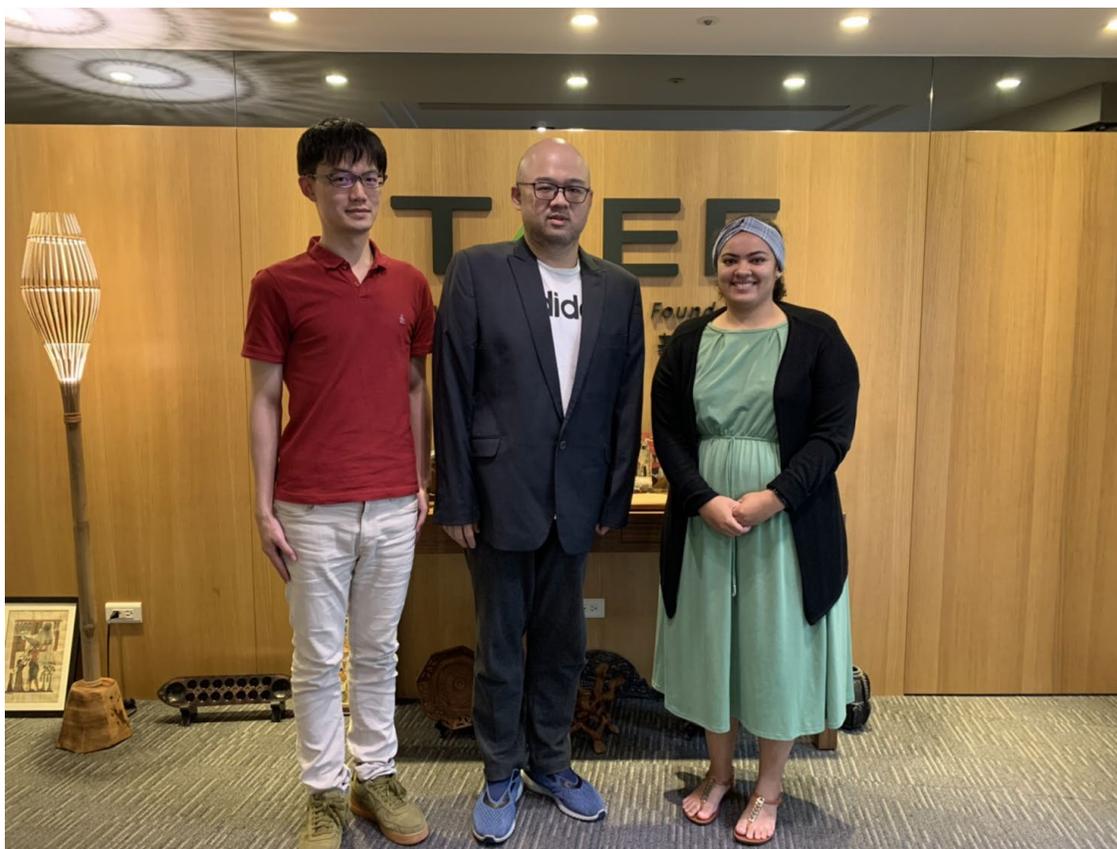


CONTENT

- TAEF Updates
- Asia Engagement Consortium Updates
- New Southbound Policy News
- Regional Headlines

TAEF UPDATES

TAEF Dialogue with Dr. Meryl Burgess



Wednesday, May 6, 2020

Dr. Meryl Burgess, a visiting scholar at National Chengchi University, had a conversation about the development and achievement of civil society organizations in

Taiwan with Dr. Alan Yang, the Executive Director of the TAEF.

Dr. Burgess' academic interests cover China's development projects in Africa, environmental issues in China, and the response of local civil society organizations. She hoped that she can expand her fields of interest to cover the relationship among civil society, the Taiwanese government, and the aid recipient societies.

Dr. Yang shared his insights by pointing out that Taiwanese civil society organizations' oversea projects not only fulfill the commitment to humanitarian values but also promote Taiwan's international status. The New Southbound Policy will continue supporting these oversea projects and encourage them to establish institutional partnerships with local counterparts.

Dr. Burgess asked whether the reliance on government grants would harm the integrity and independence of civil society. Dr. Yang responded that as a democratic country, the government seldom interferes with the works of civil society organizations, and quite a few of them have maintained a critical perspective toward government policies over the years. By contrast, the Chinese government commonly mounts pressure on foreign governments either through the official channels of communication or state-supported organizations to sabotage Taiwan's international efforts.

