



Press Review Taiwan



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## Switzerland in the local press

### Switzerland urged to do more to fight, penalize bribery (Taiwan News, 27.03.2018)

A group of mostly rich, industrialized countries says Switzerland should do more to prosecute companies and apply tougher penalties for bribery. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development also praised the Swiss Attorney General's office for expanding the number of cases it's investigating, pointing to a nearly six-fold increase in money laundering and bribery probes from 2011 to 2016.

### Fugitive ex-president of Catalonia to visit Switzerland (The China Post, 15.03.2018)

The Swiss Foreign Ministry says Carles Puigdemont, the fugitive ex-president of the restive Spanish region of Catalonia, is heading to Switzerland for a private visit. The ministry said that Puigdemont is due in Geneva after accepting an invitation from the International Film Festival and the Forum on Human Rights. The ministry reiterated that the question of Catalan independence is "an internal matter for Spain" and that Puigdemont was free to travel to Switzerland under Schengen-zone rules, which permits visa-free travel for many Europeans.

### Swiss, Qatar criminal justice officials step up cooperation (Taipei Times, 09.03.2018)

Authorities say that Switzerland and Qatar will increase cooperation in criminal investigations, including direct contact in future cases between justice officials in the two countries. Switzerland's federal justice department says that "these efforts are also in the interests of a clean Swiss financial center." The federal office said that it hosted Qatar's attorney general, Ali Bin Fetais Al Marri, to sign a working agreement on mutual assistance.

### Swiss vote on public TV fees watched elsewhere in Europe (Taiwan News, 03.03.2018)

Voters in Switzerland are getting ready to decide whether they should continue paying hundreds of francs every year for public television and other government-supported programming. The Swiss referendum on the national TV fee is being closely watched elsewhere in Europe. It was sponsored by free-market proponents and other critics of the state-imposed fees

## Foreign Policy

### Deputy U.S. assistant secretary of state visits Taiwan (Focus Taiwan, 20.03.2018)

Alex Wong, deputy assistant secretary in the US State Department's Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, arrived Taiwan for a three-day visit and will join President Tsai Ing-wen at a banquet. Wong is the first US official to visit Taiwan after US President Donald Trump signed the Taiwan Travel Act into law. American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) spokeswoman Sonia Urbom, however, noted that the official's visit is not related to Trump's signing.

### U.S. president signs Taiwan Travel Act despite warnings from China (Taipei Times, 18.03.2018)

US President Donald Trump signed the Taiwan Travel Act, a bill that encourages visits between government officials of the US and Taiwan at all levels, despite strong opposition from China. The bill was presented to Trump after clearing the House of Representatives on Jan. 9 and the Senate on Feb. 28 with unanimous support. The Taiwan Travel Act seeks to change a practice that has barred high-ranking Taiwanese officials from direct diplomatic engagement in Washington and senior US officials from visiting Taiwan since the US severed diplomatic ties with Taiwan in 1979.

### Taiwan, Poland sign MOU on financial technology cooperation (Eye on Taiwan, 07.03.2018)

Taiwan and Poland signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on cooperation in the development of financial technology. The MOU covers cooperation in a wide range of areas, including the establishment of an information sharing system and an innovative enterprises referral mechanism between the two supervisory agencies, as well as the introduction of innovative projects, according to the Financial Supervisory Commission (FSC).

## China Relation

### Jailed Taiwanese activist's wife departs for China to visit husband (The China Post, 26.03.2018)

China has given permission for a family visit for jailed Taiwanese human rights advocate Lee Ming-che, and his wife Lee Ching-yu plans to fly to China March 26 to visit him in jail, the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) said. According to an MAC statement, China a few days ago responded positively to its demand that Lee Ming-che should be granted family visits. China will issue a one-off document allowing Lee Ching-yu to enter China upon her arrival at the Changsha Huanghua International Airport in Hunan.

