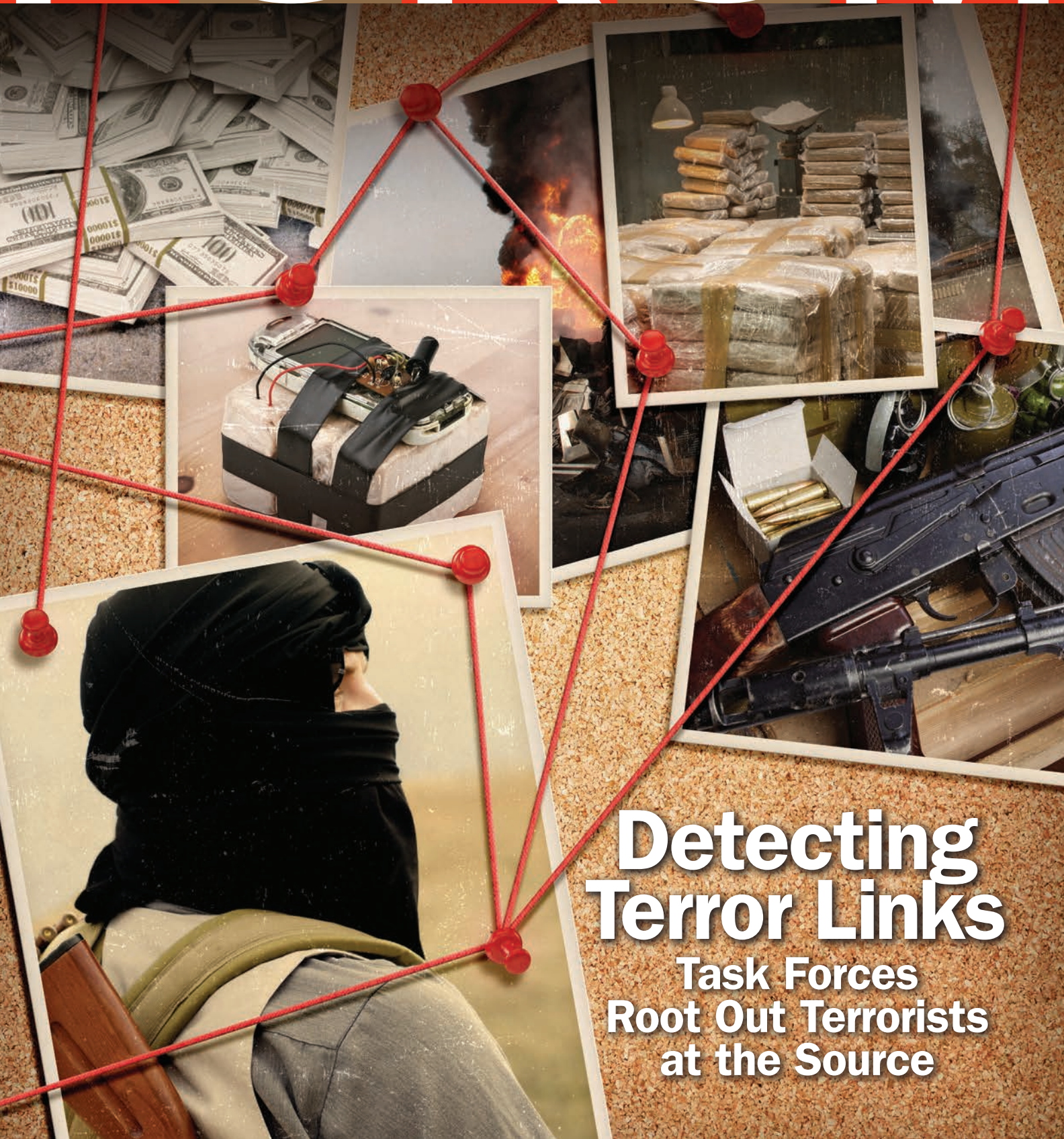


# FORUM



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Root Out Terrorists  
at the Source

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### ABOUT THE COVER:

This photo illustration  
conveys the complexity  
of combating the ever-  
changing terrorist threat  
in the Indo-Pacific.

FORUM ILLUSTRATION



Dear Readers,

Welcome to *Indo-Pacific Defense FORUM's* third-quarter edition for 2018 on countering terror threats.

Given the number and lethality of acts of terrorism worldwide, Indo-Pacific militaries and security organizations must continue to enhance their counterterrorism capabilities. Collaborative, multilateral approaches remain critical to recognize, prepare for, suppress, and respond to these continuously evolving threats.

In this issue, we share insights on recent successes in combating violent extremists, from the thwarted attempt to establish an Islamic state in the Philippines, to India's adoption of elements of Singapore's winning counterterrorism model, to suppression of returning foreign fighters in Malaysia. *FORUM's* examination not only highlights some of the leading strategies and tactics used across the region but also probes some of the complex, underlying conditions that contribute to the proliferation of extremist beliefs and related attacks.

Lt. Col. Dr. Zulkarnain Haron of the Malaysian Armed Forces shares the significant lessons learned during the siege and retaking of Marawi. He analyzes how militant groups tied to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) took root in parts of the Philippines and how the Armed Forces of the Philippines suppressed the spread of terrorism in the Indo-Pacific.

Dr. Miemie Winn Byrd, a professor at the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, reviews the latest work by such scholars as French economist Thomas Piketty on how rising socio-economic inequality plays a role in radicalization. Another feature examines the plight of the Rohingya refugees from Burma. Some political leaders recently raised concern that extremist groups, such as ISIS, could prey upon great numbers of stressed and displaced people in Southeast Asia.

Also in this issue, Thomas Koruth Samuel of the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism in Malaysia assesses how advances in technology, such as social media and the internet, have enabled terrorist groups to recruit youths who have been central to extremists' playbooks.

Indo-Pacific nations can draw lessons from Marawi and each other's successes to ensure history does not repeat itself, and terrorism, in any of its forms, does not take root in other parts of the region. Multilateral cooperation among allies and partner nations remains key for protecting citizens from this ever-changing threat.

I hope you find this edition insightful and thought-provoking, and I welcome your comments. Please contact the *FORUM* staff at [ipdf@ipdefenseforum.com](mailto:ipdf@ipdefenseforum.com) with your perspectives.

All the best,

P. S. DAVIDSON  
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## IPD FORUM

### Countering Terror Threats

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# Join the Discussion

We want to hear from YOU!

*Indo-Pacific Defense FORUM* caters to military and security personnel in the Indo-Pacific region. A product of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, the quarterly magazine provides high-quality, in-depth content on topics that impact security efforts across the region — from counterterrorism to international cooperation and natural disasters.

*FORUM* provokes thoughtful discussions and encourages a healthy exchange of ideas. Submit articles, pictures, topics for discussion or other comments to us **ONLINE** or at:

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# FORUM

*Exploring the issues that impact so many lives*



INDONESIA

## — RECORD CRYSTAL METH — BUST

**I**ndonesia seized a record 1.6 metric tons of crystal methamphetamine from a ship off the northern island of Batam in February 2018, a narcotics official said. It was the second major drug bust that month.

President Joko Widodo's government has cracked down on trafficking to contain soaring consumption of crystal meth and other narcotics. Indonesia has among the world's strictest anti-narcotics laws, and drug trafficking is punishable by death.

"It's an estimated 1.6 tons, and yes, this is a record seizure for us," said a spokesman for the national narcotics agency, known as Sulistandriatmoko, adding that details of its origin and destination were still under investigation.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimates that Southeast Asia's trade in methamphetamines and heroin was worth U.S. \$31 billion in 2013.

Earlier in February 2018, Indonesian authorities confiscated just over 1 ton of crystal meth, known locally as shabu-shabu, also in Batam, a small industrial hub a short ferry ride from Singapore.

Budi Waseso, head of the anti-narcotics agency, said authorities had acted on a tip from Chinese and Thai authorities and that the shipment had come from Burma in a vessel disguised as a fishing boat.

"It had been to Australia ... and in and out of Indonesian waters several times. This means this ship had repeatedly entered Indonesia carrying large quantities of narcotics," Waseso said. Reuters

## JAPAN

## HYDROGEN FUELING STATIONS TO NEARLY DOUBLE BY 2022

An alliance of 11 Japanese companies, including automakers and energy firms, has pledged to build 80 fueling stations for hydrogen fuel cell vehicles by 2022 to help accelerate acceptance of the next-generation fuel technology.

Japan H2 Mobility LLC, whose backers include Toyota Motor Corp. and JXTG Nippon Oil & Energy, said in early March 2018 it would oversee the construction and operation of the new fueling stations, nearly doubling the present number of 90 stations.

As countries seek low-emissions energy sources to power vehicles, homes and industry, Japan is betting heavily on becoming a "hydrogen society" despite the high costs and technical difficulties of a process that creates electricity from a chemical reaction of fuel and oxygen.



JXTG Nippon Oil Senior Vice President Yutaka Kuwahara said in February 2018 that a lack of users and high costs to build and operate fueling stations had slowed construction in Japan, delaying a previous government target to build 100 stations by March 2016.

Japan currently has about 90 stations, with at least 40 operated by JXTG Nippon Oil, and another 10 are in the planning or construction stage.

"We must lower costs, which will remove many of the bottlenecks to developing more stations," he told reporters at a briefing. Reuters



ASIA

# BIKE-SHARING

takes  
**off**

**M**illions of consumers in Beijing, Taipei, Singapore and cities across Asia are renting bikes and leaving their cars at home. They are renting bikes via phone apps to cover the last few kilometers of journeys, leaving cars and motorcycles at home and forgoing taxis.

The dramatic increase in cyclists has decreased demand for gasoline in China, and other countries in the region are expecting greater changes in energy consumption as the programs grow.

The two-year bike-share boom has put more than 16 million bikes in China alone, according to its Ministry of Transport. More than 100 million riders already are registered, which is expected to cause car use and gasoline demand growth to stagnate by 2025.

Analysts can't keep up with bike numbers, let alone estimate how much gasoline consumption growth has dropped due to the rapid rise in

bike-sharing. It is clear from industry estimates, government reports and a Reuters survey that bike services are resulting in fewer trips by motor vehicles.

"Bike-sharing has been crazy ... The general belief is that [it] boosts the utilization of public transport as shared bikes help to complete the journey," said Harry Liu, a consultant with IHS Markit.

Even before the number of bike-share units began growing, analysts had already been saying greater fuel efficiency in automobiles and the rising use of electric cars meant gasoline's big growth story was over.

In January 2018, Chinese bike-sharing start-up Mobike introduced its services in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and Bangkok, Thailand, as well as in Washington, D.C.

Mobike, which launched in April 2016, and China-owned rival Ofo have attracted combined funding of more than U.S. \$2 billion from venture capital and private equity firms that include Temasek Holdings, Tencent Holdings,

DST Global and Ant Financial.

Taiwan, where the government backs a bike-sharing program, is aiming to have bikes account for a 12 percent share in trips to work by 2020, up from about 5 percent now.

The Taipei city government is expanding bike-sharing program Youbike — which uses docking stations — to have a bike station within a 10-minute walk of every citizen.

Singapore-owned Obike and U.S.-based VBikes — both free-range systems — are also operating in Taiwan.

"Once bike-sharing pushes it really to the limit, to the extent to impact the way people think of mobility, then it could be disruptive," Liu said.

Still, mismanagement of bike numbers and misuse of some bicycles may attract legislation that could curb their use. New shared bikes were recently banned in some areas in the Chinese cities of Wuhan, Shanghai and Guangzhou, because of bicycles being discarded in public spaces. Reuters



Indonesia adds *600 officers* to its  
**COUNTERTERROR FORCE**

**I**ndonesia will double the size of its counterterrorism force ahead of major international events taking place in the country in 2018, National Police Chief Gen. Tito Karnavian said in late December 2017. A two-star police general will head the force instead of a one-star general, Tito said.

"I have also asked for the force numbers to be doubled. We're adding about 600 personnel, so that the total will become 1,300," he said.

The former head of the elite police unit said the change was due to an assessment of the 2018 threat level when Indonesia hosts two major international events.



**Indonesian counterterrorism police cordon off a road to search a house in Surabaya, East Java province, on June 19, 2017, after the arrest of a man suspected of links with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria.**

GETTY IMAGES

**LEFT: Gen. Gatot Nurmantyo, then commander of Indonesia's National Armed Forces, left, talks with National Police Chief Gen. Tito Karnavian during a Heroes Day event at Kalibata Hero Cemetery in Jakarta, Indonesia, in November 2017.**

REUTERS

The events are the Asian Games, which will take place in Jakarta, the Sumatran city of Palembang and various parts of West Java, with 1,500 people from 45 nations participating; and annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) in Bali, with 189 nations taking part.

The participation of North Korea and Burma in the Asian Games in August and September 2018 and of Israel and the United States in the IMF and WB meetings in October make both events potential targets for radical groups and terrorists, Tito said.

Densus 88, part of Indonesia's police force, in 2017 apprehended 172 suspected terrorists, of whom 16 were shot dead during arrest attempts, officials said.

The number of suspects apprehended had increased to 163 in 2016 from 73 in 2015. Of the suspects arrested in 2017, 76 were on trial at the start of 2018, and 10 had been convicted.

"The number of arrests is more due to the

proactive steps undertaken by the police, more specifically Densus 88, who are working harder to detect, monitor and take action against terror networks," Tito said.

He said the number of police killed in terror acts had increased during the past three years. Four police were killed and 14 wounded on the job in 2017, Tito said. In 2016, the elite force suffered one fatality, and 11 were wounded. One officer was killed and two injured in 2015.

"I have instructed that there be more undercover work, early prevention and action before incidents occur. For this, we need stronger detection capacity," he said.

The higher rank of the Densus 88 commander suggests an expansion of tasks and a larger budget for the force, according to counterterrorism expert Rakyana Adibrata.

"But keep in mind, training a 100 percent professional and prepared counterterrorism officer is very time consuming, whereas training a terrorist is much faster," he said. "Densus will be racing against time."

"From the point of view of resources, ISIS [Islamic State of Iraq and Syria] is not like Jemaah Islamiyah, which aimed for a lot of casualties," Rakyana said, comparing ISIS with the al-Qaida affiliate that killed 202 people in the 2002 nightclub bombings in Bali.

"For them, it's enough to mount attacks with a simple kitchen knife," he said of ISIS.

Rakyana agreed with the police chief's analysis that the international events in Indonesia in 2018 could be targeted by terrorists.

"There are high expectations from perpetrators who want to use terrorism as a tool to convey political messages," he said.

According to statistics from Indonesia's Foreign Ministry, 227 Indonesians were arrested abroad in 2017, including in Turkey, Malaysia, Syria and South Korea. The highest number of arrests took place in Turkey with 195 people, followed by Syria with 28.

The ministry added that 213 Indonesians, including 79 women and 78 children, were deported from Turkey between January 1, 2017, and October 20, 2017. That number was three times greater than the 60 deportees from Turkey in 2016.

Foreign Ministry official Lalu Muhammad Iqbal said most of the Indonesians were deported due to immigration violations, such as using an incorrect visa, overstaying a visa or being unable to produce a passport.

"Nevertheless, Turkish authorities indicated their suspicion that these individuals were in Turkey in order to cross into Syria and join ISIS or other groups of that nature, such as Jabhat al-Nusrah, in Syria," he said.



