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## TAEF UPDATES

**[Call for Application] TAEF is Hiring an Assistant Research Fellow for Taiwan-Asia Young Leaders Engagement Program**

We are hiring!



*January 12, 2021*

**A**re you interested in international exchanges? Do you want promoting international exchange to be part of your career?

TAEF IS looking for someone who is enthusiastic about and has his / her own unique

thoughts on Asian affairs and youth development; capable of carrying out project planning and handling administrative affairs simultaneously; and is willing to work both independently and collectively as a team member.

The position—Assistant Research Fellow—at the Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation (TAEF) offers you opportunities to plan and execute projects with international partners, and turn your vision into reality. If you have a strong sense of international affairs, are interested in project management, and are attentive to administrative details, you are welcome to join TAEF and take part in developing Taiwan’s external relations.

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## 2021 Yushan Forum Highlights: A Larger Role for Taiwan in the Indo-Pacific



*January 13, 2022*

For those wondering about the future of Taiwan and its like-minded partner countries, the TAEF presents a highlight video that records the important messages addressed by prominent global leaders in this year's Yushan Forum.

The Yushan Forum, organized by the Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation (TAEF), serves as a platform for facilitating regional dialogue and showcasing the achievements of governmental and non-governmental cooperation among Taiwan and its neighboring partner countries.

Entering its fifth year, Yushan Forum explores the prospect of “Resetting Priorities of Progress with Resilience,” building a resilient international community in the time of the global pandemic.

[To Watch the Full Video](#)

*The Indian Express*

### **Taiwan: An Important Ally in the Battle against Authoritarianism**

*December 31, 2021*

*- Dr. Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao, Chairman, Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation*

*- Dr. Sana Hashmi, Visiting Fellow, Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation*

**P**resident Joe Biden-led Summit for Democracy was held on December 9-10 in a virtual format. The salience of this summit lies in a deeper understanding on the part of the Biden administration that democracy is not just a form of government, it is a goal in itself, a value that must be cherished, preserved and celebrated. It is this vision of democracy as a norm that has seemingly rattled authoritarian countries.

Ideas like these are consistently echoed in Taiwan's policy circles. For instance, during the 2021 Open Parliament Forum held in Taiwan, President Tsai Ing-wen reiterated Taiwan's commitment to work with liberal democracies for forging an alliance to bolster collective democratic resilience and realise open governance.

These goals were highlighted during this year's Yushan Forum, where Vice President Lai Ching-te articulated the three principal priorities that would shape Taiwan's external cooperation in the post-pandemic world — recovering from the pandemic, restoring the economy, and safeguarding democracy. These goals are not only in sync with global priorities but also complement the objectives set forth in Taiwan's New Southbound Policy (NSP), launched in 2016 to bring Asia closer to Taiwan and vice-versa. The NSP is aimed to be a pivotal tool to engage like-minded democracies in the region.

Focusing on recovery (post-pandemic), revival (economy), and safeguarding (democracy) may help find a sustainable way in establishing a development-oriented regional engagement framework. The post-pandemic world would be more invested in some of these areas — for example, health diplomacy and collaboration in the medical sector, climate change mitigation, and developing sustainable and resilient supply chains. Taiwan is already proving its efficacy as a viable platform for the semiconductor industry. The US and its friends in the region, particularly India, Japan and Australia, have been proactively exploring possibilities of creating resilient supply chain mechanisms. With its technological knowhow, and shared interests and concerns, Taiwan fits perfectly in this agenda.

*[Read more](#)*

# When US-Indonesia Maritime Cooperation Meets India's Indo-Pacific Ocean Initiatives, Democracy is the Key, Maritime is the Framework

January 13, 2022

- Dr. Alan H. Yang, Executive Director, Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken traveled to Jakarta in the middle of December 2021 on a 48-hour visit for the purpose of enhancing U.S.-Indonesia collaboration and strategizing over President Biden's policy aims for the Indo-Pacific. This article argues that Blinken's visit to Indonesia had three strategic meanings.

First, democracy has indeed become the keyword for the United States to actively work with Southeast Asia and strengthen its ties with the Indo-Pacific region. With common challenges ahead, democracies with shared values need to work together and support each other to jointly cope with common crises in the Indo-Pacific region.

