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## TAEF UPDATES

### Syrian Awardee of the 2019 Asian Girl Awards Continues to Make Social Changes Using Award Money



*Thursday, February 27, 2020*

Last October, TAEF worked with The Garden of Hope Foundation to organize the 2019 Asian Girl Awards, in recognition of women contributing to social changes.

Among the 5 recipients, Sama Hejaz, who was forced to flee from her home country and later resides in Turkey due to the Syrian civil war, has been bringing music to girls,

children, and the handicapped in the Syrian refugee camps in Turkey.

With the award money, Sama Hejaz recently purchased an electronic piano and will continue to heal the victims of war with the sound of music.

To watch [the full video](#) of Sama Hejaz playing piano

## TAEF COMMENTARIES

*The Diplomat*

### **How Does Asia Think About Taiwan and Its New Southbound Policy?**

- *Jeremy Huai-Che Chiang, Non-Resident Research Associate, TAEF*

*Wednesday, February 26, 2020*

After President Tsai Ing-wen's re-election victory last month, analysts have already started to ponder the future of her signature foreign policy: The New Southbound Policy (NSP). As Taiwan's regional strategy for Asia, the NSP aims to expand Taiwan's comprehensive relations with countries in South and Southeast Asia, and has so far continued to achieve results in multiple realms. With a majority in the legislature and a clear landslide win, Tsai now has a clear mandate to level up her policy agenda.

Outbound investment toward NSP countries rose 16.16 percent from a year earlier to US\$2.79 billion, while visitors from NSP countries to Taiwan also increased by 6 percent last year, but what concerns South and Southeast Asian analysts the most, understandably, is still the potential implications of cooperation with Taiwan for their relations with China. For example, Tu Lai, a research fellow at the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam, acknowledges that while Vietnam has much to gain from cooperating with Taiwan's NSP, "China is currently Vietnam's largest trading partner and import market... as a result, it is not an easy task for Vietnam and Taiwan to progress with a beneficial economic relationship while not antagonizing China."

But people also understand that there still exist clever ways to push ties forward, and that China is not able to dictate everything. Taiwan's relations with China will still heavily influence its successes in the region. This is not to say that Taiwan should compromise, but that Taiwan and regional counterparts need to set priorities (deciding where to spend their political capital) and also improve policy resilience in the face of Chinese pressure. Creative channels and models of bilateral cooperation should also continue to be developed.

[Read more](#)

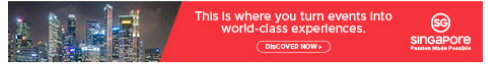
Center for Southeast Asian Studies, NCCU

## SEASIA Listed in the UIA Yearbook of 2020/2021



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### Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies in Asia (SEASIA)

*This profile has an update pending.*  
All updates are reviewed by our editors before publication. Please check back soon for updated information.

#### Aims

Promote region-based Southeast Asian studies.

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The full-featured *Yearbook of International Organizations (YBIO)* includes over 72,500 organization profiles, additional information in the profiles, sophisticated search functionality and data export. For more information about YBIO, please [click here](#) or [contact us](#).

The UIA is a leading provider of information about international non-profit organizations. The aim of the *Open Yearbook* is to promote the activities of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs).

*Tuesday, February 25, 2020*

Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies in Asia (SEASIA) is listed in the Union of International Association (UIA) Yearbook of 2020/2021 edition. Every year, the UIA, a Brussel-based non-profit organization compiles a selection of influential international organizations in its Yearbook based on a wide range of criteria. SEASIA is included in the list because of the intensive international academic activities organized with its regional members.

UIA was established in 1907 as a non-profit, independent research institute, a repository for current and historical information on the work of international associations. UIA documents the work of international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and promotes public awareness of their activities. They now also are promoting the internationality of organizations and in representing the collective views of international bodies.

As the Secretariat of SEASIA, CSEAS at National Chengchi University thanks the UIA for the recognition.

*Read more in Chinese*

## Taiwan to Allow More Migrant Workers in the Local Farming Sector

*Tuesday, February 25, 2020*

Taiwan is expanding the number of migrant workers local farm operators can hire on a trial basis this year, allowing them to work in different areas of the agriculture sector, the Council of Agriculture (COA) said Tuesday.

The limit is being raised from 800 people to 2,400 for the year, and expanded to include sectors other than dairy farming, such as land-based aquaculture and animal husbandry -- poultry, hogs and cattle.

Migrant workers will also be allowed to work in more specific areas of farming, including orchid, edible mushroom and vegetable cultivation, according to the COA's Department of Farmers' Service.

[\*Read more\*](#)

### REGIONAL HEADLINES

*Bloomberg*

**Growth Downgrades in Southeast Asia Fuel Calls for Stimulus**

*February 26, 2020*

The acceleration of the coronavirus outbreak over the past week is putting downside pressure on forecasts for Southeast Asian economies, leading policy makers to unveil

*Voice of America*

**Trump Returns From India Visit, But With Some Rewards Yet to Come**

*February 25, 2020*

**U.S.** President Donald Trump has wrapped up a spectacle-filled visit to India, where he was greeted by massive crowds in a “Namaste Trump” event, took in the grandeur of the Taj

*BBC*

**Mahathir Mohamad: Malaysian Prime Minister in Shock Resignation**

*February 24, 2020*

The resignation of Mr Mahathir, 94, comes amid rumours that he may form a new coalition without his designated successor, Anwar Ibrahim.

support measures.

Economists have slashed this year's growth forecasts for China to about 5.5%, compared with 6.1% last year. With most of Southeast Asia heavily reliant on China-linked supply chains and tourism, that has meant growth downgrades in the region as well:

Thailand, for example, is seen slowing to barely above 2% this year, from 2.4% in 2019.

Almost all of Southeast Asia's top six economies have cut interest rates this year, and economists are betting on more to come. On the fiscal side, Singapore has taken the lead with significant support to cushion its economy from the impact of the virus.

Given the virus outbreak, "we had already seen quite a few economies easing monetary policies and some sanctioning fiscal policies to mitigate the impact," Lee said, with more rate cuts likely in Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand.

[Read more](#)

Mahal and declared U.S.-India relations to be "stronger than ever before."

The president stayed on script on a visit that was designed to accentuate the positive and personal dimensions of the U.S.-India relationship.

"We'll always remember that magnificent welcome the citizens of your home state showed us upon arrival," Trump said to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, calling it a "profound expression of strength and of real love."

The visit was marred, however, by violent street protests of rival Hindu and Muslim groups demonstrating over a new citizenship law that led to the deaths of at least 10 people in two days of clashes, the Associated Press reported. Another 186 people were injured, including police and protesters.

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The world's oldest elected leader returned to power in 2018.

In a surprise victory, he ousted then-prime minister Najib Razak, who is on trial charged with taking millions of dollars from a government wealth fund.

The Prime Minister's Office said the letter of resignation to the king was submitted at 13:00 local time (05:00 GMT). No other details were included in the statement.

It is not clear who will be the next prime minister.

No group of parties has sufficient MPs to form a government - so Malaysia's constitutional monarch will play an important role now, either inviting a political leader to form a new administration, or if that fails, calling a fresh general election.

[Read more](#)

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