

EVENTS

■ Introduction to the New Taiwan Branch of the National Central Library

The Taiwan Branch of the National Central Library (NCL) was established in 1915 by the Japanese occupation government as the Imperial Taiwan Library, located on Poai Road behind the today's Presidential Office (formerly the Governor General's Office). In 1948, the library was placed under the supervision of the Taiwan Provincial Department of Education and renamed as the Taiwan Provincial Taipei Library. In 1973, it was placed under the charge of the Ministry of Education and renamed as the Taiwan Branch of the NCL.

The Taiwan Branch currently occupies an area of about 59,000 square meters in Jhonghe No. 4 Park, making it the largest public library in Taiwan (including the NCL itself, which is 1,650 square meters smaller).

The library is currently under renovation and will re-open to the public at the end of this year. The library building covers a ground area of about four hectares, with three levels below ground and four above. It is surrounded by seven hectares of parkland. The library facilities include study rooms, a Periodical Room, Reference Room, parent-child activity area, reading room for the visually impaired, Taiwan Information Center, and Folk Artifact Room. The collection at the Taiwan Information Center includes newspapers, documents, and statistical material from the Japanese occupation period and Chinese historical materials from after Taiwan's retrocession in 1945. When it reopens at the end of the year, the library will have a collection of around one million volumes, with a goal of eventually doubling that number. The Folk Artifact Room has 4,000 religious relics, daily items, and adornments, and South Pacific cultural relics collected from the Japanese occupation period and displayed on a rotational basis.

In the basement level are a 500-person capacity auditorium and 1,000-square-meter national gallery, which will be used to hold events in cooperation with local art, cultural, and historical organizations.

On the third basement level is a 500-car parking garage that will be privately managed and made available to local residents at preferential rates. The fourth and fifth floors will have four 50-person capacity classrooms for holding various library courses and activities. The rooms will also be made available for public use on Mondays when the library is closed.

The surrounding park area is illuminated with artistic lighting on the road-facing sides, making this a good place for an evening stroll. There are also several outdoor plazas, with the largest situated in front of the library's main entrance and smaller squares near the roads, as well as outdoor performance stages, a water area, rear corridor and artificial waterfall, creating a high-quality leisure space.

■ **MOE Kicks Off Summer Reading Contest**

The Ministry of Education will hold an online reading activity for kids from July 1 to August 31 this year. Minister of Education Tu Cheng-sheng was joined by children in announcing the "Four Does and One Don't" guideline of the activity: "Enjoy Good Books with Your Family", "Save Money by Reading Good Books at the Library", "Be Cool by Reading Everyday", "Be Smart by Choosing Good Books", and "Don't Read Trash!"

Students that sign up for the activity online via the Liu Sia Association (LSA) website (www.lsa.org.tw) will be given a contest code and participation number. The contest is limited to books read during the summer and registered according to the competition rules. Contestants will be scored by experts of the Society of Children's Literature of the ROC and the top 100 readers will be presented awards.

Minister Tu noted that despite the development of the Internet and electronic media, printed books are still irreplaceable. He encouraged students to make time during their