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**Premier reaffirms government's stance on 1992 consensus (Taiwan Today, 21.03.2018)**

Premier Lai Ching-te reaffirmed the government's stance on the 1992 consensus, saying that if China sees the consensus as the only key able to open the door to the development of cross-strait relations, that will not be accepted in Taiwan. The Executive Yuan has also introduced countermeasures in response to China's planned 31 incentives based on national security considerations and the rights of people on both sides of the strait, the premier said.

**Chinese aircraft carrier enters Taiwan's ADIZ again (The China Post, 21.03.2018)**

China's aircraft carrier, the Liaoning, entered waters that are part of Taiwan's air defense identification zone (ADIZ), Defense Minister said, but he insisted his ministry is keeping a close watch on Beijing's regional drills. The military said it detected nothing unusual in the drills conducted with the aircraft carrier. The last time the Liaoning was sighted near Taiwan was on Jan. 16 when it entered Taiwan's ADIZ, sailing just west of the Taiwan Strait's median line.

**One-third of Taiwanese see China's incentives as positive: poll (Taiwan News, 19.03.2018)**

China's latest package of incentives to attract Taiwanese to invest, study, live and work there has been well received by young people, those with tertiary education, and middle class citizens in Taiwan. Among those groups, 38 to 40 % see China's 31 incentives "in a positive light," said the Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation, which conducted the survey. The foundation said the poll found that 30.1 % of Taiwanese see the incentive package as a goodwill gesture by Beijing that will help improve cross-Taiwan strait relations. However, 41.9 % of Taiwanese think the offers are part of China's "united front" strategy and will bring no real benefits to Taiwan, while 28 % either have no conclusive views on the issue or prefer not to comment.

## Domestic Policy

**No. 2 reactor at second nuclear plant resumes operations (The China Post, 27.03.2018)**

The No. 2 reactor at the Second Nuclear Power Plant in New Taipei resumed operations and could run at full capacity in four days, depending on operating conditions, state-run Taiwan Power Co. (Taipower) said. Operations began after the company received permission from the Atomic Energy Council (AEC). A fully operational second reactor will give Taipower more flexibility in supplying power as the weather turns warmer.

**President proposes strategies to protect Taiwan's trade interests (Eye on Taiwan, 23.03.2018)**

President Tsai laid out four strategies that she said Taiwanese businesses should adopt in order to protect their interests in the face of an escalating trade war between the US and China. First, Taiwan needs to strengthen its development and production capabilities. Second strategy is to step up domestic investment in renewable energy, urban renewal, social housing and elderly care to drive the growth of Taiwan's economy. Third, the values of innovation and how elevating the country's ability to innovate, especially in technology, is the key to trade victory. Lastly, Taiwanese businesses should diversify the locations, ie. New Southbound Policy.

**New labor rules to go into effect March 1 (Taiwan News, 01.03.2018)**

The recently revised Labor Standards Act goes into effect on 1 March making work rules more flexible in response to demands made by employers over the past year. Under the revised labor law employees can be asked to work 12 days in a row and work shifts with only eight hours of rest in between, but enterprises must first secure approval from related government agencies and their employees. The amendment also allows up to 54 hours of overtime per month, an increase from the current 46 hours, but caps it at 138 hours over a three-month period.

## Economy/Finance

**Taiwan economy shows growth for February (Taiwan News, 27.03.2018)**

The National Development Council (NDC) said the composite index of monitoring indicators for February increased four points from a month earlier to 24 points, flashing a green light. The four-point increase in February was attributed to a two-point gain in the industrial production index, a one-point increase in the indices of customs-cleared exports, imports of machinery, electrical equipment, manufacturers' shipments, while a one-point decline in the stock market.

**Taiwan's industrial production in February ends 9-month rise (Focus Taiwan, 23.03.2018)**

Taiwan's industrial production for February registered a slight y-o-y fall of 1.93 % to 94.29, ending nine consecutive months of increases, mainly due to fewer working days last month, the Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOEA) said. Despite that, the electronic components, chemical materials and machinery sectors all posted positive growth, with increases of 3.28 %, 3.24 % and 3.42 %, respectively. This can be attributed to the increase in smart technology applications, which have helped fuel growth in those sectors, MOEA explained.