A Philippine Marine takes his position during a mock assault as part of training with Australian Defense Forces at the Gregorio Lim Marine Base, southwest of Manila, Philippines. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

# *Fighting for* **HOME**

## COMBATING TERRORISM IMPARTS LESSONS TO THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES

LT. COL. DR. ZULKARNAIN HARON

**T**he security environment has become more challenging as the globalized world confronts myriad threats, foremost of which is terrorism — a constantly evolving threat. Terrorists learn to adapt to countermeasures, which are in place to prevent terror attacks and exploit advances in technology. Terrorists are becoming more lethal as they seek to diversify their tactics and targets, exhibiting greater flexibility and technical skill. They remain motivated mainly by local issues, but global forces and developments are amplifying their resentment and operational reach.

In view of these trends, cooperation in combating terrorism has never been more exigent. No country can confront the terrorist threat on its own, so multilateral cooperation is necessary. The United Nations and other regional bodies, as well as individual countries, have spearheaded efforts toward this end. There has been no shortage of ideas, but practical multilateral undertakings to combat terrorism remain in short supply. This is a reality that must be overcome to effectively manage and ultimately devastate the terrorist threat.

Terrorism and other transnational issues have no known boundaries, requiring nations to strengthen intelligence cooperation through our shared experiences in the interest of the Indo-Pacific's long-

term peace and stability.

Against this backdrop, the Philippines has learned lessons on terrorism and counterterrorism endeavors worth sharing.

### TERRORIST THREAT IN THE PHILIPPINES

Terrorism in the Philippines was born of ideas formed by a confluence of socio-cultural, economic and political factors that bred grievances and the influence of political ideologies, particularly those espoused by al-Qaida and Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and, more recently, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, which is also known as Daesh. Terrorist groups are the offshoot of secessionist movements that spawned breakaway organizations that shunned peace agreements with the government and adopted a hard-line stance in pursuit of their aspiration to violently overthrow the secular government and establish an Islamic state separate from the Republic of the Philippines and governed by Shariah, or Islamic law.



**A Soldier looks through a military vehicle's windshield cracked with bullet holes as his unit prepares to leave the battle against Islamic State-inspired militants in the southern Philippines.** GETTY IMAGES

Experience in the Afghan War in the 1980s, which drew Islamic fighters from different countries, as well as educational and employment opportunities abroad under radical preachers, benefactors and employers facilitated interaction between and among radical and terrorist groups and personalities. These imbued a sense of brotherhood paving the way for them to lend support to one another.

Of late, the traditional and formative influence of al-Qaida and JI to local terror groups has been eclipsed by Daesh. Bolstered by its initial battlefield successes, robust propaganda machinery, online recruitment through social media and, most important, the appeal of the Daesh narrative about the creation of an Islamic community and the apocalyptic message of finally bringing to an end all enemies of Islam, thousands of foreign terrorist fighters traveled to Syria and Iraq to join Daesh — including about 700 to 1,000 from Southeast Asia.

Since the proclamation of its self-styled caliphate in the Middle East in June 2014, the Daesh network grew, with various radical groups worldwide pledging allegiance to it. Daesh acknowledged and formally linked with some of these groups with the formation of *wilayats*, or provinces.

In the Philippines, Basilan-based Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) subleader Isnilon Hapilon and his followers pledged allegiance to Daesh Caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in July 2014. Aside from Hapilon's group, other radical organizations and personalities in the Philippines also expressed their support for Daesh.

## FOREIGN TERRORISTS

The presence of foreign terrorists in the Philippines is not a new phenomenon. However, by the mid-2000s, following the regional crackdown on JI, counterterrorism efforts by the government and the resumption of peace negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the presence of foreign terrorist fighters in the country started to wane. Most of the terrorist training camps in Mindanao have been closed, and several key foreign terrorist personalities were killed there or in their home countries.

However, developments following the emergence of Daesh in 2014 encouraged a new breed of foreign terrorists to travel to Mindanao and foster ties with local terror groups in solidarity with Daesh. There are currently seven identified foreign terrorist groups in the Philippines, and there are several others who are being monitored.

Foreign terrorists influence the direction of local terror groups toward achieving Daesh's vision of a Southeast Asian territory and provide them the opportunity to obtain funding from foreign terrorist organizations. They finance the construction of mosques and schools (madrasahs) in Muslim communities as fronts to extend their stay in the country, eventually as a venue for radicalization and indoctrination efforts and as cover for terror-related efforts.

Foreign terrorists propagate violent extremist teachings and facilitate the transfer of knowledge, such



Philippine Marines fire mortar rounds toward enemy positions in Marawi, southern Philippines. GETTY IMAGES

as making explosive devices and marksmanship training. More important, foreign terrorists helped unify local terrorist groups and their linkage with Daesh in the Middle East through the Katibah Nusantara, which is a grouping of Southeast Asians based in Syria.

Katibah Nusantara is a Southeast Asian military unit within Daesh, composed of Malay-speaking individuals, mostly from Indonesia and Malaysia, but also from the Philippines and Singapore. They received notoriety for being the perpetrators of the 2016 Jakarta attacks. It is made up of about 30 small groups.

A notable foreign terrorist in the Philippines is Dr. Mahmud bin Ahmad, a Malaysian and Daesh's chief recruiter. He is responsible for training and sending militants from Southeast Asia to join Daesh in Syria and Iraq. Mahmud plans to establish an official Daesh faction in Southeast Asia by uniting terror cells from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. Consequently, Mahmud established the Katibah al-Muhajir (Battalion of Migrants) in the Philippines, composed mostly of Indonesians and Malaysians who were not able to join Daesh in the Middle East.

Generally, these foreign terrorist fighters use entry and exit routes in the country's southern backdoor, in connivance with established local and foreign contacts. Other means are the conventional entry points, such as airports and seaports.

## MARAWI SIEGE

The Marawi siege was set to commence on the first day of Ramadan, which was May 26, 2017. The plan, which was styled from Daesh's occupation of Mosul in Iraq, entailed the conduct of simultaneous atrocities in various locations in Marawi, the only Islamic city in the country, and to undertake attacks in Christian communities in other cities. The perpetrators were hoping their political allies and the people of Marawi would support the takeover of the city. This, however, was pre-empted when an intelligence-led government operation raided the safehouse of Dawlah Islamiyah leaders, Isnilon Hapilon and the Maute brothers, Abdullah and Omarkhayam, in Marawi City on May 23, 2017.

The raid triggered a premature encounter between government forces and terrorists elements, most of whom had clandestinely infiltrated the city. To note, almost 700 armed elements, composed of Dawlah Islamiyah members, their relatives, other lawless elements and their supporters, attacked several establishments, took civilians as hostages and occupied key structures and areas in a portion of the city.

In the following weeks, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) operations neutralized several enemy strongholds, including snipers, enabling government forces to regain control of establishments previously occupied by the terrorists, culminating with President Rodrigo Duterte's declaration of victory in October 2017.

## A SIGNIFICANT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

The Marawi siege has become a significant learning experience, not only for the security forces but also for the government. In the five-month campaign to defeat the terrorists, security forces faced a new breed of terrorist fighters with different tactics. These terrorists made use of their knowledge of the battlefield to wage a protracted battle against government troops, particularly exploiting existing elements on the ground, such as vantage points, routes, fortified houses, networks of armed individuals and groups, the city's resources, and the sympathy and support of some residents, for a prolonged guerrilla war on an urban terrain. The conflict, which cost the lives of a hundred Soldiers and police, underscores the need to enhance Philippine security forces' capabilities, particularly in urban warfare, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and signals intelligence.

The Philippine government also realizes the deep religious fervor that these terrorists possess, possibly stemming from radical indoctrination. Their religious zealotry transcended the ethnic divide and united these disparate groups, which was seen as early as 2016 and culminated in the Marawi siege. The initial perception that these terrorists only seek to sow fear and instability and are motivated by the prospect of gaining financially but incapable of mounting a large-scale attack has changed, with the presence of highly motivated fighters capable of seizing governed territories, inciting deep concern from the local and international community. From obscurity, they raised themselves to global infamy.

Although military operations have produced substantial gains, terrorism cannot be defeated by military force alone. Military actions and airstrikes are exploited by terrorists, turning the carnage and casualties of the conflict into a compelling narrative that seeks to erode the legitimacy of government operations, influence disenfranchised and affected residents to support the terrorists and justify their violent undertaking.

Inadequate or ineffective laws allow the development of terrorist organizations and the spread of their violent ideology. From the flawed anti-terror legislation to border control, immigration and security laws, the government watched the shaping of the physical and psychological environment through radical Islamic institutions. Authorities paid particular attention to religious and educational entities and systems (Islamic scholarship and education abroad); overseas labor systems; technological infrastructures; political and electoral systems; and, ultimately, local governance. The attempt to take over Marawi City to claim territory, based on Daesh's strategy, attests to these incapacities.

The rapid increase in the support and manpower of terrorist groups is relative to the social, political and economic context in the areas where they are prominent. A significant number of Muslim Filipinos have been consistently exposed to violence and conflict. These, coupled with a history of oppression and the lack of



**Moro Islamic Liberation Front fighters and local police walk through a marsh on their way to the front line of battle against extremists in Maguindanao province, Philippines.** GETTY IMAGES

with the MILF, which remains an important barrier to the spread of violent extremism, heightened vigilance, increased capabilities and logistics against criminal and terrorist activities, and active cooperation and collaboration with our regional and international allies.

However, considering that no country is safe from the threat of terrorism and violent extremism, and given the challenges to the Philippines' counterterrorism efforts, nations must take multilateral cooperation even further by building counterterrorism capacities of governments. This is especially important in countering terrorism financing, immigration and border controls, crafting more effective laws to combat terrorism, mutual legal assistance and extradition. Such cooperation

opportunities to improve their condition, render people vulnerable to joining terrorist groups to escape poverty and deprivation, especially because terrorist groups often promise economic gains in exchange for affiliation and support.

Poor governance further contributes to the development of precursor organizations and would-be terrorists. Such is the case in some areas in the southern Philippines where the proliferation of violent and criminal acts, justified by the "culture of the gun," "rido" and "pintakasi," have already become part of their way of life. More often, local officials do not have sufficient capacity to govern effectively, facilitating the mutation of armed groups into terror organizations.

Another worrying trend could be the possible occurrence of sectarian clashes because the animosity between Christians and Muslims may be rekindled by the Marawi conflict. It is important, therefore, that a whole-of-society approach be employed to mitigate and even negate the impact of this conflict, especially on the victims, the internally displaced people and the relatives and communities of the deceased terrorists. This should serve as an important lesson from the country's long history of Muslim secessionist wars.

The security situation in the Philippines, particularly in Mindanao, remains generally manageable. The terror threat remains confined to certain areas brought about by the firm resolve of the Philippine government to devastate terrorists' capabilities and to effectively address these challenges by pursuing a workable peace

also boosts more vigilant monitoring of the recruitment of Daesh fighters through the Internet and social media platforms, and, counterradicalization and deradicalization.

## PHILIPPINE EFFORTS IN COMBATING TERRORISM

The Philippine government is implementing comprehensive security responses to address the threat of returning foreign fighters and terrorism. Its counterterrorism campaign is anchored on state policies and the country's anti-terror law, Republic Act 9372 or Human Security Act (HSA) of 2007, whose key provisions are being amended to add more teeth in effectively addressing the terror threat in the country. Through the HSA, a multiagency body known as the Anti-Terrorism Council (ATC) was created to implement the country's anti-terrorism policy. Acting as the coordinator in the proper execution of all directives of the council is the ATC-Program Management Center (PMC), which is seeking to improve interagency coordination in combating terrorism.

The ATC-PMC recently launched the National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, which will address the different drivers of violent extremism. To note, efforts along this line are being carried out on the local level, particularly in Mindanao, by promoting a culture of peace and nonviolence.

The government also adopts legislative and legal measures to address criminal activities perpetrated by

terrorist groups. These include Republic Act (RA) No. 10167, An Act to Further Strengthen the Anti-Money Laundering Law, and RA No. 10168, the Terrorist Financing Prevention and Suppression Act, which require banks and financial institutions to report transactions involving funds with possible links to terrorists and to freeze without delay the property or funds of designated terrorist individuals and entities.

Both the government and the AFP have remained steadfast in their policies of refusing to negotiate with terrorists or pay ransom. However, the kidnap for ransom (KFR) business is deeply ingrained in the economy of the triborder area with elements of military, law enforcement, local government and Moro National Liberation Front covertly working with KFR groups to keep the flow of funds coming.

The critical role of the AFP in counterterrorism centers on intelligence-driven, timely and precise

groups. Special community development projects were initiated in impoverished areas to address the people's vulnerability to terrorist recruitment. The AFP supports peace-building initiatives, interfaith dialogue, counterradicalization and deradicalization initiatives and helps fast track the delivery of basic services to gain the trust and acceptance of the populace and dismantle the terrorist support network, which is deemed crucial in further decimating the terrorists' strength and capability.

Moreover, the AFP promotes stronger bilateral, regional and international cooperation to enhance its capability in preventing, suppressing and eventually eliminating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. This is through cooperation in the sharing of information and intelligence, and, enhancing confidence and capacity-building mechanisms.

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*The Armed Forces of the Philippines promotes stronger bilateral, regional and international cooperation to enhance its capability in preventing, suppressing and eventually eliminating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.*

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military operations. In coordination with our police counterparts and other concerned agencies, the AFP has been employing all-source intelligence to identify, monitor and locate enemy targets and exploit the enemy's critical vulnerabilities. Augmenting the collection of intelligence on key terrorist personalities is the implementation of the rewards system aimed at providing informants the incentive to report the presence of these personalities in their localities.

Greater intelligence fusion under the ambit of the AFP has contributed to better security operations that continue to yield positive results, with the neutralization of key terrorist leaders, kidnapping for ransom planners and bombers. We have captured several enemy encampments, denying terrorists access to safe havens, and seized weapons and equipment, degrading their armed capability and logistical support.

To enhance efforts to counter terrorist financing, AFP intelligence also became a member of the interagency Joint Terrorism Financial Investigation Group.

In support to the government's whole-of-society approach, the AFP collaborates with government agencies in strengthening the Mindanao peace process to insulate Muslim communities from terror

AFP intelligence is strengthening cooperation on information-sharing on mutual security concerns through bilateral and multilateral intelligence exchange conferences and analyst-to-analyst exchanges with some of its Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) counterparts and non-ASEAN countries as well. A significant breakthrough was the launching of the Philippine-initiated ASEAN Military Analyst-to-Analyst Intelligence Exchange in 2011.

To improve its capability, the AFP jointly conducts exercises with its foreign military counterparts. It also receives technical support and training, particularly on urban warfare, from our foreign military counterparts.

Overall, the country's counterterrorism efforts follow the framework of the whole-of-society approach, whose primary goals are eradicating the causes of disaffection and disgruntlement which could be exploited by radical elements, uplifting the socio-economic conditions of the most vulnerable sector of the society and propagating the culture of understanding and peace. □

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This story was adapted from a presentation that Malaysian Armed Forces Lt. Col. Dr. Zulkarnain Haron delivered during the Asia-Pacific Intelligence Chiefs Conference in Wellington, New Zealand, in September 2017. It has been shortened and edited to fit FORUM's format.

