

FERNS 'N PETALS

In continuance with our efforts to provide welfare services for seafarers, NewsLink has tied up with the leading supplier of flowers and gifts - Ferns 'N' Petals. The service is available in 33 countries now. With this service, seafarers can conveniently be connected to their loved ones back home and send them gifts, chocolates and flowers at the click of a button. For further details contact us at gifts@newslinkservices.com or visit our website <http://www.newslinkservices.com>.

MUSIC

MAHER ZAIN IN INDONESIA

JAKARTA - Swedish R&B singer-songwriter-producer Maher Zain performs his first-ever concert in Indonesia dubbed as "Konser Silaturahmi untuk Indonesia" (Hospitality Concert for Indonesia) on Sunday.

Zain, of Lebanese origin, became popular among Muslims in Indonesia for his single "Insyah Allah," which is featured in his first album titled "Thank You Allah." (Jakarta Post)

PINOY MYX COUNTDOWN (OCT01-OCT07)

1 - Delivery Boys by Somedaydream, 2 - Forever Young by Sam Concepcion, 3 - Sari-Saring Kwento by Champ Lui Pio, Gloc-9 & Noel Cabangon, 4 - 20/20 by Pupil, 5 - Muli by Ebe Dancel, 6 - Who's Gonna Save Us Now by Hilara, 7 - Pawiin by BBS, Kean Cipriano & Jay Durias, 8 - Masasabi Mo Ba by Rachelle Ann Go, 9 - Paniwalaan Mo by Yeng Constantino, 10 - The Oracle by Ernville, 11 - Desidido by Hansom, 12 - Prodigal by Salamin, 13 - I'm Already King by Christian Bautista, 14 - Kulang Ako Kung Wala Ka by Erik Santos, 15 - Kahit Di Mo Sabihin by Juris, 16 - Carried Away by JM De Guzman, 17 - Need You Now by Stephanie Dan, 18 - In Denial by Ajka, 19 - Hipon by Giniling Festival, 20 - Pogi by Superkendi.

MYX INTERNATIONAL TOP 20 (OCT01-OCT07)

1 - Mr Simple by Super Junior, 2 - Sparks Fly by Taylor Swift, 3 - Skyscraper by Demi Lovato, 4 - Lighters by Bad Meets Evil & Bruno Mars, 5 - Jet Lag by Simple Plan & Natasha Bedingfield, 6 - You And I by Lady Gaga, 7 - Wish You Were Here by Avril Lavigne, 8 - Moves Like Jagger by Maroon 5 & Christina Aguilera, 9 - Your Love by Marie Digby, 10 - Jar Of Hearts by Christina Perri, 11 - How To Love by Lil Wayne, 12 - Pumped Up Kicks by Foster The People, 13 - 330 by U-Kiss, 14 - Hands Up by 2PM, 15 - Everybody Go by Kis-My-FT2, 16 - Break Down by Kim Hyun-joong, 17 - Just In Love by Joe Jonas, 18 - Collide by Leona Lewis, 19 - Papi by Jennifer Lopez, 20 - Fly by Nicki Minaj & Rihanna.

South Korean Film Makers Support Crane Protester

SEOUL - Hundreds of South Korean film makers, directors, actors and others recently gave their backing to a female activist who has perched atop a shipyard crane since January in protest against job losses.

A statement signed by 1,543 people including the film industry members came two days before Asia's premier film festival began in the southern port city of Busan, where the protest was held.

Signatories included director Park Chan-wook, who won international awards with "Oldboy."

"The screen world has always stood by the underdog," Park and others said in the statement, throwing support behind Kim Jin-suk.

The 52-year-old has been holed up since January on top of a 35-metre-high crane at a shipyard in Busan, with her colleagues sending food and water up to her by rope.

The authorities have not blocked the supplies for fear Kim may jump from the crane.

Protesters demanding Hanjin Heavy Industries call off major lay-offs have vowed to go ahead with a two-day rally in the city last weekend, despite a police warning of a crackdown on protests during the festival.

In December last year, some 900 members of the shipyard's labour union went on strike in protest at plans to lay off some 400 workers. The company responded by locking the shipyard.

The impasse lasted 190 days until the union reached a deal with the management on June 27.