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**February jobless rate remains stable at 3.7% (Taiwan News, 23.03.2018)**

Taiwan's unemployment rate stood at 3.7 % in February, up 0.07 percentage points from the previous month but down 0.15 percentage points y-o-y, according to the Directorate General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics (DGBAS). The number of unemployed in February increased by 8,000 from a month earlier to 438,000 due mainly to an increase in the number of employees changing jobs around the Chinese New Year holiday from Feb. 15-20. The figure was down 15,000 from a year earlier, the DGBAS data showed.

**February export orders fall ending 18 straight months of growth (Focus Taiwan, 20.03.2018)**

Taiwan reported a y-o-y decline of 3.8 % in export orders to total US\$32.45 billion in February, ending 18 consecutive months of growth in the wake of seasonal factors, the MOEA said. A slow season in the global information & communications sector also impacted the performance of Taiwan's export orders in February. In the first two months of this year, Taiwan's export orders rose 8.3 % from a year earlier to US\$75.52 billion

**Inflation in Taiwan remains stable: DGBAS (The China Post, 13.03.2018)**

Despite a spike in Taiwan's consumer price index (CPI) in February, inflation has not risen, the DGBAS said. The CPI's y-o-y jump of 2.19 % in February was seasonal, as the Lunar New Year holiday fell in that month. After seasonal adjustments, however, Taiwan's consumer price growth remained in check, adding that in the first two months of the year, the CPI grew 1.54 %, which was within the government's target range of 2 %.

**Taiwan's economy forecast to grow 2.42% in 2018 (Focus Taiwan, 11.03.2018)**

Taiwan's real GDP is predicted to grow by an annual 2.42 % in 2018 due to stable economic growth, a minimum wage hike and a salary increase for public sector employees, according to a report compiled by the DGBAS. The improvement in foreign demand is expected to continue and help boost Taiwan's growth. Cathay Financial also expected Taiwan's GDP to grow 2.3 % in 2018, up 0.3 percentage points from an earlier estimate it made in December. The institution said the upgrade of GDP growth reflected the booming US and European economies, which are expected to boost global demand and benefit export-oriented economies. The Centra Bank said the nation's economic growth rate for this year is projected to be 2.58 %, with the consumer price index (CPI) and core CPI set to grow at a pace of 1.27 % and 1.26 % respectively in 2018.

**February exports fall, ending 16-month rising streak (Taiwan News, 07.03.2018)**

Taiwan's exports in February declined 1.2 % from a year earlier to total US\$22.37 billion, ending 16 straight months of y-o-y growth, mainly because fewer working days drove down sales as the Lunar New Year holiday fell in the month, according to the Ministry of Finance (MOF). Taiwan's imports for February were worth US\$19.46 billion, up 0.9 % from a year earlier, leaving a trade surplus of US\$2.92 billion, down US\$440 million y-o-y. For January and February, exports totaled US\$49.75 billion, up 7.3 % from a year earlier, a record high. In contrast, imports reached US\$44.42 billion, up 12.4 % from the previous year, representing a trade surplus of US\$5.34 billion, down US\$1.53 billion y-o-y, according to the MOF.

**Taiwan's forex reserves at record high for 11th straight month (Focus Taiwan, 06.03.2018)**

As of the end of February, Taiwan's forex reserves were US\$456.72 billion, an increase of US\$997 million from a month earlier, a new high at the end of February for the 11th consecutive month, largely on increased returns from the central bank's management of the funds, central bank data showed. The returns, however, were limited to some extent by a 1.7 % depreciation of the euro against the US dollar, the bank said.

**Industrial production grows 9th straight month in January (Taipei Times, 06.03.2018)**

The industrial production index for January rose 10.86 % from a year earlier to 115.98, a new monthly high, helped largely by a relatively low base of comparison with last year, the MOEA said. The strong growth benefited not only from strong global demand but also from a low base of comparison against January 2017, as last year's Lunar New Year holiday fell in January, resulting in a reduced number of working days.