# A D A P T I V E MEASURES

INDIA UPDATES ITS LAWS, MILITARY TRAINING AND GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES TO COMBAT EVOLVING TERROR THREATS FORUM STAFF

**W**hen it comes to rankings, moving up on a list of places most targeted by terrorists represents a distinction no country wants to claim.

Yet, India found itself in that predicament when the U.S. State Department released a report in July 2017 that showed India had ascended to the No. 3 spot — displacing Pakistan and landing behind Iraq and Afghanistan. Of the 11,072 terror attacks counted worldwide in 2016, 927 occurred in India, according to the report. That represented a 16 percent increase from 2015 figures.

The government of India, however, has not remained complacent about this trend.

“India is steadfastly committed to efforts to combat global terrorism and has consistently advocated in various international [forums] for a policy of zero tolerance on terrorism,” Minister of State for External Affairs Dr. V.K. Singh, a retired four-star general, who served as the 26th chief of army staff, said in July 2017.

Though fatalities were on the rise due to increased terrorist activity, India worked tirelessly to better equip its government, military and other authorities with laws, tools and trainings to reverse the trend.

The U.S. State Department noted that in 2016, India sought to improve the exchange of terrorism screening information and law enforcement cooperation in individual cases; cooperated with Bangladesh on procedures to improve the extradition of suspects involved in terrorism and organized crime; and banned radical cleric Zarik Naik’s Islamic Research Foundation as “an unlawful organization.”

Also in 2016, Prime Minister Narendra Modi demonetized the 500- and 1,000-rupee notes, delivering on his pre-election promise to tackle corruption and tax evasion. This action has the additional effect of driving black money out of the shadows and impacting terrorist activity and funding.

“The Indian government advanced

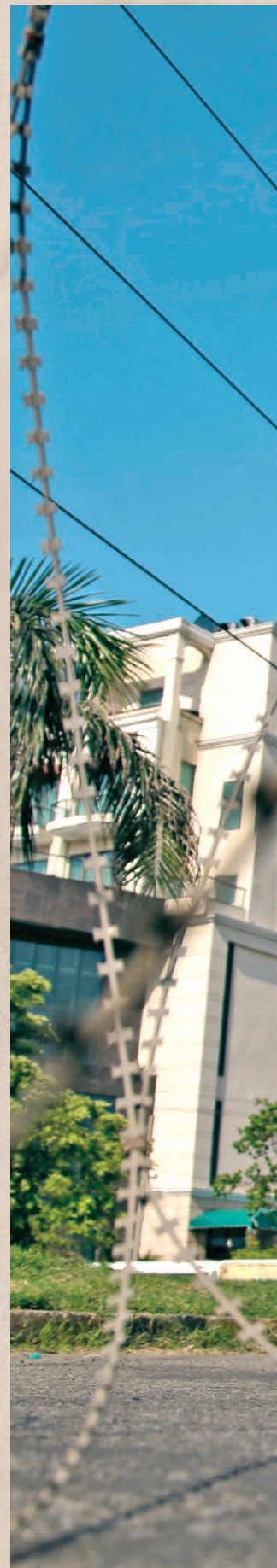
some countering violent extremism efforts, provided tacit support for civil society efforts to counter violent extremism, continued initiatives to provide ‘quality and modern education’ in madrassas, and maintained programs to rehabilitate and reintegrate former terrorists and insurgents into mainstream society,” the U.S. State Department report said. “These programs targeted disaffected sectors of Indian society that have been sources of violent insurgency.”

Indian government officials continue to raise concerns over the use of social media and the internet to recruit, radicalize and provoke interreligious tensions, the report said. In particular, officials have expressed concern about the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria’s (ISIS’) ability to recruit online, following incidents in which Indians were attracted to join or support the group. In January 2018, one Indian military official called for more internet restrictions to fight ISIS and other terrorist groups in the digital domain.

“Putting some checks and curbs on internet and social media that terrorist organizations always resort to” is necessary for safety and security, Indian Army Chief Gen. Bipin Rawat said, India.com reported. “In a democratic country, people won’t like it, but we have to make a call on whether we want safe and secure environment or [are] willing to accept curbs temporarily, so that terrorism can be dealt with.”

Terror groups have a militant and political front, Rawat said. Their soft power tactics must be met with countermessaging at every step and dissemination of their messages prohibited and retracted whenever possible.

To that end, social media giants Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Microsoft announced in June 2017 the formation of a global working group to combine their efforts to remove terrorist content from their platforms. Thus, the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT) was





An Indian Army Soldier stands guard in Panchkula, India.  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



established. Additional companies, such as Instagram, LinkedIn and Snapchat now participate.

“GIFCT’s knowledge-sharing work has grown quickly in large measure because companies recognize that in countering terrorism online we face many of the same challenges,” the consortium said in a December 2017 update. “Although our companies have been sharing best practices around counterterrorism for several years, in recent months GIFCT has provided a more formal structure to accelerate and strengthen this work.”

It continued, “We recognize that our work is far from done, but we are confident that we are heading in the right direction. We will continue to provide updates as we forge new partnerships and develop new technology in the face of this global challenge.”

Rawat noted the importance of such collaboration as today’s battlefield extends beyond a physical delineation.

“We should start preparing for the next kinds of warfare, which are cyber and information warfare,” Rawat said in January 2018, according to Pakistan’s *The News International* newspaper.

Home Affairs Minister Rajnath Singh echoed the need to adapt new tactics for combating evolving terror threats. In January 2018, he called for the creation of a special anti-terror cell to focus on lone-wolf actors and “do-it-yourself” terrorists.

The Home Ministry’s researchers have also begun a project to document reasons behind the radicalization of youth and ways to counter religious extremism in India, the Indian news site Firstpost reported in January 2018. Authorities described the program — called “Rad and Derad” — a “rare endeavor” to gain insight into radicalization and extremism.

## ADAPTING BEST PRACTICES

Indian officials wish to replicate Singapore’s multilayered and structured mechanism to counter the threat of radicalized youth and ISIS.

“For Indian conditions, among various counterradicalization programs being undertaken by different countries, the Singapore model, a combination of hard security measures and stringent laws along with community involvement, is best suited, and thus we are evolving a system to suit Indian situations,” an unnamed senior Ministry of Home Affairs official said in January 2018, according to multiple news reports.

Ministry officials want a standard operating procedure in place to deal with radical articles posted online. At the ministry’s request, the Intelligence Bureau prepared a three-level counseling system involving family, clerics and experts for deradicalizing affected youth and others, United News of India (UNI) reported in January 2018.

“All the units of the government apparatus and the entire Muslim community spectrum will be associated actively with the community for counseling the affected youths,” an unnamed intelligence source in the ministry said, according to UNI. “With a latest monitoring mechanism to keep an eye on the internet users who are active on different jihadi websites, a well-coordinated nationwide, round-the-clock, community-based and multilingual platform for disseminating suitably constructed counternarratives is being also worked out.”

The Singapore model also defines the role of the family, teachers and neighbors in the community of a person undergoing deradicalization.

Clerics will play a key role in the India model. The government seeks to recruit religious leaders to offer



**LEFT: Indian and U.S. Army Soldiers take part in a joint combat exercise.**

**Indian Army Soldiers arrive at the site of a gunbattle with suspected militants in Chadoora, on the outskirts of Srinagar, India.**

REUTERS

credible counternarratives and alternatives to joining a terrorist organization.

## BEYOND BASIC TRAINING

Traditional ways of fighting the enemy remain important. However, the evolving terrorist threat means military training must also evolve.

The Indian Army has adopted new courses for incoming recruits, providing additional counterterrorism training and lessons on identifying the threat of cyber crimes.

“The training module for the recruits has been thoughtfully evolved to meet the challenges of subconventional warfare, which is basically low-intensity conflict operations, comprising anti-terrorist, anti-insurgency operations and if necessary anti-naxalite operations,” Brig. Govind Kalvad said in December 2017, according to *The Indian Express* newspaper. (A naxalite is a member of the Communist Party of India, or a Maoist.) He said the Army has not diverted from its basic tenets of military training, but merely modernized them over time.

“After the basics are covered, a trained Soldier undergoes extensive training in facing subconventional situations,” Kalvad said, according to *The Indian Express*. “So, after the conventional training gets over, a Soldier goes on leave and immediately after he comes back, he is attached to a camp for training on situations of subconventional warfare. So, when he leaves, he is fully prepared to face any situations in Jammu and Kashmir, Northeast or in fighting Naxalites if told to.”

More than 70 Indian Soldiers die each year engaged in counterinsurgency and counterterrorist operations, *The Times of India* newspaper reported in December

2017. Kalvad said new recruits simulate more real-time situations during advanced training to lessen the chance of casualties.

Part of Indian Army training now entails 22 obstacles in various terrains, including jungles, according to *The Times of India*. Troops operate in groups of 30 to 50 while placed in “extremely tense situations,” Kalvad said.

The Army has also added more technology to its training, using an electronic device to check the accuracy of a Soldier’s firing instead of checking it physically.

“The future challenges continue to demand greater commitment from the Indian Army,” Rawat said in January 2018, according to Indo-Asian News Service.

## A POWERFUL LEADER

The United States considers India a “leading power” in the Indo-Pacific, as the latest U.S. National Security Strategy places India in a more prominent role as a “major defense partner.”

“A geopolitical competition between free and repressive visions of world order is taking place in the Indo-Pacific region. The region, which stretches from the west coast of India to the western shores of the United States, represents the most populous and economically dynamic part of the world,” the U.S. National Security Strategy states.

Members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) look to India as well to increase its role as a stabilizing security partner in the Indo-Pacific. India has already demonstrated its desire to take on that role.

During the 2017 Marawi siege in the Philippines, India contributed half a million dollars to the Philippines’ counterterrorism campaign, according to *The Manila Times* newspaper. That dwarfed assistances from any other Asian country, including China, which contributed U.S. \$300,000, *The Manila Times* reported.

Strengthening counterterrorism and security ties proved to be an important topic during the India-ASEAN Summit in January 2018.

“In all our interactions ... a repeated refrain that we picked up was a desire on the part of all the ASEAN countries for a greater presence of India, greater cooperation [with] India, and a greater integration, economically, politically and in terms of people-to-people contacts,” Secretary (East) Preeti Saran of the Ministry of External Affairs said in January 2018, according to Firstpost.

Leaders across multiple industries have taken notice of India’s growing status.

“India is at the global center stage,” said Chandrajit Banerjee, director general, Confederation of Indian Industry, a not-for-profit business association. “Expectations are huge. The world is appreciative of its efforts and wants to engage.” □



# *From* COMPUTER SCREEN *to* BATTLEFIELD

*Understanding terrorists' use of the  
digital space to lure youths*

THOMAS KORUTH SAMUEL | PHOTOS BY REUTERS

**T**here is a great deal of debate on what constitutes terrorism and who is a terrorist. There is little doubt, however, that youths play a significant role in this arena, and structured and deliberate strategies have been formulated by terrorists to radicalize and recruit young people into committing acts of violence. The advantages of targeting youths to join terrorist groups are many. Terrorist groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria have displayed increased capability and capacity in enlisting them. This, coupled with the growing exploitation of technology such as the internet, has allowed terrorists a far and wide reach.

In 1951, Eric Hoffer, a noted author and lecturer who was completely self-taught, published *The True Believer*, which was based upon his observations on the rise of fascism, Nazism and communism as reactions to the Great Depression. He postulated that for the “true believer” — someone so committed to a cause

that he or she is willing to unthinkingly die for it — it was the frustrations of life that led to joining a cause that gave meaning to the believer's own existence.

Understandably, the more frustrated these people felt, the more attracted and susceptible they were to extreme revolutionary solutions to their problems. This observation, made more than half a century ago, sadly but accurately describes the dynamics and relations between youth and terrorism.

The definition of “a youth” varies among countries. The United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines “youth” as people between the ages of 15 and 24 years. What is clear, however, is that terrorist organizations are recruiting and influencing youths to carry out their dastardly acts in the name of God and twisted ideologies. Sadly, many youths, irrespective of race, religion, educational background or economic status, have fallen prey to the rhetoric propagated by these groups.





Boys gather in an internet gaming center in the capital city of Thimphu, Bhutan, in December 2017.

The statistics are grim. In Peter Singer's book, *Children at War*, 300,000 children, both boys and girls, under the age of 18 are combatants fighting in almost 75 percent of the world's conflicts. It is frightening that 80 percent of these conflicts where children are present include fighters under the age of 15, and approximately 42 percent of the armed organizations in the world (157 of 366) use child soldiers.

With no skill beyond that of a fighter, little integration with society, and a tumultuous past with myriad psychological and emotional issues, should these children live to reach their youth, what would their futures be?

The Mumbai, India, attacks in 2008 that left 165 civilians and security personnel dead were a series of 10 coordinated attacks orchestrated by 10 individuals. The chilling thread that bound them together? They were all young. Besides the eldest terrorist, Nazir/Abu Umer, who was 28 years old, the average age of the other nine terrorists was only 23. The leader, Ismail Khan, was 25.

In the Philippines, the involvement of youths in terrorism was clearly seen in the case of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). The ASG, listed by the United States as a foreign terrorist organization, seeks a separate Islamic state for the country's Muslim minority. Abdurajak Janjalani, founder of the ASG, was in his 20s when he was influenced to join extremist activities and 26 when he formed the ASG. When he died in a police encounter in 1998, his younger brother, Khadaffy Janjalani, was 22 when he took over as the new emir or leader of the

ASG. In 2009, the ASG was led by Yasser Igasan, who was 21 when he joined the movement. Another group in Philippines, the Rajah Solaiman Movement (RSM), originated from a cell of militant students and teachers at a religious school in Luzon. It was founded by Ahmad Santos, who was radicalized when he was 21. The RSM is alleged to have conducted the Superferry 14 bombing, a maritime terrorist attack in February 2004. It is significant to note that the alleged perpetrator, Redento Cain Delloso, was in his mid-20s.

In Iraq, insurgent groups have been accused of paying between U.S. \$50 to U.S. \$100 to teenagers to plant an improvised explosive device, shoot a mortar or fire a machine gun at coalition troops. Though young, these teenagers proved to be not only a dangerous threat but a security dilemma for coalition forces.

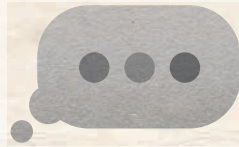
The reality is that while terrorist groups have formidable hard power, they also have considerable soft power, which they have proved to be adept in using. In turbulent times, these groups attract youths by exploiting their vulnerabilities and providing them with a sense of identity, belonging and cohesiveness. Over time, in a troubled environment, these youths begin to define their identity with that of the group and its struggle.

### Why terrorism?

When there are few opportunities to break out of the cycle of poverty, perceived or real, injustice and despair, there is a greater tolerance for violence. Terrorists groups have used these circumstances to their advantage by

identifying and offering youths what they are lacking or by even offering them a way out of their situation through martyrdom. In a study of approximately 600 Guantanamo Bay detainees between the ages of 18 and 25, unemployment motivated many of them, particularly skilled and semiskilled laborers, and terrorism was seen as viable “alternative employment.”

