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TAEF UPDATES

Regional Collaboration between Taiwan and Southeast Asia



May 20, 2021

The exacerbating global pandemic has not only shattered medical, political, and economic stability, but also disrupted art and cultural industry.

With an aim to examine how cultural exchange has been restricted by the pandemic, Mekong Cultural Hub and Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation has partnered with

Taiwan's Ministry of Culture, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in the US, Japan Foundation and Asia Arts Management in Japan, to hold an online roundtable dialogue "The Future of Art and Social Action in Post-Pandemic Asia" on May 20.

With more than one hundred participants, the dialogue revealed the challenges, prospects, and resilient basis of art and cultural development in Asia during and beyond the pandemic era.

[Read more](#)

Ms. Ivy Kwek at TAEF



May 10, 2021

TAEF had the pleasure to receive Ms. Ivy Kwek from Malaysia. Ms. Kwek is currently a visiting scholar at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies of National Chengchi University in Taiwan.

In Malaysia, she is the research director at [Research For Social Advancement \(REFSA\)](#). Her research areas include global migrant workers, climate change, politics in Southeast Asia. Ivy worked previously for the United Nations as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross.

With our executive director Dr. Alan H. Yang, Ms. Kwek discussed Taiwan's New Southbound Policy and possible co-working projects, such as a network-building among academics specialized in public health and regional development as well as publications on policy analysis.

At TAEF's upcoming event - the SEASAT Youth Camp, Ivy is going to share her observations on social movement, relations between political parties, and civil society.

TAEF COMMENTARIES

Taipei Times

Taiwan can help; so should India

May 15, 2021

- Sana Hashmi, visiting fellow of the Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation

“No country is safe from COVID-19 until every country is safe, but despite this, Taiwan is excluded.”

The 74th World Health Assembly (WHA) is to take place from May 24 to June 1. This meeting is crucial, as several countries are witnessing a surge in COVID-19 cases. Some Asian countries that successfully kept the virus at bay are once again facing the threat of an outbreak. The deadly second wave ravaging India is a reminder that this pandemic is far from over and complacency should have no place in any countries' COVID-19 response. Countries are faltering while dealing with the pandemic, and in such a grim situation, what is most important is to work toward finding a collective solution.

Unfortunately, despite its impeccable COVID-19 response, Taiwan has been unfairly excluded from the WHA and other high-level discussions. In the past year, Taiwan has demonstrated that it is essential to engage with it, and health cooperation should be an important component in the Indo-Pacific region with Taiwan at its core.

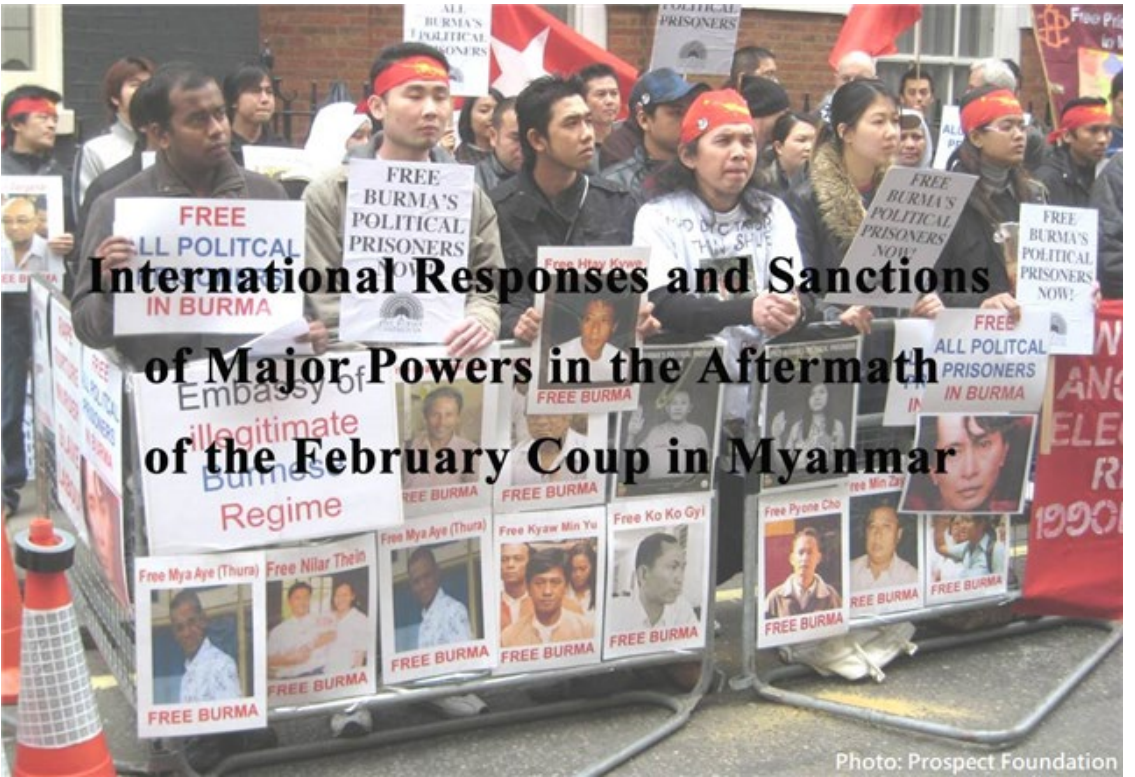
Taiwan's inclusion at the WHA would not magically make COVID-19 go away, but it would expedite a collective response to the pandemic and allow countries to learn from its best practices.

