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## TAEF UPDATES

### TAEF Staff Members Attended a Celebration Event on the Indonesian Mother's Day



*Sunday, December 22, 2019*

TAEF staff members, Cheng-Chia Tung and Ding-Ling Chen, attended the Mother's Day celebration event organized by the Indonesian Diaspora Network in Taiwan (IDN) on December 22. The day was commemorated as the Indonesian Mother's Day because the country had its first Women's Congress on December 22, 1928, where various issues of gender equality were publicly raised, including female education and the ban on child marriage. In celebration of this turning point in Indonesian history, the Indonesian Diaspora Network in Taiwan (IDN) invited its members and guests to dance and taste Indonesian cuisines at the front square of the National Taiwan Museum.

[Read more](#)

## Experts from Thailand Attended TAEF's Workshop on Disaster Governance and Preparedness in Yilan



*Thursday, December 19, 2019*

A workshop on disaster governance and preparedness which brought together the wealth of knowledge and experience between academia and local communities of Thailand and Taiwan was held in Meizhou Community, Yilan County, Taiwan.

Thailand and Taiwan both suffer from floods, earthquakes and other natural disasters which emphasizes the importance of understanding local communities' approaches to prepare for and manage disasters. As one of Taiwan's model resilient communities, members of Meizhou Community Taskforce-spearheaded and run by community elders-shared their operational model and personal accounts. Similarly, professors from Thammasat University talked on local approaches of disaster preparedness in Thailand.

There is the hope for Taiwan and Thailand to continue learning from each other's models to help make local communities self-reliant and truly disaster prepared and resilient.

[Read more](#)

## TAEF COMMENTARIES

*The Diplomat*

# Beijing's Animosity Toward Taiwan's DPP Is Bad for Everyone

*Friday, December 13, 2019*

-Jeremy Huai-Che Chiang | Assistant Research Fellow, TAEF

Relations between Beijing and Taipei have been steadily deteriorating over the past three years, with one of the key reasons being a historical Chinese policy not to engage with any Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)-led administrations from Taiwan. It is understandable that in Beijing's perception, being open to dialogue with the DPP could risk being perceived as lending legitimacy toward the DPP's views on Taiwan's statehood. In the DPP's party charter, it does state in the first clause its aim to "establish a sovereign, independent, and autonomous Republic of Taiwan."

However, this stalemate has increasingly frustrated not only the DPP, but also Beijing in the past two decades. What Beijing's nonconciliatory attitude toward the DPP has done, in effect, was to discredit factions within the DPP that advocated engaging China and push the entire party (and its supporters) further away. Instead of advancing its principle of peaceful unification, what the Chinese government is doing now is enabling a self-fulfilling prophecy that only force can ultimately resolve bilateral differences. The use of force would be equally disastrous for Taiwan and China, and would almost certainly destroy China's international image and significantly destabilize its domestic order.

[\*Read more\*](#)

## ASIA ENGAGEMENT CONSORTIUM UPDATES

*Taiwan Foundation for Democracy*

**The Head of the National Endowment for Democracy was Awarded the Order of Brilliant Star with Grand Cordon by President Tsai Ing-wen**



*Thursday, December 5, 2019*

On December 5, Gershman was awarded the Order of Brilliant Star with Grand Cordon by Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen at the 2019 Asia Democracy and Human Rights Award Ceremony, in recognition of his contribution to the consolidation of Taiwan-U.S. relations and the advancement of freedom and democracy around the world.

Taiwan is a model that shows democracy is a universal idea and not just a western idea as China tends to argue, Gershman said. "China will say, 'well China's different because it is a Confucian civilization and you can't have democracy in a hierarchical Confucian country.' Well, Taiwan shows that you can," he said.

The annual ceremony was hosted by the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy, which is dedicated to strengthening democracy and human rights in Taiwan and abroad.

[\*Read more\*](#)

## NEW SOUTHBOUND POLICY NEWS

*Taipei Times*

### **Taiwan, Vietnam Ink New Version of Bilateral Investment Pact**

*Friday, December 20, 2019*

Taiwan and Vietnam have signed a new version of a bilateral investment agreement (BIA) to provide better protection for Taiwanese investors in the Southeast Asian nation,

the Ministry of Economic Affairs said.