Many strikers returned to work but dozens including Kim have continued a sit-in. Hanjin, which was once among the world's ten largest shipyards, says lay-offs were inevitable because of falling orders. It has reduced its workforce in Busan since it opened a shipyard in the northern Philippine port of Subic Bay. (AFP)

Fans Pose With Lookalikes AT Tokyo Tussauds

TOKYO - Japanese fans took the chance to pose with waxwork models of Lady Gaga and Michael Jackson as a three-month "Madame Tussauds Tokyo" exhibition recently opened to the public. About 70 fans arrived early last week to strike poses with their idols, with many donning blue and white wigs next to a model of a body-suit-wearing Lady Gaga.

Tatsumasa Arakawa, 22, came to the venue with his father two hours before opening to be the first to enter the exhibition, having visited similar events overseas.

A total of 18 British-made life-size figures were on display on September 30, including Johnny Depp, Angelina Jolie, Michael Jackson and Japanese manga cartoon hero Astro Boy.

One more figure is expected to arrive middle of this month. The Madame Tussauds museum in London opened in 1835. It has since expanded to other countries, drawing 550 million people worldwide. The Japanese exhibition, in Tokyo's bay-side area, runs until January 4, 2012. (AFP)

Mobile-Loving Thais Still Waiting For Full 3G

BANGKOK - While BlackBerrys and iPhones are fast becoming must-have accessories for many urban Thais, mobile Internet in the kingdom is still struggling to get out of the slow lane.

Third-generation - 3G - technology allows mobile phone users to surf the Internet and download music and videos, and Thailand is the only country in Southeast Asia not to have full 3G apart from Myanmar.

A year ago, a Thai court halted a 3G licence auction at the last minute after state-owned giant CAT argued that then-regulator the National Telecommunications Commission, had no authority to conduct the bidding.

The next attempt is expected in 2012. Of Thailand's 21 million Internet users, 17.6 million connect to the web through their mobiles, according to research group Nielsen. Social media is rocketing, with a 75% jump in the number of Facebook accounts to almost 12 million users since the beginning of the year. (AFP)

MOVIES

Busan Film Festival Opens At Gleaming New Home

BUSAN - Asia's largest annual film festival opened with a glittering cast in South Korea on Thursday as it seeks to cement its place on the world cinema stage against growing competition.

The Busan International Film Festival (BIFF), now in its 16th edition, moved into a new USD140-million permanent home, the Busan Cinema Centre in South Korea's second city.

Designed by award-winning Austria-based architecture collective Coop Himmelblau, it spans 30,000 square metres and includes a 4,000-seater outdoor theatre and four indoor screens under a vast LED-covered roof, 1.5 times the area of a football pitch.

New festival director Lee Yong-kwan is pledging to use the venue to show art and independent film all year, keeping Busan at the centre of Asian cinema as Chinese events seek greater prominence. "BIFF's role will now expand beyond the festival," he said.

"Facilities such as our media centre, the cinemathèque, and our archive space will enable the Busan Cinema Centre to become a symbolic structure representing the entire Asian film culture and business."

This year's event - formerly known as the Pusan festival, when it used the host city's Korean name rather than the Romanised version - will see 307 films screened, representing 70 countries and including 135 world premiers.

"The most important role Busan can play is to continue as a showcase for young directors, writers and producers," said American producer Andre Morgan, who first came to Asia to work with Bruce Lee on "Enter the Dragon" in 1972.

It was also a "venue for forging business relationships between young directors, distribution and finance companies around the Asia region" he added. "This exchange is important in understanding the economic forces and popular media trends at play in the region." (AFP)

CCP Accepts Entries For Alternative Film, Video Tilt

MANILA - The Cultural Centre of the Philippines (CCP) invites Filipino film makers to join the "Ika-23 Gawad CCP Para sa Alternatibong Pelikula at Video" slated for November this year. Entries to the competition must be in 16mm and 35mm format for Film and DVD, and MiniDV formats for Video.

Competition categories are: Short Feature/Narrative, Experimental, Documentary and Animation. All works submitted to the competition must be strictly independent works and not produced for commercial screening. School-based works may also be submitted.

The works must not have been completed earlier than December 2010.