Read more

CONSORTIUM UPDATES

Prospects & Perspectives, Prospect Foundation

International Responses and Sanctions of Major Powers in the Aftermath of the February Coup in Myanmar



May 18, 2021

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

In a swiftly executed coup on February 2, 2021, the Myanmar military took into custody the country's President, Win Myint, State Counsellor, Aung San Suu Kyi, and a large number of Parliament members.

Political power was simultaneously taken over directly from the democratically elected government by way of the immediate formation of a National Administration Committee with army general Min Aung Hlaing at its head. The coup has been generally seen as a counterstrike arising out of the military's dissatisfaction with the results of the previous year's election, as well as being a devastating set-back for the country's 10-year old fledgling democracy.

Since the February coup, Myanmar citizens have taken to the streets many times to protest and demonstrate for democracy in the nation's major cities, including Mandalay, Yangon, and their nearby special economic zones. Many outraged protestors in mass demonstrations have gathered in front of the Chinese embassy as well as Chinese enterprises and factories.

Regardless, the military, firmly in control of the reins of power, has turned a deaf ear to citizen demands, and even responded in brutally repressive ways. Recently, this included violent crackdowns on the country's Armed Forces Day that claimed the lives

of 50 demonstrators. In fact, since February, suppression of demonstrations has resulted in more than 700 fatalities, and led to more than 2000 arrests.

[Read more](#)

NEW SOUTHBOUND POLICY NEWS

Taipei Times

Taipei to offer testing to migrants without papers

May 15, 2021

Migrant workers without valid residency documents would not be punished or deported if they take rapid COVID-19 tests at four testing sites soon to be set up in the capital, Taipei Mayor Ko Wen-je (柯文哲) told a news briefing yesterday.

The new measure is to encourage unlicensed migrant workers to get tested at a time when Taipei has been affected by COVID-19 cluster infections, especially in Wanhua District (萬華), Ko said.

Despite describing the measure as an “amnesty,” Ko did not say what would happen to undocumented migrant workers after testing, for example whether it would result in any changes to their status in Taiwan.

There are about 50,000 undocumented migrant workers in Taiwan, Ko said, adding that the initiative is aimed at closing a loophole in the nation’s disease prevention framework.

[Read more](#)

REGIONAL HEADLINES

Reuters

Shangri-La Dialogue summit in Singapore canceled due to pandemic

Reuters

PetroChina ships jet fuel to junta-ruled Myanmar, data shows

The Japan Times

Japan and Australia affirm security ties over China's assertiveness

May 20, 2021

The Shangri-La Dialogue Asian security summit that was due to be held in Singapore next month has been canceled, the organisers said on Thursday, citing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, including on the host country.

This year's event, which is arranged by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), was scheduled to take place from June 4–5. The forum has typically attracted top level military officials, diplomats and weapons makers from around the globe since its launch in 2002

A wide range of defence ministers, senior officials, corporate leaders and influential strategists from Asia, North America, the Middle East and Europe had confirmed their attendance.

Attendees of the 2019 event included China's Defence Minister Wei Fenghe and then-acting U.S. Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan.

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin was to attend the summit this year.

[Read more](#)

May 20, 2021

PetroChina International Singapore Pte Ltd sold a cargo of jet fuel into Myanmar in April, according to government import data reviewed by Reuters, the first such shipment since before the military seized power in a coup in February.

Industry sources say suppliers have been particularly wary of selling jet fuel because it could be used in planes to bomb ethnic armed groups that have been supporting anti-junta protesters, as well as in civilian airliners.

The shipment could raise new questions over China's role in Myanmar at a time when it has been accused by the junta's opponents of backing coup leader Min Aung Hlaing - an accusation rejected by Beijing. China's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Western nations including the United States and Britain have condemned the junta for killing hundreds of civilians and have applied limited sanctions, but there are currently no international measures outlawing oil product shipments.

[Read more](#)

May 19, 2021


The defense ministers of Japan and Australia affirmed their commitment Wednesday to oppose unilateral attempts to change the status quo in the East and South China seas through closer ties amid Beijing's increasing assertiveness in the region, the Japanese Defense Ministry said.

Defense Minister Nobuo Kishi and his counterpart, Peter Dutton, also "strongly condemned" North Korea's test-firing in March of two ballistic missiles into the Sea of Japan in its first such launch in a year in violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions, according to the ministry.

The drill was conducted as Tokyo is seeking to deepen defense cooperation beyond the United States, its long-standing security ally, at a time when Beijing's growing military presence in the East and South China seas poses concerns for surrounding countries. Such concerns grew strong particularly after China enacted a new maritime security law in February to enable its coastguard ships to fire on foreign vessels in waters Beijing deems its territory.

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