Second, regarding the challenges, much attention has been paid to the Covid-19 pandemic; moreover, as the United States is now experiencing a surge in the omicron variant, it is estimated that the key issue for Blinken's visit may center on pandemic governance collaboration. However, his remarks showed a wider range of concerns for President Biden, not merely on pandemic issues. Blinken's remarks on President Biden's Indo-Pacific policy tack the threats to human rights, climate emergency as well as the Covid-19 pandemic crises.

Third, of course, the concrete mission of this trip was to express support for Indonesia for its G20 chairmanship and to reiterate U.S. commitment to ASEAN's centrality. It echoes the existing U.S. position in adhering to the rules-based international order and, to a certain extent, addressing its importance to the geopolitical and geoeconomic order in the Indo-Pacific region. U.S. engagement and commitment to ASEAN centrality call on all stakeholders to respect ASEAN as the architecture of regional cooperation so that the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery framework may be the highlight for the enhanced collaboration in the Indo-Pacific region.

Finally, it is worth noting that the United States and Indonesia agreed to build a 2+2 dialogue mechanism to strengthen exchanges and discussions between senior defense and foreign officials. Moreover, the United States and Indonesia signed an MOU on maritime cooperation. The two countries will strengthen cooperation in maritime security, marine resources, conservation, fisheries and freedom of navigation to 2026.

The abovementioned areas are also of strategic interest to another Asian democracy, India. New Delhi has been actively implementing Prime Minister Modi's Act East Policy through the seven pillars of the Indo-Pacific Ocean Initiative (IPOI). As the U.S.-Indonesia maritime cooperation and India's Indo-Pacific Ocean Initiative continue to progress, Blinken's visit strongly showed that democracy is the key, while maritime is the framework, to the strategic dynamics to the future of the Indo-Pacific region.

[Read more](#)

*Center for Austronesian Culture, National Taitung University*

## **[Call for Registration] Cultural Ecological Guided Tour of Bunun's Stone Slab House**

*January 10, 2022*

**T**he Center for Austronesian Culture at National Taitung University will be organizing a cultural-ecological guided tour of Bunun's stone slab house, exploring the living history and wisdom of the Bunun people. The participants will be walking along the Wa-la-mi trail, which embodies the enriched history of the Bunun people. The registration will be open until January 24 and successful registration will be notified by email.

*Read more in Chinese*

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## **NEW SOUTHBOUND POLICY NEWS**

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*Taipei Times*

## **Taiwan Eyeing Medical Field in Southeast Asia**

*January 1, 2022*

**T**aiwan is to work with Medical Excellence Japan to explore market opportunities in Southeast Asia, as a part of its effort to fortify ties with New Southbound Policy countries, the Cabinet's Office of Trade Negotiations said yesterday.

The government in October last year established Medical Excellence Taiwan, which is this year to work with its Japanese counterpart to explore the medical care market in Southeast Asia, the office said.

More than 110,000 visitors from the countries sought medical help in Taiwan during the first 10 months of last year, which accounted for nearly half of the nation's total international medical services, it said.

NRICM101, a Chinese medicine-based herbal formula developed by Taiwanese researchers to treat symptoms of COVID-19, has been sold in the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and other countries, it added.

Taiwan also donated oxygen concentrators, medical masks and personal protective equipment to India, Indonesia and Vietnam, it said.

The government and Taiwanese insurers in Vietnam convinced Hanoi to launch an

international medical insurance program, which eases the burden of Vietnamese seeking treatment in Taiwan, the office said.

[Read more](#)

*AmCham Taiwan*

## New Southbound Policy Offers New Prospects for 2022

*December 27, 2021*

**F**ive years after its implementation, the Tsai government's flagship policy initiative aimed at boosting engagement with South and Southeast Asian countries has delivered some encouraging economic results. But observers say that to fulfill the policy's goal of developing more comprehensive relations, a greater focus on people-to-people ties is needed.

Taiwan's Executive Yuan reported this September that overall trade between Taiwan and the 18 countries targeted under its New Southbound Policy (NSP) reached US\$68.4 billion in the first half of 2021, a 32.14% increase from the same period last year. Trade in agricultural goods also experienced significant growth of 12.3%, which included a 31.7% rise in Taiwanese exports of fertilizer, pesticides, and farm machinery and equipment to the NSP countries.