The new pact has an investor-to-state dispute settlement mechanism to facilitate negotiations between Taiwanese investors and the Vietnamese government.

If the disputes cannot be resolved in six months, they would be able to resort to international arbitration.

When Taiwanese investors encounter investment obstacles, the Taiwanese government would also be able to negotiate with its Vietnamese counterpart for assistance in removing the hurdles, the ministry said.

[Read more](#)

## *Focus Taiwan*

# Foreign Investment in Taiwan up nearly 20% in the First 11 Months

*Friday, December 20, 2019*

Foreign investment in Taiwan during the first 11 months of the year was up nearly 20 percent year on year, driven mainly by investment from European wind power developers, the Investment Commission (IC) reported Friday.

During the January-November period, foreign investment in the domestic market totaled US\$10.29 billion, a 19.97 percent increase on an annual basis, the IC said, attributing the rise to investment by Germany's wpd AG and Demark's Ørsted Wind Power TW Holding A/S, both offshore wind energy developers.

In contrast, Taiwan's outbound investment plunged 51.47 percent to US\$6.219 billion from the same period of 2018, which the IC ascribed to a high comparison base and the impact of trade frictions between the United States and China.

Nevertheless, investment by Taiwanese companies in some countries included in the New Southbound Policy such as Vietnam, Singapore, Australia and Thailand grew to US\$2.613 billion, increasing 18.99 percent year on year, the IC said.

[Read more](#)

## REGIONAL HEADLINES

*India Today*

*Nikkei Asian*

*The Guardian*

## Govt Announces India's First Chief of Defence Staff to Bring Better Synergy between Forces

December 24, 2019

Government has approved the creation of the post of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS). The officer to be appointed as Chief of Defence Staff will be a four-star General and will also head the Department of Military Affairs, announced Union minister Prakash Javadekar.

Javadekar added, "CDS will have all powers of a secretary-level officer. The files need not go through defence secretary and the CDS will be empowered to send to it directly to the defence minister."

The Chief of Defence Staff was proposed to be a four-star or 'four-and-a-half-star' officer who would be senior to the three service chiefs, all of whom are four-star officers. A CDS, the committee and other

*Review*

## Mahathir's Muslim Summit Turns Malaysia-Saudi Ties Bitter

December 24, 2019

A meeting of Muslim countries hosted by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has strained Malaysia's cordial ties with Saudi Arabia and its allies, who complained the Kuala Lumpur Summit 2019 undermines the Jeddah-based Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Saudi Arabia was particularly angered by presence at the forum of some of the kingdom's fiercest critics, including Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim Hamad Al Thani and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.

Riyadh has condemned the summit as divisive and urged Muslim countries not to participate in the three-day event. The kingdom and its close allies, the

## Australia Fires: Rain Offers Little respite as Out-of-control Bushfires Continue to Burn

December 26, 2019

Rainfall over parts of eastern Australia during the Christmas break did little to extinguish some of the country's major bushfires, ahead of worsening conditions and a heatwave due to arrive in the coming days.

About 70 bushfires continue to burn throughout New South Wales, despite modest rainfall in some fire-affected parts of the state, while firefighters continued to battle a large blaze in [South Australia](#) on Boxing Day.

Rob Taggart, a meteorologist at the Bureau of Meteorology, told the Guardian NSW's mid-north coast and hinterland had received the bulk of the rain since Christmas Eve, with some areas hitting totals

analysts have argued, would better integrate the functioning of the Indian Army, Indian Navy and Indian Air Force.

[Read more](#)

United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, and Bahrain, stayed away. Indonesian President Joko Widodo also declined to attend despite a personal invitation from Mahathir, sending his foreign minister, Retno Marsudi, instead.


[Read more](#)

of around 80mm.

But he added that rainfall in the fire-ravaged Blue Mountains and south coast regions had been minimal.

[Read more](#)

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