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## **16) Librarian education:**

The Chinese Association of Library and Information Science Education held a seminar on library and information science dissertations; National Taiwan Normal University hosted a ten-session roundtable seminar on library development in the twenty-first century; and the NCL Taiwan Branch, National Taichung Library, Taipei Public Library, Kaohsiung Municipal Library, and Bureau of Cultural Affairs, Ilan County Government held 30 practical training courses for librarians across Taiwan.

## **17) Strengthening training and counseling in library affairs:**

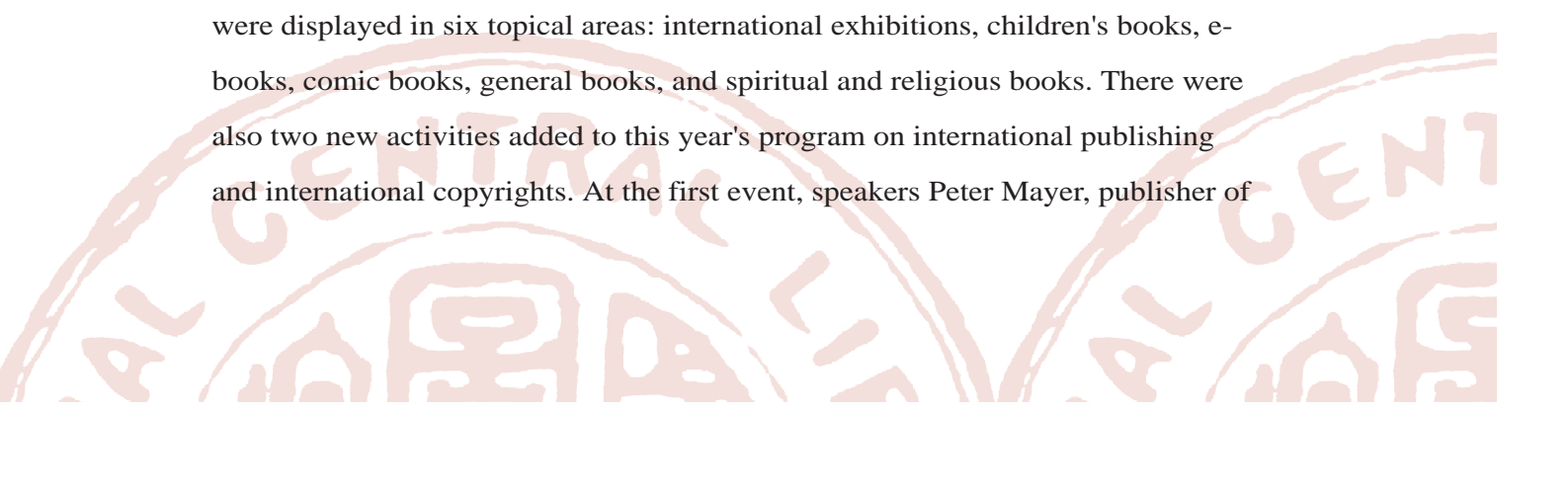
Representatives visited 75 public libraries across Taiwan to provide them with blueprints for development.

(Chinese text by Wu Ying-mei. 吳英美)

## **TIBE 2003**

The 11th Taipei International Book Exhibition wrapped up an event-packed week on February 16 this year at three separate venues across Taipei. The show kicked off on February 11th with an opening address by President Chen Shui-bian, who noted TIBE's role as a focal point for the global publishing industry.

A total of 925 publishers reserved 2,092 booths for the 2003 show, including 414 publishers from Taiwan and 511 from nearly 50 other countries. Exhibits were displayed in six topical areas: international exhibitions, children's books, e-books, comic books, general books, and spiritual and religious books. There were also two new activities added to this year's program on international publishing and international copyrights. At the first event, speakers Peter Mayer, publisher of



the U.S.-based Overlook Press, Jamie Byng, publisher of Britain's Canongate Publishing, Masao Kase, Chairman of Soshisha of Japan, Gunter Berg, publisher of Suhrkamp Verlag of Germany, and Dale Hollis Hoiberg, editor-in-chief of Encyclopedia Britannica shared their experience in developing successful small publishing companies. Their insights proved especially useful to Taiwan's publishing industry, which is dominated by small and medium companies, as it seeks strategies to survive against competition from big publishing groups. At the second event, publishing executives from around the world were invited to exchange experience and encouraged to use the Internet to share information on copyright transaction opportunities.

The Czech Republic was this year's Country of Honor, with a special pavilion devoted to the publishing industry in the eastern European country. The opening ceremony for the pavilion was presided over by Czech deputy minister of culture Zdenek Novak. Adopting the motto, "Memory of the Nation," the Czech pavilion highlighted the richness of Czech literature and culture past and present through the perspective of Franz Kafka's Prague. Among the activities held at the pavilion was a performance of the famous Czech puppet play "Budulinek." Czech illustrator Adolf Born held a poster signing and book release event, and illustrator Kveta Pacovska set up a special booth at the pavilion. Other participants from the Czech Republic were Miroslav Balastik, who spoke on contemporary Czech literature, and Charles University professors Zhou Zhiwen (周志文) and Ye Guoliang (葉國良), who introduced the Chinese Studies Institute at Charles University. Czech authors Mr. Michal Viewegh and Mrs. Iva Pekarkova also participated in the exhibit.

Several theme activities were presented at this year's TIBE. At the Government Information Office's "Discover Taiwan" exhibit, visitors could learn more about award-winning publications in Taiwan. The Council for Cultural Affairs also highlighted the cultural accomplishments of Taiwan at its exhibit, "The Beauty of

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Taiwan." Other theme displays included the Cultural Technology Pavilion, Best Comics Pavilion, Rated Publications, and an exhibition devoted to Lin Yu-tang.

Among the other literary luminaries present at this year's TIBE was Wole Soyinka, a Nobel laureate of literature from Nigeria. A total of four events on Mr. Soyinka were held during the exhibition including a seminar on "Soyinka vs. Taiwanese Writers", a poetry reading, performances from Mr. Soyinka's "Death and the King's Horseman", and meetings between the Nigerian author and Taiwanese students.

The NCL exhibit at TIBE this year showcased the library's database and READncl services.

## Program Seeks to Build a Better Future for Public Libraries

In an ambitious drive to improve the quality of public libraries in Taiwan, the government has earmarked nearly NT\$1.55 billion for the "Public Library Improvement Plan." This project will be carried out jointly by the Council for Cultural Affairs and the Ministry of Education (MOE) through April 2004 as part of the Executive Yuan's "Infrastructure Expansion Plan".

While every county, city and town in Taiwan has a public library, many of these facilities are lacking in the services needed to attract readers. The Executive Yuan plan seeks to address these shortcomings through a five-part program aimed at improving the facilities and operation of public libraries, introducing automated and online services, establishing Internet resource centers (public-access databases), establishing online book acquisition systems, and augmenting the collections at public libraries. The goal of these initiatives is to refashion public libraries as dynamic and interesting places that combine the functions of library, art center,