In addition, approved or planned investment by Taiwanese businesses in NSP markets saw major increases between January and June this year. Sixty projects totaling US\$2.24 billion were applied for or given the green light during that time, a year-on-year increase of 58.8%. Government-approved investments from NSP countries in Taiwan came to US\$297 million; while a comparatively small amount, it represented a 57.5% increase from the first half of 2020.

For Taiwan and the Tsai Ing-wen administration, whose stated purpose for the NSP was in part to reduce economic overreliance on a single market, China, these numbers appear to indicate that the policy has been a smashing success. Of note is that the impressive growth in trade and investment has occurred despite a global pandemic that continues to impede economic recovery around the world.

[Read more](#)

## REGIONAL HEADLINES

*Nikkei Asia*

**Cambodia  
Shelves ASEAN  
Meeting, as  
Myanmar Issue**

*Aljazeera*

**Omicron Surge  
Threatens  
Australia's  
Economic**

*Deutsche Welle*

**India: COVID  
Outbreaks  
Among Medics  
Threaten to**

## Divides Members

January 12, 2022

Cambodia said on Wednesday it had postponed a meeting of foreign ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) scheduled for next week, because some ministers had expressed "difficulties" in attending.

The meeting was the first under Cambodia's chairmanship of the 10-member bloc, which comes amid divisions on how to deal with the military that seized power in Myanmar last year and has led a bloody crackdown on thousands of its opponents.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen met Myanmar's military ruler Min Aung Hlaing last week, the first such visit by a head of government, sparking concern that it could undermine international efforts to isolate the junta.

"The postponement is because many ASEAN ministers are having difficulties to travel to join," Cambodia foreign ministry spokesperson Koy Kuong told reporters, without elaborating.

Under Brunei's chairmanship, ASEAN late last year took the

## Recovery

January 12, 2022

Australia's Omicron surge is leading to staff shortages that have disrupted supply chains and hampered the economy's recovery.

Australian businesses are grappling with the growing toll of workers out sick or ordered to isolate for being close contacts. But the virus is also scaring customers away from airlines, entertainment and hospitality sectors, already battered by several lockdowns over the past two years.

"Essentially [small businesses] are in a lockdown ... there is little support out there to help them keep their doors open," Alexi Boyd, head of the Council of Small Business Organisations, told the broadcaster ABC on Wednesday.

Australia's daily infections on Wednesday lingered near records with about 100,000 cases reported so far. Forty-two new deaths were registered, with New South Wales reporting its worst day of the pandemic with 21 deaths, although seven of those were fatalities dating back as far as September that were added to the toll following coronial inquests.

## Derail Health System

January 11, 2022

India has seen an exponential rise in coronavirus cases over the past week, recording over 100,000 cases daily.

The South Asian country on Tuesday reported 168,063 new COVID cases with 277 deaths, and a daily positivity rate of 10.64 %.

Infection among health care workers has been particularly high in cities, increasing the burden on existing medics who have to work overtime. Hospitals have also been forced to curtail routine clinics and surgeries.

Health authorities warn that while a steady number of medics has been testing positive for a while, they began seeing a higher number of infections in the last week of December.

"Frontline workers are bound to have more infections as we are in the middle of a wave driven by a highly transmissible variant," Shashank Joshi, a member of India's COVID-19 task force, told reporters last week, referring to the omicron variant.

"It is important for hospitals to wait for a negative RT-PCR test before calling the doctors

unprecedented step of sidelining Min Aung Hlaing from its annual leaders' summit over his failure to honor commitments he made toward ending violence and starting a dialogue process.

The exclusion angered the junta, which said outside powers had pressured ASEAN to break its own code of consensus and non-interference.

[Read more](#)

Labour shortages and caution about being in public places have stifled household spending, Australia and New Zealand Banking Group said in a research note, with spending in early January resembling lockdown conditions in Sydney and Melbourne, Australia's largest cities.

[Read more](#)

back on duty."

Nearly 800 health care workers from Delhi's six major hospitals are currently unable to work after contracting COVID-19.

In Mumbai, major hospitals like King Edward Memorial, Lokmanya Tilak Medical Hospital and St. George's Hospital are reporting staff shortages between 5% and 30%, with growing number of doctors and nurses infected with the virus.

[Read more](#)

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