

'AIM 2020': Education Minister Dr. Wu on government policy for nurturing creative talents



Education Minister Dr. Wu Ching-ji was the guest of honor invited to TNUA's "AIM 2020" cultural forum, delivering a speech on Taiwan's education policy on May 18.

Dr. Wu gave an in-depth analysis of how Taiwan's government policy is supporting the development of creative talents and what challenges it is facing. He also revealed his vision on arts education and how it can be put into practice.

Universities and colleges nurturing more talents for cultural innovation industries

President Ma Ying-jeou in a speech marking his second anniversary in office unveiled a six-point directive, with two of the points stressing the importance of culture and innovations for increasing Taiwan's competitiveness, according to the education minister.

According to the statistics from the Ministry of Education, the number of arts and design departments in

Taiwan's colleges and universities grew to 182 in the academic year of 2008 from 149 in 2002. The number of students in related fields grew to 66,746 (7,290 of whom were in masters' degree programs) in 2008 from about 18,000 (2,800 in masters' degree programs) in 2001.

Over a period of eight years, the number of students related to the cultural innovation industries increased five-fold, Dr. Wu said. Taiwan is not big, but it has been actively working towards becoming a "nation of creativity."

The education paradigm and reform

In 2002 the Ministry of Education unveiled its white paper on creativity education, adopting a comprehensive view aiming to incorporate the creativity education in all levels of education. Guidelines were also made to systematically promote creativity education in a comprehensive way.

Dr. Wu thinks that the education paradigm and reformed mechanisms are the foundation for developing cultural innovation talents.

He noted that university education is chiefly aimed at developing students' talents. While university education is not aimed at training students to serve enterprises, ways must be found to bridge the gap between school education and market demand, he said.

Cross-field integration is key to competitiveness

The Ministry of Education runs various overseas training projects, encouraging participation in and organization of international arts and design competitions, sponsoring talents in special fields with important characteristics, and funding cross-field degree and credit programs and digital teaching for the liberal arts.

Dr. Wu said these programs are meant to create endless momentum of creativity and to widen students and teachers' perspectives. ◆

COIP minister on indigenous culture and future

AIM 2020

On May 26, Council of Indigenous Peoples Minister Mr. Sun Ta-chuan was the guest speaker at the "AIM 2020" cultural forum, sharing his views on the present situation and future of Taiwan's indigenous peoples.

Prof. Ju noted that Mr. Sun is a scholar well-versed in literature, philosophy and history, and has a deep understanding of indigenous issues.

The spirit of the indigenous peoples

In his speech, Mr. Sun remarked that the indigenous peoples' lives are closely linked to nature, and they have long learned to live and co-exist with nature.

The indigenous peoples are known for their dancing and singing. But it would be a bid misunderstanding to see such qualities only from an entertainment perspective, he said.

He explained that the indigenous people's dancing and singing are part of their religious rituals, and the lyrics of their songs are teachings passing down from generations to generations through an oral tradition.

Indigenous peoples' future relying on the politico-legal, cultural, academic and socio-economic support

The indigenous people's future will rely on the politico-legal, cultural, academic and socio-economic support in order to unshackle themselves from various restrictions, the minister said.

The indigenous people, in the face of their own languages, cultures and arts and crafts, have to seek and preserve their traditions and spirit, and to face their historical and social situations, Mr. Sun said.

This the heavy burden of this indigenous generation because the majority of society lack sufficient understanding of the indigenous peoples. But after more than 20 years of planning by the government, where various mechanisms have been established, there is still a ray of hope for the existence and future of the indigenous peoples, Mr. Sun said. ◆

Bottom: TNUA President Prof. Ju, Tzong-Ching (third from right, front), other school officials, and Council of Indigenous Peoples Minister Sun Ta-chuan (fourth from left, front), the guest speaker of "AIM 2020" cultural forum.