This, coupled with terrorists’ strategy of preying on susceptible youths, has borne tremendous fruit in communities where there is a real or perceived injustice. Hence, these groups are not looked upon as perpetrators of violence but rather as fighters struggling against a tyrannical enemy. Against this backdrop, it is perhaps somewhat understandable that youths who join such groups are perceived to be heroic and courageous — a narrative that is actively constructed, propagated and disseminated by terrorist groups. It is also significant to note that poverty and despair are not the only factors that draw youths into extremist groups. Membership provides a sense of identity, prestige or pride, acceptance, responsibility, outlets for frustration and excitement, which appeal to all youths, regardless of economic or social status.



### Why the young people?

Youths who generally have no prior police records allow the terrorist group more operational freedom as the involvement of youths reduces the likelihood of arrest of the more senior terrorist leaders. Such youths also have the added advantage of allaying suspicion on the part of the security and enforcement authorities. Former Central Intelligence Agency Director Michael Hayden observed that al-Qaida actively recruited Western youths for possible operations against Western targets because of their familiarity with the language, culture and appearance and because they would “not illicit any notice whatsoever from you if they were standing next to you in the airport line.” Al-Qaida, which in the past has referred to children as the “new generation of Mujahideen” (guerrilla fighters), aggressively used this tactic when conducting suicide attacks in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan because young people are not immediately suspected of being suicide bombers.

Youths are also, at times, given more dangerous tasks on the assumption that if they are caught, they would receive lighter sentences due to their age. Young adults may also be targeted for their skills, as in the case of the Jemaah Islamiyah recruiting university students to ensure a cadre of educated and technically capable leaders for terrorist attacks.

Youths are also important in ensuring continuity. Euskadi Ta Askatasuna, the Basque separatist movement, has sought new members from a younger demographic. Its ability to regenerate itself over time has been largely credited to its own youth organization, Jarrai-Haika-Segi.

### Where do they find recruits?

Prison, ironically, provides a contributory environment for terrorist recruitment. Prisons are said to be the breeding grounds for radicalization. They are places of vulnerability, which, due to the environment, produce identity seekers, protection seekers and rebels in greater numbers than in any other environment. American criminologist Harvey Kushner argued that Western prisons were one of the main recruitment grounds for al-Qaida, while some have suggested that the relatively lax practices in Western prisons have been well-exploited by al-Qaida. Matters are made worse in prisons when terrorists are not separated from the juvenile population.

Hence, terror detainees who are not physically separated from other criminals and the younger offenders have used the time and both physical and ideological space given to recruit and indoctrinate young people into their groups. These youths are vulnerable, and the support structure of family and friends is often supplanted by these groups.

Religious institutions, preaching a skewed and misconstrued interpretation of a religion, have the potential to capture the hearts, minds and imaginations of the young people. In most cases, recruiters would target the more promising youth and pull them into a smaller setting to indoctrinate them without arousing the suspicions of the moderate members in the congregation. Coupled with the actual injustices happening around the world, these “men of God” clinically exploit the minds and hearts of the youths into thinking the only alternative left is that of violence. Having the advantage of “God” on their side, these youths are manipulated into believing that they are struggling for a noble and worthy cause, with the assurance of victory.

Universities and institutions of higher learning have also been turned into recruiting pools for terrorists. Foreign students and lecturers from countries in conflict zones use lecture sessions to vividly describe the atrocities and injustices occurring in their respective countries and over time mold their students into thinking that the “propaganda of the deed” is the only recourse left. This problem is compounded by local students going abroad to study but instead being indoctrinated and radicalized. Not only are they infected with such ideas but also they import these ideas to their local setting when they return home.

### Why use the internet to reach prospects?

The internet has been a useful tool in reaching out to the young and has helped terrorists overcome their handicap to acquire and attract young new recruits. Terrorism expert Bruce Hoffman said, “Virtually every terrorist group in the world today has its own internet website and, in many instances, multiple sites in different



*The role of the internet as a radicalization accelerant has significantly changed the way terrorists operate, for it has allowed them unprecedented scope and opportunity in developing and strengthening their modus operandi.*



languages with different messages tailored to specific audiences.” While in the past, terrorists’ indoctrination, recruitment and training relied heavily on physical meetings between recruits and recruiters which required time, coordination and travel, the internet has bypassed this by providing connections quickly, easily, remotely and anonymously. The role of the internet as a radicalization accelerant has significantly changed the way terrorists operate, for it has allowed them unprecedented scope and opportunity in developing and strengthening their modus operandi.

This has been made possible because youths and the internet are so closely intertwined. Statistically, internet use among young people has risen dramatically and the use has evolved from a passive, individually directed, information-seeking process (termed as Web 1.0) to an active, socially connected, user-involved environment where youths interact, discuss, create and pass on content (termed Web 2.0). Besides the websites, other facilities on the net, ranging from email, chat rooms, e-groups, forums, virtual message boards, all facilities frequently visited and used by youths, have also been increasingly used by terrorists as virtual training camps, providing an online forum for indoctrination and the distribution of terrorists’ manuals, instructions and data.

What is also disturbing is that the natural inclination of the current generation of young people to gravitate toward the internet has been accurately anticipated and exploited by terrorist groups. How else can one explain the Taliban, which once punished people who owned television sets but later began updating its own websites numerous times

**A teenager who fought alongside Islamic State-linked militants in Marawi City speaks to Reuters during an interview in the southern Philippines in July 2017 after fleeing the fighting.**

a day? This dramatic change occurred because terrorists understand the power and potential of the internet.

Terrorists’ ability to creatively utilize the internet has enabled them to exponentially increase their reach, transitioning from the physical space to cyberspace. The internet has also shown great potential in becoming the focal meeting point for terrorists across the globe. Social networking sites have replaced the battlefield as the venue to link up and fight for a common cause.

Given this development, analysts can perhaps understand how young people are being radicalized through the internet without having to physically meet other fellow terrorists.

While in the past, terrorists used the internet as the means to disseminate their rhetoric of hate, now the internet has extended its potential to include identifying, nurturing and developing a raw recruit into a full-fledged terrorist. Hence, internet radicalization is a means of self-radicalization. This “computer screen to battlefield process” poses a grave threat and requires a paradigm shift in our efforts to counter terrorism.

### **Next Battlefield**

The ability of the terrorists to identify, indoctrinate, recruit and use youths for political violence has dramatically evolved. Terrorists have also demonstrated great sensitivity in crafting their message to youths and creativity in exploiting technological mediums in reaching out to them.

In this arena, authorities are struggling to counter and curb the momentum that terrorists have garnered in winning over young people. While terrorists are developing strategies to target and attract youths, counterterrorism efforts often continue to focus on hard power as the central approach in dealing with this issue. Given this scenario, it is imperative that authorities understand the dynamics between youth and terrorism. Among the areas that need research and attention are the profiles of youths who have joined terrorist groups and the reasons for them to do so, the radicalization and indoctrination process employed by terrorists in recruiting the youths, and a review of existing programs in countering the vulnerability of youths toward extremism and terrorism. It is only by understanding the realities on the ground and taking proactive, preventive and resourceful steps that nations and governments will be able to address this challenge.

The next battlefield in the struggle against terrorism may not take place on a physical plane but in the mental and emotional domains of the youth. Unless governments win the hearts and minds of these young people, not only will officials not garner their support, but they may find themselves facing them as future adversaries. □

# RETURNING FOREIGN FIGHTERS

**MALAYSIA EMPLOYS  
A MULTIFACETED  
COUNTERTERRORISM  
STRATEGY TO  
SUPPRESS THREATS**

FORUM STAFF

In January 2016, militants linked to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) killed four civilians in a gun and bomb assault near a bus station in Jakarta, Indonesia. Soon after, ISIS claimed responsibility for a grenade attack at a nightclub near Kuala Lumpur, injuring eight people and marking the first ISIS-affiliated attack to hit Malaysia. Then in 2017 militants inspired by ISIS controlled the southern Philippine city of Marawi for more than five months. Hundreds died, and fears materialized that ISIS would try to spread its influence in Southeast Asia as the group was pushed out of Syria and Iraq.

In recent years, the threat of attacks in the Indo-Pacific region by ISIS and affiliated foreign fighters returning from Syria and Iraq has materialized. Since ISIS' emergence, however, Malaysia has implemented counterterrorism measures that have proven largely successful in containing such threats there. Through December 2017, Malaysian authorities had foiled 19 large plots, including the botched nightspot attack in Kuala Lumpur, and detained more than 340 terror suspects since 2013. Authorities went from making four such arrests in 2013 to arresting more than 100 terror suspects in 2016 and 2017. Moreover, Malaysian courts have achieved among the highest conviction rates of nations for terror-related crimes, convicting and sentencing more than 100 people in the past four years.





Members of Malaysia's special operations force and elite counterterrorism tactical unit, known as VAT 69, take part in the 60th National Day celebrations in Kuala Lumpur. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

However, military and police professionals engaged in combating the spread of terrorism must remain vigilant, experts say. The large-scale defeat of ISIS in Marawi, for example, could cause another wave of foreign fighters migrating to other countries in the Indo-Pacific from the Philippines, some analysts have warned. The threat to Malaysia remains high, they say.

For Malaysia, “I rank Islamic State as the No. 1 threat [for 2018] as its ideology has spread all over the world. Even though they no longer have any territories, they still receive strong support and have many sympathizers,” Ayob Khan Mydin Pitchay, head of the Malaysian police counterterrorism division, told Channel NewsAsia in late December 2017. “Marawi in the Philippines is the second-biggest threat because IS is expanding its power to the Southeast Asia region. People are joining them [pro-ISIS groups] in the Philippines because the location is nearer and easier to access compared with Syria,” he said.

Authorities have confirmed that more than 50 Malaysians joined ISIS in Syria, according to Ayob Khan, and the actual numbers could be much higher. In Syria, ISIS formed distinct units called Katibah Nusantara that were composed of Indonesians and Malaysians who moved to the region. Authorities estimate that at least 20 Malaysians died fighting in Syria, including nine suicide bombers.

Meanwhile, at least five Malaysians traveled to Mindanao to join terror groups through the end of 2017, Ayob Khan told Channel NewsAsia. Before

being killed in a gunfight with Armed Forces of the Philippines Soldiers, a former Malaysian university lecturer named Mahmud Ahmad helped plan and fund the Marawi siege, raising more than U.S. \$500,000.

ISIS “may have lost a very valuable conduit in Mindanao with the reported death of Mahmud,” Rommel Banlaoi, a terrorism expert who heads the Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence and Terrorism Research, told *The New York Times* newspaper in October 2017. “His death can severely affect financing terrorism in the region. However, threats of attacks from other terror groups remain imminent. It’s not yet over.”

Malaysians are continuing to venture to Mindanao. During the first half of December 2017, Malaysian police arrested 16 men who wanted to join a pro-ISIS faction of the Abu Sayyaf Group, Ayob Khan said.

### CONTINUING ONLINE THREAT

Moreover, ISIS’ online recruitment efforts are ongoing, some of which have worked in Malaysia. For example, ISIS has distributed various videos in Malay via its Al-Hayat media center with the hopes of recruiting Malaysians to execute attacks in Malaysia. ISIS has used other social media routes, including encrypted messaging apps to radicalize Malaysians.

“Although the concept of the caliphate is long gone, IS is currently exploiting the social media to recruit, disseminate ideology and incite new members to launch attacks in their respective countries,” Ayob

Khan told Bernama, a news agency of the Malaysian government, as evidenced by the October 2017 arrests of three ISIS members in Kelantan who were suspected of planning attacks at the Better Beer Festival 2017 and other targets in the Klang Valley with improvised explosive devices. “They were influenced by the ideology and then learned to make a bomb through the IS website,” he said.

“The IS ideology is getting more active without the need to go to Syria and without having to recruit people physically anymore,” he told Bernama.

To counter ISIS online, Malaysia helped launch a regional initiative in 2016 called the Digital Counter-Messaging Centre. It will help stop outreach and recruitment efforts by ISIS and other militant groups in the region, then Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak said during a speech at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Police conference in July 2016 in Kuala Lumpur, according to themalaymailonline.

“It is vital that this center utilizes the studies that illustrate why there is nothing



**Soldiers guard a major shopping area in Kuala Lumpur after Australia warned that terrorists might be plotting attacks.** THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

at all ‘Islamic’ about the IS that shamefully declares [itself] as such,” he said. “It is also vital that all authorities — our muftis, our media commissions, our tech-savvy young people for whom social media is an integral part of their daily lives — ensure that the message the center puts out is solid, persuasive and real.”

Because the online threat transcends geographical borders, information sharing is increasingly important, experts agree. Ayob Khan said the Malaysian government and Royal Malaysia Police are working to enhance information sharing with many other countries to enable authorities to monitor, detain and return foreign fighters to their countries of origin, according to a January 2018 report by themalaymailonline.com. “We need intelligence sharing. If not, how can we detect any terrorist suspect?” he asked.

“We are worried because if we fail to obtain intelligence, we certainly cannot detect and defeat IS attacks,” Ayob Khan told Bernama.

### INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

Malaysia has proven a trailblazer in implementing counterterrorism measures. The nation, long at the forefront of counterterrorism, has adopted a multifaceted approach that employs a diverse set of tactics.

Malaysia has long espoused that tackling terrorism requires a whole-of-society approach that looks beyond military and police solutions to resolve the threat. Prior to the onset of ISIS, for example, Malaysia had implemented innovative approaches to deradicalizing individuals to reintegrate them into society. Its programs, which are run by the ministries of home affairs and education in conjunction with prison authorities and religious institutions, rank among the most successful, according to available statistics. Between 2001 and 2012, Malaysia treated 229 suspected terrorists in its programs, and seven are known to have since engaged in terrorist activities. Malaysian officials plan to enroll Malaysians radicalized by ISIS in programs similar to those that helped citizens radicalized by Jemaah Islamiyah.

Public information campaigns and education programs may also help stop individuals from becoming radicalized, some experts advocate. “We need efforts by our religious authorities to explain to the public about the misinterpretation, the misquotation of certain al-Quran verses,” Ayob Khan told the FreeMalaysiaToday website. He said schools may need to include modules in their curricula to address the perils of extremism.

Similarly, even before ISIS emerged in 2014, Malaysian lawmakers passed updated anti-terror legislation under its Security Offences and Special Measures Act (SOSMA). The laws added provisions for terrorism-related offenses and crimes to the nation’s penal code. For example, SOSMA criminalized

promoting terrorist acts, aiding terrorists and financing terrorism and implemented tough penalties, including death in some instances, for those convicted of such offenses.

Then in 2015, Malaysia introduced additional legislation to grant police more authority to arrest and detain suspected terrorists. The laws include the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the Special Measures Against Terrorism in Foreign Countries Act. In addition, Malaysia joined the international Financial Action Task Force in 2016 to help crack down on global financing of terrorist groups.