**Two-year fall in manufacturing output reversed in 2017 (Taiwan News, 03.03.2018)**

In the wake of stronger global demand, the production value of the local manufacturing sector in 2017 increased 5.85 % y-o-y to NT\$13.04 trillion (US\$445 billion), ending a two year fall in output, according to the MOEA. The electronic components industry, which accounted for almost 30 % of total output in the local manufacturing sector, posted NT\$3.67 trillion in production value in 2017, up 3.54 % from a year earlier.

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## Technology/Innovation

### **MOST announces Taiwan's 'coolest tech startups' (Eye on Taiwan, 31.03.2018)**

The Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) published a list of the 10 "coolest tech startups" in Taiwan in 2017, featuring companies behind some of the best cutting-edge technology in several fields. The 10 startups listed were Appier, CloudMile, Gogoro, Health2Sync, iStaging, JARVISH, Maisense, MoBagel, Umbo CV, and Viscovery. These companies are providing unique and cost-effective services and solutions for businesses and individuals.

### **Two NCKU presidents recognized among top 100 Asian scientists (Focus Taiwan, 22.03.2018)**

Huey-jen Jenny Su, president of National Cheng Kung University (NCKU) in Tainan, and Michael Ming-chiao Lai, a former NCKU president, have been named among the top 100 prize-winning researchers, academicians, innovators and leaders in Asia Pacific region. In the latest edition of the Asian Scientist 100, Su and Lai were the only two Taiwanese on the list of 100 honorees who won national or international prizes in 2017 for their scientific research or leadership.

### **MOST seeks to expand technology cooperation with Israel (Taiwan Today, 20.03.2018)**

A science and technology division is set to be launched at the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Tel Aviv as part of government efforts to boost industry cooperation with Israel and strengthen Taiwan's R&D capabilities, the MOST announced. Taiwan can learn much from Israel's success in commercializing technologies developed by academic institutions. Enhanced collaboration will help foster innovation-based growth and strengthen the country's global tech competitiveness, MOST said.

### **Taiwanese dinosaur protein find highlighted by U.S. magazine (Taiwan News, 15.03.2018)**

US science magazine Discover has ranked the case of a Taiwanese scientist and his research team who found protein in a 195 million-year-old dinosaur fossil as its number 12 top story of 2017. Led by Lee Yao-chang of Taiwan's National Synchrotron Radiation Research Center, the research team used a non-destructive approach known as in situ synchrotron radiation-based Fourier transform infrared microspectroscopy, to look inside the rib fossils of the Lufengosaurus specimen.

### **Taiwanese innovators turning garbage into gold (Taiwan News, 14.03.2018)**

Once dubbed a genius of garbage disposal, Taiwan has now gone one step further as its small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are turning waste into profitable products, applying the concept of a "circular economy," according to the SME Administration. The SME Administration has assisted over 100 companies since 2013 to develop green business based on the concept of sustainability and innovation. Over the past six years, the production value of Taiwan's green industry has increased to NT\$6.1 billion, with exports reaching NT\$10 billion.

### **Taiwan to introduce software to help foster US\$1 billion startup (Eye on Taiwan, 13.03.2018)**

The Ministry of Science and Technology plans to introduce a software platform to help businesses reduce labor costs and research and development time, with the aim of fostering at least one privately owned startup valued at over US\$1 billion in Taiwan. The platform will be delivered to the industrial sectors of the Internet of Things, biomedicine, green energy, smart machinery, defense industry, new agriculture and the circular economy, to help them undergo transformation, according to the ministry.

## Special Focus

### **Taiwan requests correction of name change by Sweden (The China Post, 10.03.2018)**

Taiwan's government has lodged a protest against a change of its designation to a "province of China" on the website of the Swedish Tax Agency, the MOFA said. The foreign ministry has directed its representative office in Sweden to tell the Swedish government that such a change is unacceptable to the government and people of Taiwan. The designation "Taiwan" must be reinstated to ensure national dignity and the people's rights. In response, the Swedish Tax Agency said that the decision was made to designate all countries in line with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) code 3166 standard.

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