



The Pilgrimage of Mazu

During hard times, the goddess is still with us

By Staff Our Taiwan writer Luke Yeh

Every year in April believers in south and central Taiwan hold pilgrimages to celebrate the Chinese sea goddess Mazu's birthday. The largest event is a nine-day pilgrimage made by the Dajia Jenn Lann Temple. With COVID-19 still ravaging the world, many activities have been delayed or canceled. Though the condition in Taiwan is stable, believers must still make concessions to hold the pilgrimage.

Why do believers not want to cancel the pilgrimage?

According to Mao-Hsien Lin, an associate professor in the Department of Taiwanese Languages and Literature at the Taichung University of Education, Mazu is the image of a mother in the hearts of Taiwanese. "When we fret about something, we will talk to her," said Lin. He also points out that the process of participating in a pilgrimage provides group psychotherapy, easing the trouble and confusion of believers. By staying with Mazu to pray, one can bless one's family. To these believers, Mazu has become a symbol reassuring the public. Thus, the pilgrimage is not just an event to celebrate, but also an activity to remind people that Mazu will take care of us during this pandemic.

Epidemic Prevention Implemented During the Pilgrimage

The pilgrimage held by the Dajia Jenn Lann Temple attracts hundreds of thousands of people to assist in the occasion every year. Therefore, implementing methods to prevent COVID is a most important issue. The chairman of Dajia Jenn Lann



Matsu worshippers in Taiwan

Temple recommends that stalls be provided with free food for believers instead of public buffets. Also, people who want to enter the Dajia Jenn Lann temple need to register their name, take their temperature, and wear masks. Moreover, one of the traditions, crawling underneath the sacred chair, has been canceled in order to prevent physical contact. The staff of Dajia Jenn Lann Temple will stream the entire process of the pilgrimage for believers.

The Effect of the Pilgrimage

The Mazu pilgrimage has many effects. It is more than just a religious festival to assure the public. It also enhances relationships between people. In the process of the pilgrimage, believers support each other and put aside all prejudice, because of their firm belief in the kindness of Mazu. People

provide free food, supplements, or places to let believers rest.

People in this atmosphere can be close to one another. And in addition to enhancing Taiwanese warmth and familial activity, the pilgrimage also boosts the economy. In previous years, and the hotel industry and diners have benefited. This year Tigerair Taiwan has launched its

"blessing flight" which will cross eastern and southern Taiwan, then continue to the island groups of Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu, and finally to return to Taoyuan Airport. It is hard to imagine that a religious festival can help the flight industry, but the pilgrimage of Mazu gathers people from everywhere in traveling activity. This tradition, a substantive part of Taiwanese culture, has gathered people for hundreds of years, and it will continue to do so in the future.

Art by <https://radseason.com/>

Food delivery booms, but has problems

By staff writers Sean Zhu and Rocus Liu

Food delivery services have become ever more popular in Taiwan. Global Views Monthly Magazine reports that the number of people in Taiwan who used delivery platforms has increased 25 times over the last year. Although this industry is growing at an incredible rate, it is also creating some problems

No matter whether it is rainy or sunny, food delivery couriers will take action as soon as they receive an order. Most couriers are young people, and they want to get as many online orders as possible, in order to earn money. This means they always work at a high speed during meal times. This greatly increases the probability that accidents on scooters may occur.

Customers always hope the food they order arrives as fast as possible, and the couriers thus deliver meal as fast as they can. Avoiding the breakdown of food during delivery is a test for couriers. If there is food breakdown, it is not always clear who will take responsibility, whether the courier, or the food provider, or the customer.

Food delivery is booming, but many policies still remain problems and have to be improved. Accidents must be prevented, for safety, and adequate training should be provided. Insurance issues must be addressed. Although this may increase costs, these problems must be addressed.

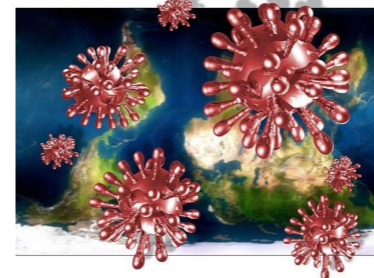
Taiwan's food delivery industry is experiencing explosive growth, but oddly enough the amount of consumption per order on delivery

platforms is decreasing, posing a severe challenge to the industrial ecosystem of restaurants, platforms, and delivery staff. The head of Uber Eats in the U.S. and Canada have pointed out that, unlike the

strategy of focusing on exclusive cooperative restaurants in the past, what is more promising is to "structure a sustainable business model," exploring cooperation with partners with reasonable profit margins. This may create benign relationship of mutual benefit between owners and customers, and pave the way for growth in the future.

Art: <https://www.google.com.tw/>

COVID-19...



...stay safe!

INSIDE...