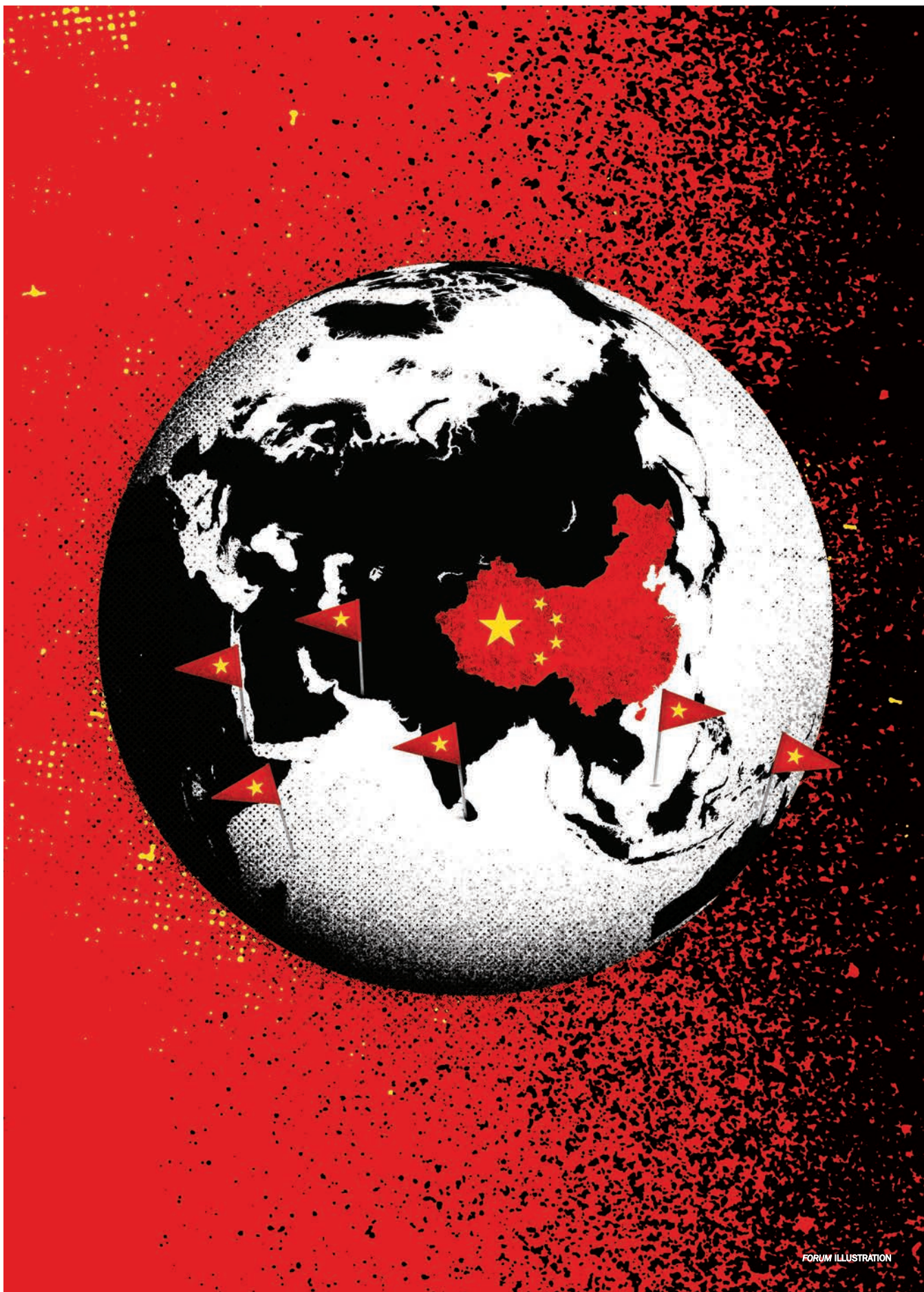
Malaysia also is cooperating with Australia and other Southeast Asian nations to stifle terror financing of ISIS and other terror groups. Called the Southeast Asia Counter Terrorism Financing Working Group, the alliance will “directly target and disrupt the funding lifeline of terrorist groups” by blocking them from the international financial system and other funding sources, Australian Justice Minister Michael Keenan said in Kuala Lumpur in November 2017 at the third Counter-Terrorism Financing Summit, *The Straits Times* newspaper reported. Malaysian Home Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said that “to stop a terror network effectively, all forms of its financing must be cut off,” *The Straits Times* reported.

Malaysia has also enhanced its terror enforcement capacity in recent years. In October 2016 then Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak created a National Special Operations Force. The unit integrated personnel from the Armed Forces, police and Malaysian maritime enforcement agency to provide a coordinated response to any terror attack. Then in July 2017, the Royal Malaysia Police announced plans to launch a new federal counterterrorism department, according to *The Straits Times*. The department will be staffed by 500 officers or more than double the 200 officers who are drawn from various state forces to staff the existing counterterrorism division.

“The establishment of this new department is timely, especially when terror threats are growing in this region. The country needs more trained personnel to keep Malaysia safe from radicalism and extremism, including the war against the Islamic State group,” a source told *The Straits Times*.

Malaysia also supports various institutions within its borders to suppress such threats, including the King Salman Center for International Peace and the Southeast Asia Regional Center for Counterterrorism.

Malaysia’s comprehensive approach to countering terrorism serves as a model for the region to help keep ISIS in check. Malaysia’s strong laws, intelligence sharing and vigilant law enforcement efforts combined with online countermessaging, revamped education and deradicalization programs have aimed at tackling terrorism from all sides and enabled authorities to successfully curb such activities. □



FORUM ILLUSTRATION

# CHINA'S CREDITOR IMPERIALISM

BRAHMA CHELLANEY

*Loans from  
Beijing put  
natural resources  
and sovereignty  
at risk for  
recipient nations*

*Just as European imperial powers employed gunboat diplomacy,* China is using sovereign debt to bend other states to its will. As Sri Lanka's handover of the strategic Hambantota Port shows, states caught in debt bondage to the new imperial giant risk losing natural assets and their very sovereignty.

In December 2017, Sri Lanka, unable to pay an onerous debt to China, formally handed over the strategically located Hambantota Port to the Asian giant. It was a major acquisition for China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) — which Chinese President Xi Jinping calls the “project of the century” — and proof of just how effective China's debt-trap diplomacy can be.



Hundreds of Sri Lankans protest the government's plan to lease the Hambantota Port to a Chinese-controlled joint venture in exchange for heavy loans to build the port. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Moreover, as Sri Lanka's experience starkly illustrates, Chinese financing can shackle its "partner" countries. Rather than offering grants or concessionary loans, China provides huge project-related loans at market-based rates, without transparency, much less environmental- or social-impact assessments. As then-U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson put it in December 2017, with the BRI, China is aiming to define "its own rules and norms."

To strengthen its position further, China has encouraged its companies to bid for outright purchase of strategic ports, where possible. The Mediterranean port of Piraeus, which a Chinese firm acquired for U.S. \$436 million from cash-strapped Greece in 2016, will serve as the BRI's "dragon head" in Europe.

By wielding its financial clout in this manner, China seeks to achieve two aims at once. First, it wants to address overcapacity at home by boosting exports. Second, it hopes to advance its strategic interests, including expanding its diplomatic influence, securing natural resources, promoting the international use of its currency, and gaining a relative advantage over other powers.

China's predatory approach over securing Hambantota is ironic. In its relationships with

smaller countries such as Sri Lanka, China is replicating the practices used against it in the European-colonial period, which began with the 1839-1860 Opium Wars and ended with the 1949 communist takeover — a period that China bitterly refers to as its "century of humiliation."

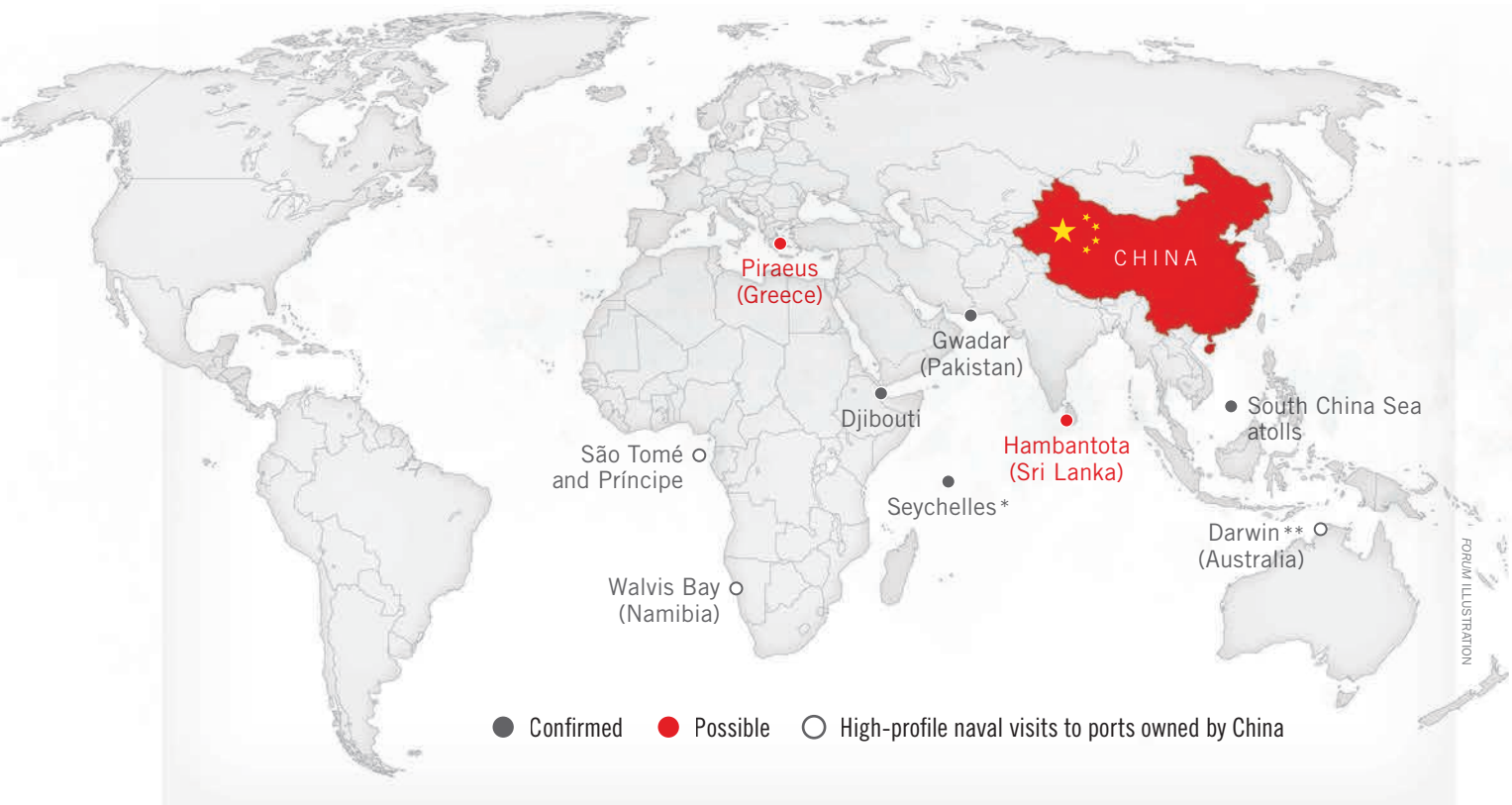
China portrayed the 1997 restoration of its sovereignty over Hong Kong, following more than a century of British administration, as righting a historic injustice. Yet, as Hambantota shows, China is now establishing its own Hong Kong-style neocolonial arrangements. Apparently, Xi's promise of the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation" is inextricable from the erosion of smaller states' sovereignty.

Just as European imperial powers employed gunboat diplomacy to open new markets and colonial outposts, China uses sovereign debt to bend other states to its will, without having to fire a single shot. Like the opium the British exported to China, the loans China offers are addictive. Because China chooses its projects according to their long-term strategic value, they may yield short-term returns that are insufficient for countries to repay their debts. This gives China added leverage, which it can use, say, to force borrowers to swap debt for equity, thereby expanding China's global footprint



Chinese People's Liberation Army personnel attend the opening ceremony in August 2017 of China's new military base in Djibouti, where China already has deployed troops. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

# CHINA'S **DUAL USE** COMMERCIAL AND NAVAL PORTS



Dual use is defined as Chinese-owned or -invested ports confirmed, or proposed, as engaging in both commerce and military uses.

Source: *Financial Times*

\* China has not invested in a port, but its navy uses Seychelles' facilities in anti-piracy operations in the Indian Ocean.

\*\* The U.S. has expressed concern over the possible use of Chinese-owned Darwin port for military purposes.

by trapping a growing number of countries in debt servitude.

Even the terms of the 99-year Hambantota Port lease echo those used to force China to lease its own ports to Western colonial powers. Britain leased the New Territories from China for 99 years in 1898, causing Hong Kong's land mass to expand by 90 percent. Yet, the 99-year term was fixed merely to help China's ethnic Manchu Qing Dynasty save face; the reality was that all acquisitions were believed to be permanent.

Now, China is applying the imperial 99-year lease concept in distant lands. China's lease agreement over Hambantota, concluded in the summer of 2017, included a promise that China would shave U.S. \$1.1 billion off Sri Lanka's debt. In 2015, a Chinese firm took out a 99-year lease on Australia's deep-water port of Darwin — home to more than 1,000 U.S. Marines — for U.S. \$388 million.

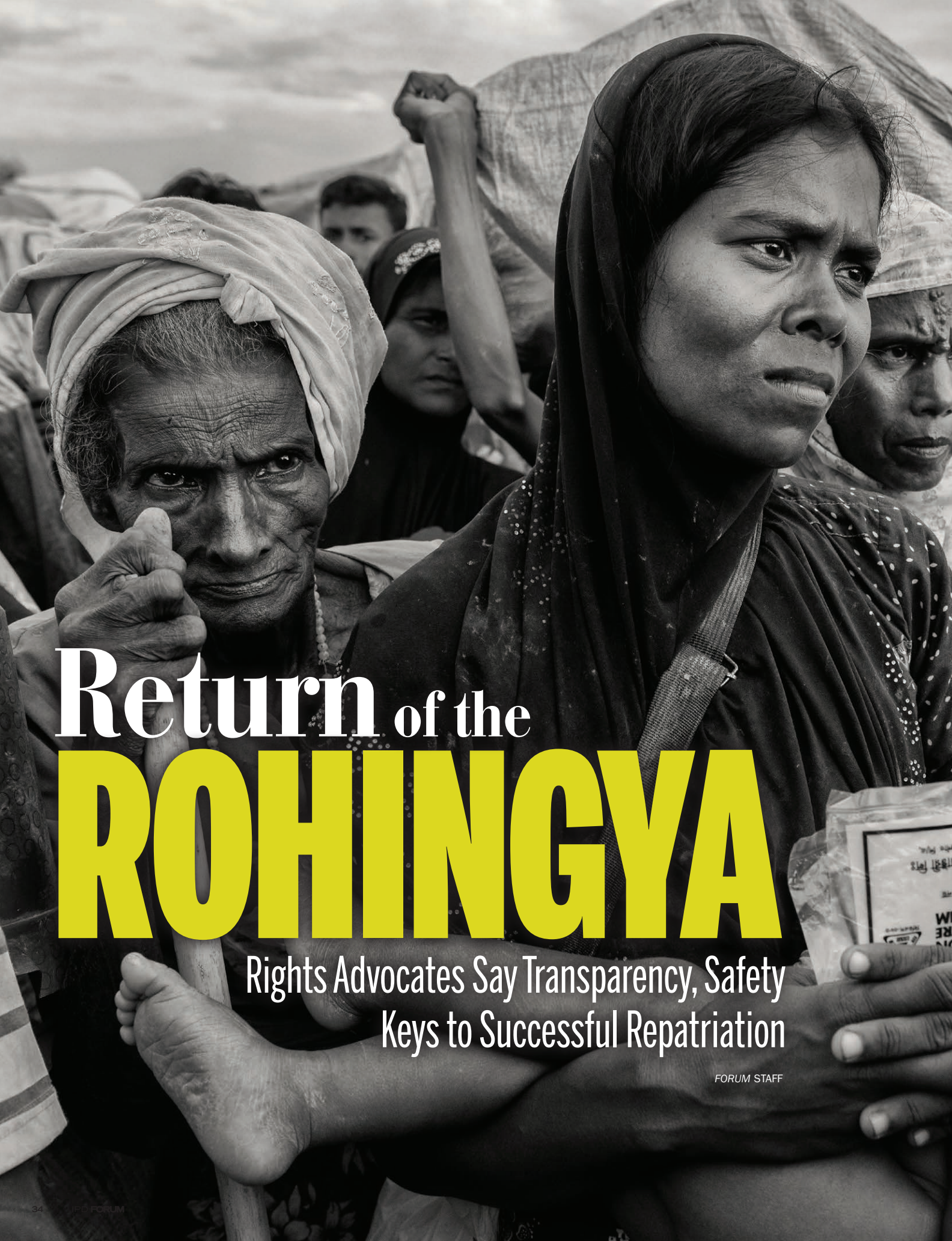
Similarly, after lending billions of dollars to heavily indebted Djibouti, China in 2017 established its first overseas military base in that tiny but strategic state, just a few miles from a U.S. naval base — the only permanent American military facility in Africa. Trapped in a debt crisis,

Djibouti had no choice but to lease land to China for U.S. \$20 million per year. China has also used its leverage over Turkmenistan to secure a natural gas pipeline largely on Chinese terms.

