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TAEF UPDATES

New Southbound Cultural Salon II: "From Tribes to Worlds: Rediscovering Indigenous Music and Visual Arts"



Held at Taitung Art Museum, the second New Southbound Cultural Salon centered on “From Tribes to Worlds: Rediscovering Indigenous Music and Visual Arts.” With this topic, we aimed to focus on how contemporary indigenous singers and artists “return” to their tribes to collect traditional cultural elements and transform them into a modern form of artistic creation, which they carry to international performance platforms to exchange ideas and experiences with their foreign counterparts. In rediscovering indigenous traditions, they also encountered different worlds of international cooperation that helped them unlearn their existing values and relearn their Austronesian connections lost in the progress of global modernization.

This cultural salon also brought together scholars committed to Austronesian studies for years to reflect on Taiwan’s New Southbound Policy (NSP). Although Austronesia cooperation has not been a primary concern in this regional strategy, TAEF believes that this cultural heritage could make a substantial contribution to the NSP if taken into serious consideration.

Read more in Chinese (Part I)

Read more in Chinese (Part II)

TAEF COMMENTARIES

Cross Paths: How Should Taiwan Approach India?



-Wei Azim Hung, Intern, TAEF

Friday, August 14, 2020

The series of border skirmishes between India and China that began in early May this year have prompted a wave of anti-China sentiment across the subcontinent. India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi has struck a particularly aggressive tone by saying "the age of expansionism is over" and "peace is not won by weakness" while being mindful of the need to save his Chinese counterpart face by not indulging in overly bellicose or provocative rhetoric. Interestingly, this is not the first time India and China have engaged in border hostilities, nor is it the most bloody conflict. Both nations entered into a bloody war in late 1962 when border clashes near the Himalayas broke out after failed attempts to settle the dispute through diplomacy.

So, in 2020, how is India responding to the very same border dispute that has plagued the two nations over the last six decades? The ongoing tensions have brought renewed attention to India's age-old Look East Policy. But instead of just *Looking East*, India now wants to and needs to *Act East*. That is to say, it aims to enhance bilateral ties with other nations and become a more active player in East and Southeast Asia and Australasia.

Check out TAEF's latest commentary on Taiwan Insight!

[Read more](#)

ASIA ENGAGEMENT CONSORTIUM UPDATES

Taiwan Foundation for Democracy

2020 Asia Young Leaders for Democracy Webinar



Wednesday, August 19, 2020

The Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD) on August 19th held the 2020 Asia Young Leaders for Democracy (AYLD) webinar, inviting AYLD alumni to share their observations on how COVID-19 has undermined democracy and human rights in the region. The alumni also spoke about efforts that the civil society has made to sustain democracy and to help the vulnerable to weather the impacts of the pandemic.

AYLD alumni highlighted that emergency laws for curbing COVID-19 have become legal excuses for some governments in Asia to suppress civic space and violate international human rights standards. Freedom of speech and the press have been repressed by authoritarian regimes in the region. Journalists not only face government surveillance but also lack protective equipment, putting them at a higher risk of COVID-19 infection when interviewing or reporting on the scene. Women, the LGBTQ+ community, migrant workers, and young people are also relatively more vulnerable to the social and economic impact of COVID-19. Due to city lockdowns, cases of gender-based violence and migrant worker rights violations have been increasing.

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NEW SOUTHBOUND POLICY NEWS

Taiwan President to Speak at Australian Think Tank Event

Thursday, August 27, 2020

President Tsai Ing-wen will give a video speech and answer questions at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute's (ASPI) annual Indo-Pacific Leaders Dialogue event at 1:00 pm (Taiwan time) today, according to Presidential Office Spokesperson Kolas Yotaka.

Kolas said Wednesday (Aug. 26) evening that President Tsai's speech will mention Taiwan and Australia's shared responsibility to maintain "peace" and "prosperity" in the Indo-Pacific as important players of the region. Tsai will also touch upon the bilateral sharing of anti-epidemic supplies and open, transparent information, which has enabled the two countries to survive the first wave of the Wuhan coronavirus pandemic, CNA reported.

Kolas also stated that President Tsai is looking forward to beginning negotiations for an Economic Cooperation Agreement (ECA) between Taiwan and Australia as soon as possible, which will benefit the economic and trade development of the two countries.

[Read more](#)

REGIONAL HEADLINES

The Straits Times

Beijing Fires Missiles in South China Sea as US Adds Sanctions

August 27, 2020

US-China tensions over the South China Sea

SCMP

Thailand Vows to Restrict More 'Illegal' Content on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Other Sites

August 27, 2020

Thailand has vowed no relent in its crackdown

The Jakarta Post

Australia to Seek Veto Powers on All Public Deals With Foreign Nations, PM to Say

August 27, 2020

Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison

escalated on Wednesday (Aug 26) with Beijing firing four missiles into the disputed waterway and the Trump administration strengthening action against companies that helped set up outposts in the region.

China launched four medium-range ballistic missiles into the South China Sea on Wednesday amid broader military exercises by the People's Liberation Army, according to a US defence official who asked not to be identified.

The missiles landed in the sea in an area between Hainan Island and the Paracel Islands, the official said. The move came a day after Beijing protested a flyover by a US spy plane.

Separately on Wednesday, the US announced trade and visa restrictions on 24 companies for their efforts to help China "reclaim and militarise disputed outposts" in the contested maritime area, according to a statement from the US Department of Commerce.

on social media content deemed illegal and is pushing for the removal of 1,000 online posts, videos and other content that "break the law", officials said on Wednesday, after Facebook vowed legal action over the censorship of a group discussing the monarchy.

Youth-led pro-democracy protests have swept Thailand in recent weeks, calling for political reform and frank discussion about the powerful king's role in the country – long a taboo subject.

A private Facebook group called "Royalist Marketplace" had more than a million members posting about the royal family before it was blocked in Thailand on Monday.

The social media giant said it was "compelled" by the government to block the group, and is preparing to mount a legal challenge against the move.

[Read more](#)

will announce on Thursday legislation giving the federal government new powers to review and cancel any agreements that local authorities and public institutions make or have made with foreign governments.

If approved by parliament, the law will give the federal government a veto over any deals made between state and territory governments, local councils, and public universities and foreign administrations.

While Morrison will not name China specifically, the new law is likely to further sour bilateral ties, and comes amid growing concerns over links between Australian institutions and Beijing.

"It is vital that when it comes to Australia's dealings with the rest of the world, we speak with one voice and work to one plan," Morrison will say on Thursday, according to extracts of a speech seen by Reuters.

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