[Read more](#)

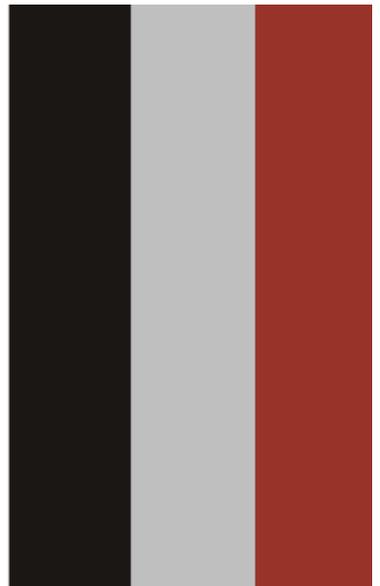
ASIA ENGAGEMENT CONSORTIUM UPDATES

Taiwan Foundation for Democracy

**TFD Launched a New Series of Publication titled
"Democracy at Work"**

Democracy and the Great Pestilence
民主與大瘟疫

John Keane
約翰·基恩



Tuesday, May 5, 2020

Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD) launched a mini publication series of “Democracy at Work.” The first volume in this series is “Democracy and the Great Pestilence” by world-renowned political scientist John Keane. John Keane is Professor of Politics at the University of Sydney and at the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin (WZB). Prof. Keane is also on the advisory board of the *Taiwan Journal of Democracy*.

[Read more](#)

NEW SOUTHBOUND POLICY NEWS

Focus Taiwan

Taiwan to Donate 7 Million More Masks to Countries Worldwide

Tuesday, May 5, 2020

Taiwan will start the third round of mask donations soon, giving more than 7 million surgical face masks to countries around the world to help with their response to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) said Tuesday.

Of the total 7.07 million masks, 2.28 million will be donated to the United States federal government and American states hardest hit by the pandemic, MOFA spokeswoman Joanne Ou said.

Another 1.3 million will be sent to member states of the European Union, 1.09 million to Taiwan's 15 diplomatic allies, and 1.8 million to some of the countries covered in Taiwan's New Southbound Policy, namely, 18 countries in Southeast and South Asia, Australia, and New Zealand, Ou said.

[Read more](#)

REGIONAL HEADLINES

The Diplomat

The Telegraph

The Jakarta Post

Fears of Press Freedom Crackdown After Philippines Orders Largest Broadcaster off Air

May 7, 2020

ABS-CBN, the largest TV broadcaster in the Philippines, was forced off the air just before 8 p.m. Tuesday night by a government agency, leading to shock and outrage from domestic and international journalists and press freedom watchdog groups.

Over 11,000 people employed by the network could lose their jobs due to the order by the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), which comes as much of the Philippines, including the metro Manila area, remains under quarantine due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The network, which had aired reports critical of President Rodrigo Duterte and drawn his

Coronavirus Fears in South east Asia's Overcrowded Prisons as Covid-19 Rapidly Spreads among Inmates

May 3, 2020

Pressed in cheek by jowl, forced to sleep in shifts and with barely any access to sanitation, prisoners held in some of the world's most chronically overcrowded jails are at increasing risk of a health catastrophe as the Covid-19 pandemic sweeps through Southeast Asia.

The Philippines over the weekend released close to 10,000 inmates across the country this weekend in a bid to halt the spread of the disease, according to Mario Victor Leonen, a Supreme Court Justice.

But human rights groups fear the move is too little, too late after multiple reports of Covid-19 seeping into prisons. Some 332 cases have been reported by local media in Cebu City jail,

COVID-19 Shrinks Civic Space in Southeast Asia

April 25, 2020

Limitations on movement, on assembly, on public gatherings and on free speech have severely curtailed the operations of frontline civil society organizations. Funding for democracy and human rights issues has also been affected as donors halt disbursement of activity funds and channel resources towards combating COVID-19.

Restrictions on public gatherings puts civil society organizations (CSOs) at a major disadvantage. Their work to push back on authoritarianism and demand rights protection depends on being able to organize events, to engage in public advocacy, to meet with like-minded groups, to

ire over allegations it had failed to air his campaign advertisements, had been awaiting a franchise renewal from the Philippine Congress when it was served a cease and desist order and ordered to stop its broadcasts, despite earlier being assured it could continue to operate.

[Read more](#)

the country's most overwhelmed facility, where about 6,000 men are crammed into cells with a capacity for 1,500.

In Indonesia, which is still heading towards its peak and where cases have topped 11,500, with one of the highest death rates in the world, more than 38,000 prisoners have been released from prisons and detention centres operating way beyond the capacity they were built for.

According to Indonesia's Ministry of Law and Human Rights, 232,249 inmates are squeezed into facilities intended for 132,307.

Arif Maulana, director of the Jakarta Legal Aid Institute, said the prisoners most vulnerable to Covid-19 were drug users and petty criminals who were serving time in cramped cells.

[Read more](#)

lobby public officials and to organize cross-border meetings.

With the movement restrictions, civil society activities have become near impossible to carry out, except for through internet audio and video calls and via social media engagement. Hence, coordination meetings, seminars and advocacy calls have been through the internet.

[Read more](#)

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