Several other countries, from Argentina to Namibia to Laos, have been ensnared in a Chinese debt trap, forcing them to confront agonizing choices to stave off default. Kenya's crushing debt to China now threatens to turn its busy port of Mombasa — the gateway to East Africa — into another Hambantota.

These experiences should serve as a warning that the BRI is essentially an imperial project that aims to bring to fruition the mythical Middle Kingdom. States caught in debt bondage to China risk losing both their most valuable natural assets and their very sovereignty. The new imperial giant's velvet glove cloaks an iron fist — one with the strength to squeeze the vitality out of smaller countries. □

This article was reprinted with permission from Project Syndicate, an international media organization that publishes and syndicates commentary and analysis on a variety of important global topics. The article was first published on Project Syndicate's website on December 20, 2017.



# Return of the **ROHINGYA**

Rights Advocates Say Transparency, Safety  
Keys to Successful Repatriation

FORUM STAFF



**T**he United Nations calls them the “most persecuted people in the world.” The Rohingya Muslims of Burma fled by the hundreds of thousands — including women, children, newborn babies and the elderly — to live in tent cities in Bangladesh rather than face conflict with the military and police in their home country. Their numbers in Bangladesh reached a staggering 1 million by late 2017, according to the Bangladeshi government, pushing camps to the breaking point as refugees began living outside the camps in temporary shelters, sometimes with nothing more than tarps supported by bamboo poles.

A peaceful resolution to one of the Indo-Pacific’s most pressing crises, however, could be within sight. As part of an ongoing bilateral negotiation, Bangladesh and Burma reached a deal in January 2018 to repatriate the Rohingya to Burma over a two-year period. Statements from both governments said Bangladesh would set up five transit camps on its side of the border, and Burma would set up two reception centers in its country. Burma “has reiterated its commitment to stop [the] outflow of [Burmese] residents to Bangladesh,” the Bangladesh Ministry of Foreign Affairs statement said.

### **SAFETY TRUMPS SPEED**

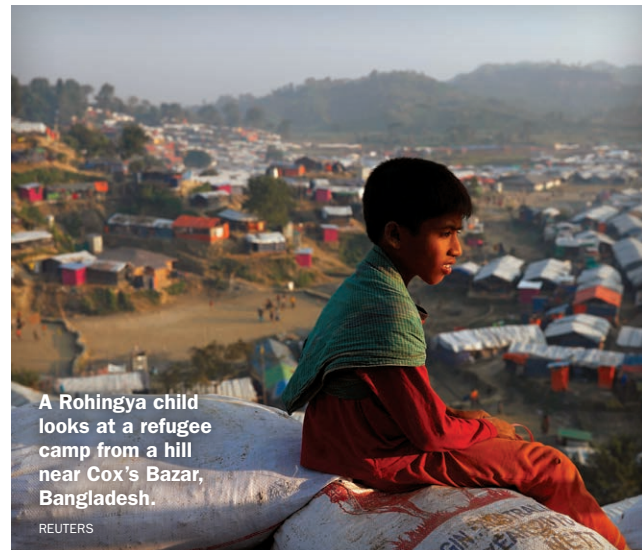
The crisis allegedly erupted after Rohingya insurgents attacked police security posts on August 25, 2017, triggering a fierce military response. Doctors Without Borders said at least 6,700 Rohingya Muslims were killed in the first month of a crackdown the U.N.

**Rohingya Muslim refugees cross the border into Bangladesh near the Naf River on their way to crowded camps.**

GETTY IMAGES

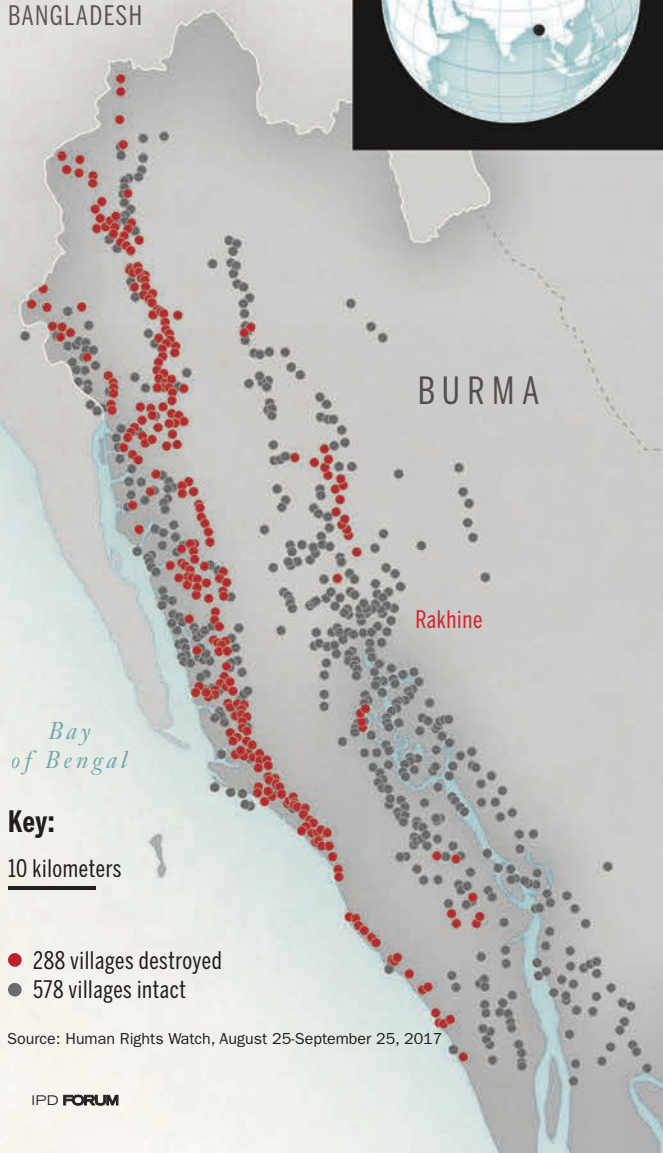
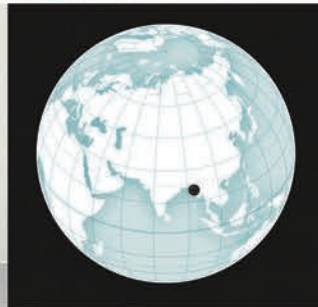
## Finding Safe Haven in Bangladesh

Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya have left their ethnic homeland of Rakhine state for the district of Cox's Bazar in Chittagong, Bangladesh.



## Destroyed Villages in Rakhine State

BANGLADESH



denounced as ethnic cleansing. More than 650,000 people have fled the violence since the outbreak of the most recent violence. By January 2018, Bangladesh had counted more than 1 million Rohingya refugees living in camps near its border with Burma, according to a report in *The Times of India* newspaper.

"So far, we've registered 1,004,742 Rohingya. They are given biometric registration cards," said Saidur Rahman, a brigadier general with the Bangladesh Army who heads the registration project. Several thousand more had yet to be registered.

While the pressures posed by the influx of 1 million people created a sense of urgency around the repatriation project, international human rights watchers said the refugees' safety should be the top priority. A United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) spokesman said the Rohingya should return voluntarily and only when they believe it is safe. "Major challenges have to be overcome," UNHCR spokesman Andrej Mahecic said, according to Reuters. "These include ensuring they are told about the situation in their areas of origin ... and are consulted on their wishes, that their safety is ensured."

The United States expressed similar concerns. "The timeline is less important to us than the ability for people to safely and voluntarily go home," U.S. State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said. Nauert, who visited the region in 2017, noted that only a few months had passed since many Rohingya had fled their homes. "I can't imagine anyone would feel safe at this point in returning," she said in January 2018.

While refugees expressed their fear of returning, they also face threats if they stay in their current makeshift homes. One of the most pressing perils is disease. UNICEF reported in January 2018 that it had detected 4,011 suspected cases of diphtheria in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh and that 21 people had died from the disease. The outbreak



A young refugee who fled Burma by boat makes his way to a refugee camp in Bangladesh, where hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims are being housed.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

# 48,000 babies will be born in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh in 2018.

This new arrival at a refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, takes a nap after a journey to escape violence in neighboring Burma.

GETTY IMAGES



A boy waits with water bottles destined for a refugee camp in Bangladesh.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

prompted the World Health Organization, UNICEF and the Bangladesh Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to embark upon a massive vaccination program. By the end of December 2017, 150,000 children age 6 weeks to 7 years had received a combined vaccine, while 166,000 others in the 7- to 17-year age bracket were given tetanus and diphtheria vaccines during a three-week campaign.

Diphtheria is caused by a bacterium that primarily infects the throat and upper airways. The disease is spread through direct physical contact and when infected people sneeze or cough around others. The disease had nearly been eradicated in Bangladesh, so its outbreak in the camps caught the medical community off guard. Bangladesh authorities were prepared for other diseases

and moved quickly to inoculate new arrivals against cholera and measles, according to a report by Agence France-Presse. However, the emergence of diphtheria, which can lead to heart failure, paralysis and death if left untreated, was a surprise. “We were taken aback when tests confirmed diphtheria in the camps. It was a long-lost disease in our country,” said Abdus Salam, the chief medical officer for Cox’s Bazar district, where the camps are located. “Immediately, we acquired vaccines from abroad for an emergency response.”

High rates of vaccination mean diphtheria is now rare in much of the world, although Yemen is currently suffering an outbreak, Agence France-Presse reported. The Rohingya, however, come from the impoverished Rakhine state, where many children are not vaccinated.

Making matters even more complicated is that the number of Rohingya in refugee camps is exploding even when no one crosses a border. The aid agency Save the Children issued a report that said 48,000 babies will be born in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh in 2018, The Associated Press (AP) reported. The babies most likely face unsanitary conditions and a risk of disease and malnutrition. “The camps have poor sanitation and are a breeding ground for diseases like diphtheria, measles and cholera, to which newborn babies are particularly vulnerable,” said Rachael Cummings, the agency’s health advisor in Cox’s Bazar. “This is no place for a child to be born.”

A Bangladeshi official called the projection of 48,000 babies mind-boggling. “Simply, this will be disastrous and terrible for us,” said Priton Kumar Chowdhury, a deputy

director of the government's social services department in Cox's Bazar, according to AP. "I can't imagine it, and my brain does not actually know how to deal with this."

### A CHANCE AT CITIZENSHIP

The U.N. has declared the lack of Burmese citizenship for the Rohingya a big stumbling block in persuading them to return. Many Rohingya are denied citizenship and classified by the Burmese government as illegal migrants from Bangladesh — not ethnic minorities. Many of the Rohingya lack state-issued identification.

Burma's government now says Rohingya Muslims are eligible to apply for citizenship if at least two generations of their families have lived in Burma, Immigration Minister Khin Ye told Radio Free Asia. "The requirements are that their grandparents and parents must have lived here and died here, that the applicant was born here and can speak the Burmese language, and that he or she wants to live here, among other things," he said.

The Rohingya are referred to as "Bengalis" in Burma even though they have long lived in the country. "Foreigners, like the Bengalis, have the right to apply for citizenship if they want to," Khin Ye said. He asserted that many Rohingya were brought to Burma as laborers during British occupation from 1824 until the nation gained independence in 1948. The Rohingya are physically and culturally more like the people of Bangladesh and India than to the ethnic Bamar majority in Burma.

Despite Khin Ye's assertion about when the Rohingya came to Burma, many scholars say they descend from Arab and Persian traders who arrived in what is now western Burma more than 1,000 years ago. The Rohingya people in the eighth century lived in an independent kingdom in Arakan, which is now known as the Rakhine state in Burma, according to *The Wall Street Journal* newspaper. From the ninth century to the 14th century, the Rohingya were immersed in Islam through Arab traders. In 1784, the king of Burma conquered Arakan, forcing thousands of Rohingya to flee to Bengal. From 1824 to 1942, the British made Burma a province of

British India and migrated many Rohingya workers back to Burma to build infrastructure projects. When Japan invaded in 1942, it pushed out the British and prompted Burmese nationalists to attack the Muslim communities they thought had benefited from colonial rule.

Khin Ye explained why his government does not treat the Rohingya as an ethnic group in Burma, which is 90 percent Buddhist. He said that during the colonial era, Burmese "had no right to protect and manage our country," meaning that the Rohingya were never invited

to stay by the country's citizens. "So, unless they are blood-related with our people, there is no way they [can be automatically considered] our citizens," he said.

That perspective leaves refugees wary of returning. Since repatriation must be voluntary under international law, getting the refugees to return without citizenship could be difficult. "I will go back again only if our rights and safety are guaranteed — forever," said 71-year-old refugee and Rohingya Muslim farmer Hamid Hussain, according to Reuters. Hussain first fled Burma for Bangladesh in 1992 and went home the following year under a repatriation deal, only to repeat the journey in 2017 when violence broke out again.

Authorities in Burma say this time will be different, while human rights advocates insist that openness in the repatriation process is the best way to protect everyone involved. While the UNHCR was not directly involved in negotiating the repatriation agreement, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told reporters it "will be very important to have UNHCR fully involved in the operation to guarantee that the operations abide by international standards."

The refugees, he said, need permanent structures to live in to ensure their health and well-being. "A huge effort of reconciliation is needed to allow it to take place properly," he said. "The worst would be to move these people from camps in Bangladesh to camps in [Burma], keeping an artificial situation for a long time and not allowing for them to regain their normal lives." □

**"I will go back again only if our rights and safety are guaranteed — forever."**

Hamid Hussain, Rohingya Muslim farmer



Hamid Hussain, a 71-year-old Rohingya refugee, cuts firewood at the Kutupalong camp in Bangladesh.