-Miss Peace Myanmar arrested in Thailand	2
-A distressing scene	
Editorial: Taiwan is a true transnational state	3
Taroko train crash one of nation's worst	4
Art Walk: Gender neutral school uniforms	5
Our Taiwan: The Pilgrimage of Mazu	6



Miss Peace Myanmar arrested in Thailand

By staff writer Alice Lee

On April 7 The Myanmar government issued an arrest warrant for Han Lay—Miss Grand Myanmar—after she gave a speech about the country's political situation on the final night of Miss International Peace in Thailand. On March 27, Han Lay burst into tears as she shared her country's situation and sought the help of international friends. Han Lay wept as she said: "I grieved



at the loss of the people of Myanmar. They took to the streets to fight for democracy. Please help us people. We need international help for the time being." Han Lay was unable to leave Thailand, and her family members were restricted from leaving Myanmar. Miss Grand International President, Nawat Issara Kraissil and Han Lay held a press conference with the media. The organiz-

ing committee decided to support Han Lay and allow her to stay in Thailand for three months, until the situation improves. They will issue her a visa and look for a job for her. A few days earlier, Myanmar military television said, the military government of the country had issued arrest warrants for another 20 celebrities including singers, actors and influencers on social networks. According to Reuters, all of these figures have expressed their opposition to the military regime.

A distressing scene: Starfish lying withered on shore

By staff writers Alice Lee and Sophia Chen

Recently, an image of starfish lying pitifully dry and dying on the shores of Phu Quoc (the largest island in Vietnam) is being shared by many people who are expressing great dismay.

The person who posted the photo is a tourist from Hanoi named H.A. She said that she took this picture around noon on April 2 in the fishing village of Rach Vem. At that time, she and her family had been told by a taxi driver that there were many starfish in the area, which they came to admire.



ranged in a heart shape on dry sand, and waves did not come in. All were crooked and blackened. I felt really frustrated." H.A. guessed that some tourists had wanted to take pictures, so they had arranged the starfish like

this. However, being abandoned on the sand under the blazing sun had killed them. "Everything was too late," the female tourist sadly shared. Rach Vem was known as "the kingdom of starfish." Every year at the end of March and early April, visitors could admire the sight of thousands of

starfish gathering together closely on the shore, after which they would quickly return to the sea.

Earth Buddies says that taking starfish out of water is "extremely dangerous and irresponsible." The primary reason "is that most marine animals, including starfish, need to breathe to live. And they can only breathe underwater. Starfish breathe through tube feet and the papillae which are the tiny dots covering the body of the starfish. In short, their breathing apparatus is all over the body. Most starfish can only hold their breath for less than 30 seconds. Five minutes without water is like a death sentence for them", they said.

Art: <https://zingnews.vn>



Gender-neutral school uniforms: A new aesthetic

By staff Art Walk writer Lisa Wen

Taiwan has built a reputation as being one of Asia's most progressive countries. It has also ranked as one of the freest liberal democracies in the world, by organizations such as Freedom House. Its strong civil society is perceived as a key component of Taiwan's democracy. With a young demographic it has become increasingly more diverse and inclusive.

The nation's legalization of same-sex marriage was recognized internationally as a key development in Taiwan's democracy and freedom. "Taiwan has today made history in the fight for equality for LGBTI people. Love has won over hate, and equality has won over discrimination. This is a moment to cherish and celebrate, but it has

been a long and arduous campaign for Taiwan to become the first in Asia to legalize same-sex marriage" said Annie Huang, Acting Director of Amnesty International Taiwan, This development has served as inspiration for a collaboration between acclaimed designer Angus Chang and Ogilvy Taiwan, a promotion group based in Taipei. "Project Uni-form" is developing gender-neutral school uniforms, which can be worn equally by both sexes. The

project reportedly wanted the collection to do away with the usual strict gender regulations of traditional school uniforms, and hopes to inspire people to act together and celebrate diversity and individuality. "We hope to better society with Project Uniform's support in joining the conversation, so each one of us can confidently be proud of



who we are and express our true self, comfortably" Ogilvy Taiwan said in a statement. According to the information on the Internet, this isn't the first time schools have reached out to encourage of students self-expression, while promoting gender equality. The New Taipei Municipal Banqiao Senior High School has approved transgender students to wear school uniforms worn by the opposite sex, in order to challenge gender stereotypes and bul-

lying in school. "We can learn from these students. If they are aware of these gender restricting rules and codes and can rewrite them, so can we," said Stratos Efstathiou, Associate Creative Director of Ogilvy Hong Kong. "These progressive students are leading the way and Project Uniform is celebrating all gender identities and

gender expressions in its amazing spectrum of colors, shapes, and sizes." Gender-neutral school uniforms are to be sure an important development in Taiwan education. Conservative attitudes about sex and gender are still common in Asia, including Taiwan. In most countries, same sexes simply

moving around together, much less something like marriage, are still illegal Malaysia, same sex act are illegal, Gender neutral uniforms represent a new aesthetic in school life and student experience. Therefore, this creative project can level social impact and inspire people to act together to celebrate diversity and individuality, making Taiwan a better place. Gender neutral school uniform art by <https://www.projectuni-form.com.tw>