Each participant may submit a maximum of three entries for each category. Winners will be announced on November 25 at the CCP Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino after all selected entries are screened starting November 22 at the Tanghalang Manuel Conde. Deadline for submission of entries is on or before October 18. (PNA)

'Seediq Bale' Leads 'Chinese Oscars' Nominations

TAIPEI - Widely acclaimed two-part epic "Seediq Bale" leads the nominations at Taiwan's annual Golden Horse Awards, also known as the "Chinese Oscars."

The latest offering from Taiwanese director Wei Te-sheng was nominated in 11 categories including best feature film, according to a statement from the Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival and Awards committee.

"Seediq Bale" was also nominated in the best director, best supporting actor and best new performer categories at the awards, which celebrate cinema from Taiwan, mainland China and Hong Kong.

Experts expect "Seediq Bale," based on the true story of Taiwan's indigenous head hunters fighting against Japanese colonial forces in the 1930s, to break the box office record of USD17.1 million set by "Cape No 7," the romance film that shot Wei to fame in 2008.

The first instalment of "Seediq Bale," "The Sun Flag," has raked in USD12 million in box office earnings since it was released on September 9. The second part, "The Rainbow Bridge," was released on September 30.

Chinese blockbuster "Let the Bullets Fly" has nine nominations and another China-produced film, "The Piano in a Factory," has seven. A total 161 films compete in the 48th annual awards and winners will be announced on November 26. (AFP)

TELEVISION

South Korea's Poporo Sparks Paternity Suit

SEOUL - Pororo, South Korea's friendly blue cartoon penguin beloved by children worldwide, has become the subject of a paternity suit in the land of his birth. Ocon Animation Studio has brought a case in a local court against its partner Iconix Entertainment, accusing Iconix of taking credit for creating the animated character.

The adventures of Pororo, who sports aviator goggles and a flying helmet and dreams of being able to fly, have now been sold in 110 countries and spawned a tidal wave of merchandise in South Korea.

"Pororo's creator is Ocon, not Iconix," Ocon said in a statement.

"Iconix deprived Ocon and animators of recognition by marketing Pororo as its own creation and being the sole recipient of a government prize," it said. Iconix denied Ocon's accusations.

NEWSLINK is the market-leading daily news service providing 70+ titles for seafarers as part of Headland Media's Satnews portfolio.

Address: 15 Nafpliou St., 1st Floor, P.O. Box 3627, 3317 Limassol, Cyprus.

Tel: +357 25340360

Email: Info@NewsLinkServices.com

Copyright © 2011 NewsLink Services Ltd is a Headland Media company. All rights reserved.

"We have never made statements to imply we are the real creators. Pororo's co-production has always been made clear in media interviews," Choi Jong-II, head of Iconix, told "Yonhap" news agency.

"It's true Ocon designed and digitalised it, but story and post-production were done by Iconix. It's absurd to claim who's the 'real creator' over co-produced works." Pororo helped Iconix earn USD25 million in sales last year. The penguin is also owned by broadcaster EBS and internet service provider SK Broadband. (AFP)

Snafu As China Space Launch Set To US Patriotic Song

BEIJING - It was supposed to be a patriotic tribute to China's technological prowess. Instead, a video showing the launch of China's first space station module inadvertently glorified the country's biggest rival.

A video animation put together by state television to mark the highly-publicised launch of Tiangong-1 - or "Heavenly Palace" - is set to the music of "America the Beautiful," a patriotic song about the United States.

China sees its ambitious space programme as a symbol of its global stature and Internet users who recognised the tune were surprised at the choice of music for the space launch-a proud moment for the Asian nation.

"At the time, I was eating in a hotel with foreigners from an American company and Chinese clients and we were watching the live broadcast," posted one user on Sina's Weibo, China's answer to Twitter.

"All the Chinese there wanted to disappear," he said of the embarrassed response. It was unclear whether the choice of song - which includes the line "America! America! God shed His grace on thee" - was a mistake. (AFP)

JOKE OF THE WEEK

After tucking their three-year-old son in bed one night, his parents heard sobbing coming from his room. Rushing back in, they found him crying hysterically. He managed to tell them that he had swallowed a penny, and he was sure he was going to die. No amount of talking was helping.

His father, in an attempt to calm him down, palmed a penny from his pocket and pretended to pull it from the boy's ear. The kid was delighted. In a flash, he snatched it from his father's hand, swallowed it, and then cheerfully demanded: "Do it again, Dad!"