REUTERS

# RISING INEQUALITY



# Economic Disparities Increasingly Contribute to Security Risks

STORY BY DR. MIEMIE WINN BYRD | PHOTOS BY REUTERS

**F**rench economist Thomas Piketty declared in the aftermath of the November 2015 terrorist attacks in Paris that persistent socio-economic inequality has contributed to the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). His assertion created a storm of controversy, adding to the debate over the outlook for global inequality. In 2014, he brought the subject of inequality into popular consciousness with his best-selling book, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. The book had critics as well as fans, and many on both sides agreed his work created a level of interest in this topic that had not been seen since English economist John Maynard Keynes published *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* in 1936.

Other modern-day economic titans such as Robert Shiller, Paul Krugman, Joseph Stiglitz and Robert Reich have been beating the drum about rising inequality since the global financial crisis of 2007-08, but they have not been able to capture the public's attention like Piketty. His findings are transforming the debate on wealth and inequality, providing objective data to counter the long-dominant side of the inequality debate, which says that inequality is not a problem for public policy attention, according to Robert Wade, a London School of Economics and Political Science professor. Furthermore, Piketty's book is setting the agenda for the next generation of thought regarding capitalism.

## Why Care About Increasing Disparity?

Discussions of inequality have broadened and intensified since his book became a worldwide best-seller. Even Pope Francis weighed in on the subject during a January 2018 address to his diplomatic corps. "There is a risk that we will see the rise of modern forms of ideological colonization by the stronger and the wealthier to the detriment of the poorer and most vulnerable," he said.

Rising inequality remains a concern because it creates economic, social and political vulnerabilities within societies, and it shows few signs of abating, according to Piketty.



Activists in India protest a government decision to hand out cash instead of subsidized food to poor people while police use a water cannon to disperse the crowd.

In the World Inequality Report 2018, Piketty and his colleagues at the World Inequality Lab found that since 1980, income inequality has increased rapidly in North America and Asia, grown moderately in Europe and stabilized at a high level in the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa and Brazil. The poorest half of the world's population has seen its income grow due to high growth in Asia. The top .1 percent, however, still captured as much growth as the bottom half of the world's adults since 1980.

A recent Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) study showed that gross domestic product (GDP) growth has a "negative and statistically significant" correlation with income inequality. Specifically, an average three-point increase in Gini index for OECD countries over the past 20 years correlated to a .35 percent decrease in economic growth per year for the same time, which translates into an 8.5 percent GDP loss for that period. Of the 34 OECD member countries, several are in the Indo-Pacific, including Australia, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand.

Italian statistician Corrado Gini invented the Gini scale in 1912, which runs from zero to one, with a score of one signifying maximal inequality: A single person earns all the income and the rest of the world earns nothing.

The World Bank's lead economist, Branko Milanovic, warned that "social stability and the social fabric of a society are torn apart if there are very large income differences." His warning has been empirically supported by the recent finding of British epidemiologists Richard G. Wilkinson and Kate Pickett that as inequality increases, social capital deteriorates. Social capital is defined as the level of social cohesion and trust in a society, with decreased social capital making the society vulnerable to unrest and conflict.

When a condition of disparity, inequality and exclusion is perceived as being the result of persistent injustice, it can invoke a powerful tide of base instinct, studies have revealed. Behavioral and evolutionary biology researchers at Central Washington University found the instinct for fairness is deeply rooted in humans' genetic code. Therefore, it is especially concerning if inequality is perceived by "have-nots" as a lack of fair access to opportunities and resources.

Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project 2013 survey revealed that more than 70 percent of the respondents perceived their country's economic system to favor the wealthy. This growing sense of injustice, combined with the evidence and data of rising inequality, should alarm policymakers and security professionals, given its apparent ties to undesired behaviors and instability.

Researchers from Harvard and Columbia universities conducted a study published in 1996 measuring income inequality and socio-political instability in 70 countries from 1960 to 1985. They, too, found that as income inequality increases, socio-political instability escalates. This conclusion supports the earlier findings by political science researcher Ted Gurr of links between relative deprivation, frustration and aggression. Gurr, a distinguished professor emeritus at the University of Maryland, discovered that relative deprivation — not absolute poverty — leads to grievances and frustration. The empirical support behind the "frustration-aggression" theory has shown that all humans are biologically coded to respond aggressively toward a perceived culprit when frustrated.

It is almost predictable that movements such as al-Qaida and ISIS would attempt to tap into this primal need within communities around the globe to exploit the perception of marginalization and inequality. Many separatist movements, insurgencies, armed conflicts, terrorist groups and violent clashes have seized upon such universal instincts to recruit and mobilize followers.

### **Additional Side Effects**

While people generally understand the correlation between socio-economic inequality, social unrest and political

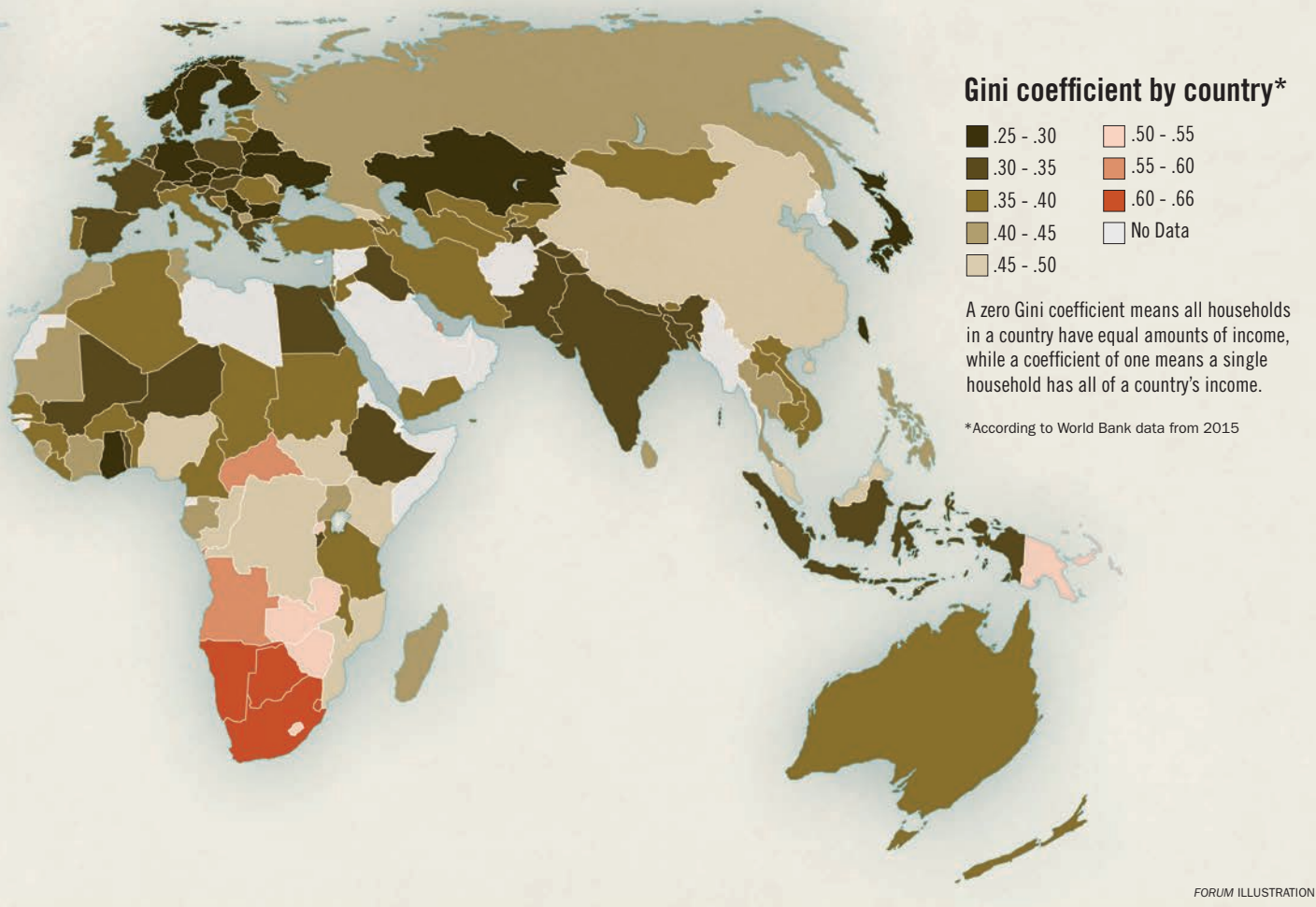


instability, most are unaware of the relationship between socio-economic inequality and public health. Harvard University researchers S.V. Subramanian and Ichiro Kawachi in their 2004 meta-analysis of epidemiological studies, which encompassed about 60 million people around the world, found a link between inequality and poor health. In 2009, British epidemiologists Wilkinson and Pickett found evidence suggesting that inequality is associated with rates of obesity, teenage birth, mental illness, drug overdose and mortality.

Common sense suggests the impact of persistent unemployment can lead to stress and depression. Now, the science unequivocally shows the negative effect of stress and depression on mental and physical health. Wilkinson and Pickett also found that high inequality correlates with higher rates of hostility, homicide, racism and imprisonment, while corresponding with lowered levels of trust, social capital, educational performance and social mobility.

### **Falling Equality in Asia**

Piketty wrote his book at the Paris School of Economics based on historical data on income and wealth distribution gathered from 20 countries over three centuries. At the same time, the World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) were sounding an alarm about increased inequality in the Indo-Pacific region. Its rapid economic growth in the past 20 years



has pulled many people out of poverty, but it has also generated a widening gap between rich and poor, with the rate of wealth accumulation for the rich increasing much faster than that for the poor.

As capitalism spreads across Asia, market-based economic models have created winners and losers. These conditions, combined with rampant corruption within governmental structures, have often given rise to crony capitalism and monopolies, contributing to an even greater sense of injustice among those who shared less of the growth and progress. This sense of unfairness was captured by the Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project 2013, in which more than 60 percent of Asian respondents said their country's economic system favors the wealthy.

As inequality increases, the legitimacy of the political system declines among the "have-nots." When inequality is amplified along the lines of racial, ethnic and religious divides, resentment and discontent can cause political instability ranging from peaceful protests to criminal activities, social unrest, political violence, military coups, armed conflicts and revolutions. We have witnessed

such cases throughout the Indo-Pacific and the rest of the globe. American sociologist Neil Smelser argues in his book, *Faces of Terrorism: Social and Psychological Dimensions*, that awareness of socio-economic disparity serves to "make other, remaining foci of exclusion more visible and aggravating." The effects of such awareness can be seen, for example, in the long-running ethnic conflict in Burma and Muslim uprisings in the southern Philippines and Thailand.

The ADB and WB weren't the only ones concerned about the trend of increasing inequality in the region. In 2013, the World Economic Forum surveyed 1,000 experts from industry, government, academia and civil society to evaluate 50 risks and asked them to rank these risks by their likelihood and impact in the next decade. "Severe income disparity" ranked as the No. 1 risk. Oxfam International published a report showing that the richest 1 percent have seen their share of global wealth increase from 44 percent in 2009 to 48 percent in 2014. As of March 2018, *Forbes* magazine's billionaires list had a record 2,208 names, accounting for a total of U.S. \$9.1 trillion in wealth, up from U.S. \$7.7 trillion in 2017.



Homeless children sleep on a sidewalk in Mumbai, India. Researchers say economic disparity that leads to such conditions can cause political instability.

“The super-rich continue to get richer, widening the gap between them and everyone else,” said Luisa Kroll and Kerry A. Dolan, assistant managing editors of wealth at Forbes Media.

### Climbing Inequity in the U.S.

The U.S. is not immune from the problem of inequality. Joseph Stiglitz, a U.S. Nobel laureate in economics, argues that increasing inequality in a weaker economy can create a negative self-reinforcing loop. “The problem of inequality is not so much a matter of technical economics. It’s really a problem of practical politics,” according to Stiglitz. Economic inequality “can lead to a capture of the political process by a tiny high-income and high-wealth elite.”

In other words, economic inequality is linked to political inequality. Indeed, some economists such as New York University’s Nouriel Roubini caution that “any economic model that does not properly address inequality will eventually face a crisis of legitimacy.” Legitimacy underpins democratic governments’ ability to instill trust in institutions and leaders and to enforce rule of law.

In this age of widespread advancement in communication and transportation, the images and awareness of inequality between rich and poor are seeping into the people’s consciousness, especially for those who are at the bottom of the wealth pyramid. As their aspirations change, they may no longer be satisfied with small, incremental improvements in their lives when they know that others are gaining much more.

### Security risks

Policymakers and security professionals should be cognizant of persistently rising socio-economic inequalities. The World Economic Forum’s Global Risks 2012 reported that “on an unprecedented scale around the world, there is a sense of receding hope for future prospects. Gallup polling data reveal that, globally, people perceived their living standards to be falling, and they expressed diminishing confidence in the ability of their government to reverse this trend.

International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine LaGarde, in her remarks at the Conference on Inclusive Capitalism, warned that “disparity also

brings division. History also teaches us that democracy begins to fray at the edges once political battles separate the haves against the have-nots.” Such sentiment can be easily amplified and exploited by extremists such as al-Qaida and ISIS with charismatic appeal and entrepreneurial use of modern communication technology.

This returns the discussion to the plausibility of Piketty’s 2015 pronouncement in the French newspaper *Le Monde* attributing the rise of ISIS to persistently increasing socio-economic inequality. On the basis of a review of literature and studies across various disciplines showing that relative deprivation and socio-economic inequality have a significant correlation with social unrest, political instability and violent conflict, Piketty’s argument appears to be well-founded. Relative deprivation and inequality can indeed promote radicalization by reinforcing other sources of grievances, creating fractured societies and loss of legitimacy for existing systems, which in turn offers greater opportunity for social unrest and violent political expression. Therefore, Piketty is on target in recommending that the strategy to address the ISIS problem must include approaches to improve overall economic conditions and narrow the socio-economic gaps within and between countries. □

A woman asks passersby for donations to fight child poverty in Tokyo.



# STRATEGIC POSITIONING



# India in the Cross Currents of the Indo-Pacific

SAROSH BANA

India is heartened by the U.S. administration's interest in not only sustaining a strategic partnership but also in elevating India to higher levels in the context of changing geopolitics.

As U.S. President Donald Trump lit an oil lamp to celebrate his first Diwali, the festival of lights, at the White House alongside several Indian-Americans, he praised the Indian-American community and said he valued his strong relationship with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"As we do so [celebrate Diwali], we especially remember the people of India, the home of the Hindu faith, who have built the world's largest democracy," Trump said. "We reaffirm that Indian-Americans and Hindu-Americans are truly cherished, treasured and beloved members of our great American family."

Modi was among the first world leaders Trump telephoned within five days of his inauguration as president in January 2017. During his election campaign, Trump declared to his Indian supporters and donors that he was "a big fan of India; big, big fan, big, big fan." He also added, "Let me start by saying right up front that if I'm elected president, the Indian and Hindu community will have a true friend in the White House, and I can guarantee you that."

