2016 IT Month, one of Taiwan's largest 3C product exhibitions, ended in Taipei on December 11<sup>th</sup>. The exhibition attracted about 950,000 visitors. The organizer Taipei Computer Association (TCA) reported, that the high number of visitors to the 3C trade fair showed, that the consumers remained highly interested in electronics gadgets with focusing on buying notebook computers and PC peripheral products. The organizer said that they expect this to spark in further buying high-tech devices provided by international brands. After the trade show ends in Taipei, the IT Month continued in Taichung from December 16<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, in Kaohsiung from December 29<sup>th</sup> to January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2017 and will be in Tainan from January 6<sup>th</sup> 2017 to January 11<sup>th</sup> 2017.

#### **Xiaomi's TV streaming device gaining popularity in Taiwan (Focus Taiwan 12.12.2016)**

As one of the major smartphone brands in China, Xiaomi has sold more than 15,000 units of its first TV streaming device -- the Mi Box -- in Taiwan after unveiling the gadget in the Taiwan market on November 10<sup>th</sup>. The number of sales shows, that the Mi Box, which uses the Android TV system, has become the best-selling set-top box in Taiwan. The Mi Box supports 4K high-definition images with 60 frames per second (FPS). The higher the FPS, the smoother the motion appears and for high-motion content. Ideally, an encoding session of around 60 FPS is the most beneficial to viewers.

#### **Pokemon Go: Google's most popular Taiwanese search term of 2016 (Focus Taiwan 14.12.2016)**

Google has released its annual "year in search" list of Taiwan for 2016. The company began compiling the annual lists in 2011 and this year it was produced based on data collected between December 2015 and November 2016. First place for most popular keyword searches went to the mobile game Pokemon Go. Second place has been taken by the Rio 2016 Olympic Games and the third place went to the U.S. presidential election. Also, U.S. President-elect Donald Trump topped the ranking of the fastest-rising people and fastest-rising political figures, while Taiwan's first female president was placed fifth and second in the two categories respectively.

#### **Taiwan team enters finals for Tricorder XPRIZE (Taiwan Today 14.12.2016)**

A team comprising more than 30 engineers, physicians and scientists from Taiwan is one of two finalists in the US\$10 million Qualcomm Tricorder XPRIZE, an international competition challenging teams to develop a next-generation mobile medical diagnostic device. They beat out five rivals from Canada, India and the U.K. to advance to the final stage of the competition. Comprising a vital signs monitor, blood-urine test kit and scope module, the teams device can be wirelessly connected to a smartphone and allows users to carry out diagnostic tests through a simple and interactive screening process.

#### **Biotech to dominate 2017 IPO market: forecast (China Post 16.12.2016)**

Global accounting firm Ernst & Young is expecting that biotechnology and high-tech companies account for more than 80 percent of funds raised through initial public offering (IPO) in Taiwan next year. The technology sector continued to be a major contributor in Taiwan in 2016, with a total of 18 newly listed high-tech companies accounting for more than NT\$6.85 billion. Though only nine biotech firms completed their listings in this year, they raised the most funds this year - a total of NT\$7.7 billion. Furthermore they noted that virtual reality (VR) development was a main driver of growth in the local tech industry and related technologies have the potential to improve education and health services.

#### **Asus introduces its own home robot `Zenbo' to public (Focus Taiwan 22.12.2016)**

On December 21<sup>st</sup>, Asustek Computer Inc. (Asus) introduced Zenbo to the media. The domestic robot has been developed and produced by the Taiwan-based PC brand and they further announced that January 1<sup>st</sup> will be the start of the sale. At the press conference, 10 Zenbo robots sang songs and danced to create a festive Christmas atmosphere for spectators, and demonstrated their varied functions as "a smart home manager, security guard, hands-free kitchen assistant and family photographer."

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