24.05.2026 NEWS

DRAFT RULES FOR THE "VP-G RAM G" ACT RELEASED

- As an alternative to the hundred-day work scheme, the "VP-G RAM G" scheme is set to come into effect from this July 1.

» Consultation

- The "VP-G RAM G" Act, 2025 has been passed.
- In accordance with this Act, Section 33 and its related clauses have been structured, and the draft rules for it have been formulated.
- The Central Government yesterday released these draft rules into the public domain for consultation with the general public and experts.
- It includes protocols regarding the wage payment system for workers and the unemployment allowance to be provided in the event that work is not given.
- Management rules, including administrative expenses, a public grievance redressal mechanism, and fund allocation for Union Territories, have also been formulated.

» Assurance

- The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme will be phased out and replaced entirely by this new "VP-G RAM G" scheme.
- These draft rules will also ensure that during the transitional period when state governments announce their new schemes, the rights of workers are not affected.
- Furthermore, officials from the Ministry of Rural Development have stated that the job cards of workers whose identity verification process, known as 'e-KYC', was completed under the old scheme will continue to remain valid under the new scheme as well, and the rights of the workers will be fully protected.
- It has been informed that state governments, various organizations, social activists, and the general public can review these draft rules and offer constructive suggestions to the government.

COLONIAL SCARS AND LOVING SILENCES

- The novel "Taiwan Travelogue," which has won the 2026 International Booker Prize, considered one of the highest literary awards globally.
- Written by Yang Shuang-zi in Mandarin Chinese and translated into English by Lin King, "Taiwan Travelogue" has secured this historic victory.

» Love and Power Imbalance:

- The novel unravels the hidden subtleties within the question of whether two people situated at different places in a power hierarchy can overcome the natural inequality existing between them through the love that blossoms in their hearts.
- Set against the backdrop of 1930s Taiwan under Japanese colonial rule, the chair of the judging panel, Natasha Brown, notes that the novel meticulously examines this psychological struggle.

» To Experience Authentic Life...

- The time of the story is 1938. Aoyama Chizuko, a young novelist, travels from her hometown of Nagasaki in Japan and arrives in Taiwan.
- Although the Japanese government, which is occupying and ruling the island, had extended an official invitation to her, Chizuko does not have even the slightest desire to participate in their state banquets or the imperial political events behind them.
- Instead, she wishes to experience the authentic life of that island. Her primary objective is to travel across the entire island and taste the local cuisine as much as possible to satisfy her monstrous appetite.

THE TRANSLATOR WHO MADE DREAMS COME TRUE

- At that moment, a local Taiwanese woman named Chizuru, who is younger than her, exceedingly beautiful, and possesses a multifaceted intellectual personality, is appointed as her translator.
- The arrival of Chizuru makes Chizuko's dreams come true. Arranging for Chizuko to travel without hindrance throughout the southern landscape of the island, Chizuru introduces her to different kinds of marvelous local cuisines at every milestone of the journey.
- Along with this, she proves to Chizuko that she herself is an extraordinary culinary artist.

» A Heart-Wrenching Separation

- Amidst scenic train journeys, varieties of traditional foods, and delightful, deep conversations, an unquenchable love blossoms in Chizuko towards her assistant, Chizuru.

- However, some barrier prevents Chizuru from giving her consent to this love. Because of this, she very cautiously maintains a strict distance.
- This silence plunges Chizuko into great grief. In the end, a heart-wrenching separation occurs between them.
- Only after that separation does Chizuko slowly understand the dominant mindset that stood as a barrier between both of them.
- The author Yang Shuang-zi realistically expresses how, no matter how closely they interact on a personal level, the division and power struggle between the occupiers of a country and the occupied can shatter that emotional relationship.
- Stating that this novel has achieved an extraordinary double feat, the judging panel mentioned that they joyfully conducted several deep discussions about its multifaceted layers.
- Cleverly written with mock footnotes in the guise of a translation of an old diary manuscript found by chance, this novel, when it was first published in 2020, made many readers believe that it was indeed a real historical document.

» A Historic Moment

- This international victory has caused a huge outpouring of emotion in the Taiwanese literary world and among its readers.
- Generally, they celebrate this recognition achieved through art and literature as a very important historic moment for their country, which has usually received the attention of the international community through news related to political tensions with China.

» Hope for a Healthy Dialogue

- This book, which was released in Mandarin in 2020, is currently being translated into various languages in many countries around the world.
- However, this book has not yet been published in China. Speaking about this, the author Yang Shuang-zi hopes that if this book enters into China in some way and is read by the readers of that country, the doors for a healthy dialogue between both sides will open, and it will help China understand what kind of an independent future the Taiwanese people desire for themselves, contrary to what many in China imagine.

» The Translator's Sharing

- Lin King, an American translator of Taiwanese origin, has emotionalized, 'Getting Taiwanese literature translated into English, published internationally, and recognized has always been a difficult struggle.
- Therefore, this victory is personally a very historic moment for me.'