## GROWING PARTNERSHIP

Soon after his Diwali celebration, Trump sent then-U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson on his first visit to India. Trump's daughter and advisor, Ivanka Trump, followed a month later. Both emissaries relayed Trump's sentiments to the Indian leadership. His daughter led a 350-person U.S. delegation to the eighth annual Global Entrepreneurship Summit that was inaugurated by the prime minister in the south Indian city of Hyderabad. In her address to more than 1,500 business leaders from 150 countries at the summit, which was co-hosted by the U.S. State Department, Ivanka Trump said the event testified to the strong partnership and the abiding economic and security ties between India and the U.S., despite differences on issues such as the movement of people, trade imbalance and visas.

At his India stop on his Asia tour, Tillerson affirmed in New Delhi: "President Trump and Prime Minister Modi are committed, more than any other leaders before them, to building an ambitious partnership that benefits not only our two great democracies, but other sovereign nations working toward greater peace and stability."

"The Pacific and the Indian oceans have linked our nations for centuries, and as we look to the next 100 years, it is vital that the Indo-Pacific, a region so central to our shared history, continues to be free and open," Tillerson said.



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, left, and U.S. President Donald Trump shake hands during a bilateral meeting at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Summit in November 2017 in Manila, Philippines. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



**Top, clockwise: Burmese State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi, left, and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi greet before a meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in New Delhi celebrating 25 years of the group's ties with India. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, left, and his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi, raise hands after the groundbreaking ceremony for a high-speed rail project in Ahmedabad, India, in September 2017. REUTERS Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, left, and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi greet each other before a meeting at Hyderabad House in New Delhi in January 2018. REUTERS**

Noting that the U.S. and India are global partners with growing strategic convergence, he maintained this would have far-reaching implications for the next 100 years.

Tillerson picked up the threads from Modi's June 2016 address to the U.S. Congress where he, in response to then-U.S. President Barack Obama's keenness in enlisting India in stemming the rise of China in the Indo-Pacific, had affirmed that strong links between the two democracies could anchor peace, prosperity and stability "from Asia to Africa and from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific." Modi's repeated references to India's commitment to freedom and democracy served as a reminder that his country offered Washington a like-minded partner in an increasingly unsettled region, and that it provided Asia with a model for development and progress more compatible with American values. Obama, too, had declared the two-way relationship to be "a defining partnership of the century ahead," calling India "a 21st-century center of influence."

## ASEAN SUMMIT

Meeting in November 2017 on the sidelines of the 31st Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit, convened in Manila, Philippines, Modi and Trump discussed their shared commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific region. They pledged to enhance their cooperation as major defense partners, resolving that two of the world's greatest democracies should also have the world's greatest militaries. India, the world's largest buyer of arms, is a major importer of American military hardware and conducts more military exercises with the U.S. than with any other country.

The two leaders were meeting a day after officials from their countries and Australia and Japan discussed formalizing a quadrilateral alliance — known as the quad — with the aim of keeping the Indo-Pacific region "free, open and inclusive." The quad is being viewed as a counterbalance to China in the littoral, prompting Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang

to retort that any such proposal should “avoid politicizing or excluding relevant parties” and should not be “directed at a third party.”

Prior to his meeting with President Trump, Modi said, “I would like to assure you that whatever expectations the world has of India, and whatever expectation the U.S. has, India has made all-out efforts to fulfill those expectations, and it will continue to do so.” Tillerson had previously remarked that China, while rising alongside India, had done so less responsibly, at times undermining the international rules-based order even as countries like India operated within a framework that protected other nations’ sovereignty. He added that China’s provocative actions in the South China Sea directly challenged international law.

In current geopolitics, India is prioritizing Southeast Asia in its foreign policy as it completes 25 years of dialogue partnership, 15 years of summit-level interaction and five years of strategic partnership with ASEAN. India has traditionally invited a foreign head of state or government to its Republic Day celebrations every January and unprecedentedly invited the leaders of all 10 ASEAN nations to the most recent observance.

New Delhi is negotiating with ASEAN to extend the planned 1,360-kilometer India-Burma-Thailand highway to Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. “Once we connect, we have a tremendous potential in terms of incremental GDP [gross domestic product],” said Dakshita Das, joint secretary to the Indian Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. “Connectivity can generate annually an estimated [U.S.] \$70 billion in incremental GDP and [U.S.] \$20 million in incremental aggregate employment by 2025.”

ASEAN, with a combined GDP of U.S. \$2.56 trillion and population of 639 million, lies in the immediate and extended vicinity of India, with some of its member states sharing maritime boundaries with India, while Burma also shares a land boundary.

This bloc of nations — established August 8, 1967, in Bangkok, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) — includes Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. It abuts a littoral rendered volatile by a confrontational China determined to dominate the South and East China seas and beyond, and an intransigent North Korea that flaunts its nuclear and conventional clout. Beijing’s claims of sovereignty over the region have fueled disputes with Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei on the Paracel and Spratly island chains and with the Philippines also over the Scarborough Shoal.

## ECONOMIC ALIGNMENT

New Delhi also seeks to align its U.S. \$1 billion line of credit proposal for ASEAN for promoting projects that support sea, air, road and digital connectivity with the ASEAN Master Plan on Connectivity 2025 that concerns sustainable infrastructure, digital innovation, seamless logistics, regulatory excellence and people mobility. India additionally set up a U.S. \$77 million project development fund for establishing manufacturing hubs in Burma, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. The country is already working with Burma in the areas of border security, infrastructure and institutional development, capacity building and connectivity projects.

Trump chose the platform of the subsequent Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum in Da Nang, Vietnam, to articulate an incipient strategy for Asia that focused on the expanding cooperation between the U.S., India, Japan and Australia. “I’ve had the honor of sharing our vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific,” he told the delegates. “We have been friends, partners and allies in the Indo-Pacific for a long, long time, and we will be friends, partners and allies for a long time.”

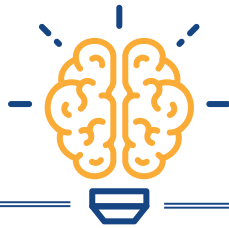
He, however, did not delineate any policy framework for the region or how American efforts would play out.

His administration does see threats emerging in the Indo-Pacific from the rise of an increasingly restive and assertive China, which, in the larger context, is signaling a shift in the balance of power in the region. New Delhi’s stance is also compelled by realism because it is circumspect about Beijing’s vaulting ambitions, as well as about the crosshairs of conflicting interests in this region of immense geostrategic import.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s resounding win in the October 2017 elections will prove crucial because he has publicly decried Beijing’s aggression and is intent on redrafting his country’s pacifist Constitution to make it more militarily responsive to the emergent situation in the region.

Around the same time, China held its Communist Party Congress that not only conferred an unimpeachable position on President Xi Jinping but also implied a “new era” of Chinese power and the making of China as the leading global superpower by 2050.

India is already an integral part of the great power shift of the 21st century to the Indo-Pacific. As India continues to work with other countries and organizations to assume a greater role in the region, India is emerging as a key counterbalance to China. □



# INFORMATION

# SHARING

*Better cooperation among military, civilian and humanitarian organizations can improve data management for aid and relief efforts*

JOSEPH D. MARTIN

In a world plagued with communication challenges, the generation, validation and dissemination of information isn't one of them. The use of digital sensors, commercial satellites and drones flood communications platforms with ones and zeros. Other technologies and human activities such as crowdsourcing may shape that information to address relevant questions and challenges, but often answers get lost in the sheer volume of data.

This is particularly relevant — and especially challenging — in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR). The nexus between civilian and military actors in this environment rates special attention due to altruistic and security-linked concerns. However, for any meaningful action to occur, military and civilian actors need to make significant changes in their trust and openness policies.

In a disaster, the militaries of the world are often the best-resourced organizations to respond. Be it communications, data collection, transportation or command and control, there is often no civilian analog with equally broad capacity. A downfall of this significant resource is that the military usually operates within the confines of its own protective barriers, be they physical or digital. Data are gathered, and information is shared in response to specific military needs with rare consideration

for the utility of that same information outside the military.

Similarly, civilian or humanitarian organizations gather and share their own information to meet their specific needs during a response. Examples include other government agencies, private businesses, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and a range of international and regional organizations. Recent advances in technology even allow individuals and small-team, tech-driven players to use their unique skill sets to help others, often in an impromptu fashion.



**Nepali and U.S. service members help children at a school during the bilateral humanitarian aid and disaster relief exercise, Pacific Angel, in Gorkha, Nepal.**

AIRMAN 1ST CLASS VALERIE MONROY/U.S. AIR FORCE

## Shared Interests

Experiences relayed by practitioners during military events, combined United Nations and Association of Southeast Asian Nations gatherings, and even academic interactions point to a difference in collection means and capacities but a mutual willingness or ability to share. In the immediate aftermath of a large-scale disaster, information pours in from countless sources: militaries, local and foreign, gather

imagery and intelligence data; local NGOs gather firsthand reports and on-the-ground images; and social media feeds populate Twitter, Facebook and other apps with real-time self-reporting. The volume of data continues to grow, and disaster-specific sharing mechanisms pop up based on the preferred local apps and data-sharing platforms.



Chinese and U.S. Soldiers work together during joint disaster-relief training in Kuming, Yunnan province. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Technologists from across the globe independently mine the metadata of the feeds and produce products accordingly. Intensity maps pop up, and various hot spots are triangulated and verified. These compiled products add to the growing stream of data, which, on the macro level, can be overwhelming.

However, at the micro level, challenges exist as well. In an instant, a U.S. surveillance aircraft on a HADR-sanctioned flight over the city captures an image of the destruction. The image is then scrubbed of any classified-related metadata and released to the affected country and is placed on a system such as the U.S. Department of Defense's All Partners Access Network (APAN). Shortly thereafter, NGOs on the ground venture into that area to serve their primary benefactors.

Challenges to this scenario are extensive:

- With degraded communications, much of the technological analysis can be delayed in getting sufficient data and/or in relaying it to consumers in the field.
- Declassification and timelines for military assets may exceed the relevancy of the imagery taken.
- If the military imagery is scrubbed and becomes available, NGOs may not be willing to use it for fear of losing their humanitarian principles of neutrality, particularly in a combat zone. Or they may not trust the data if the source is masked and no longer verifiable.

With this flood of information — on a grand scale or with a single image — it is critical to realize that data and imagery are only useful if the consumer can do the requisite analysis. For example, with proper analytical support, an image of an affected urban area can serve the needs of search-and-rescue teams for damaged facilities and UNICEF and other children-focused NGOs

**People eat in a flood-relief camp in West Bengal, India.**  
REUTERS



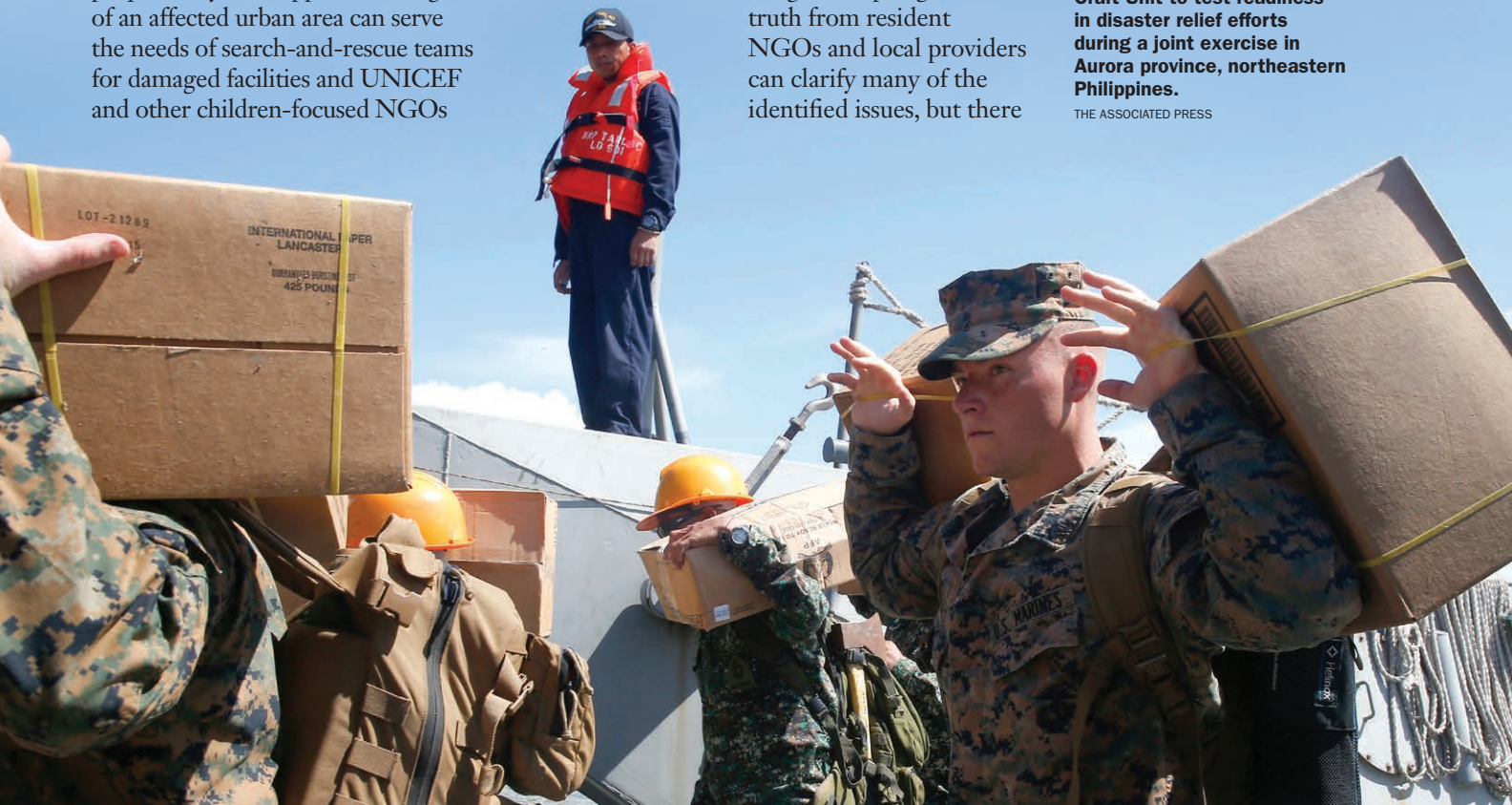
on the condition of schools. The same schools can be used by shelter managers for displaced personnel. Engineering teams can determine the condition of roads, power lines, and water and sewer treatment plants. Medical personnel can determine how many beds are needed. Moreover, the details of population gathering points as well as the number of dead and injured can be ascertained. Six, 10 or 100 people can look at the same image and find answers to their respective questions if they can analyze the image for relevant information.

However, there are significant trust issues with data sharing and historical challenges such as those espoused in the military mantra of having a “need to know.” Many have expressed the advantages of transitioning to a “need-to-share” basis, but that is a separate discussion.

In the above urban image example, ground truth from resident NGOs and local providers can clarify many of the identified issues, but there

**Philippine and U.S. troops carry relief supplies from a Philippine Navy Landing Craft Unit to test readiness in disaster relief efforts during a joint exercise in Aurora province, northeastern Philippines.**

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



are no known mechanisms to feed a central system. Additional types of data can augment the clarity by overlaying social media feeds, firsthand imagery and even crowdsourcing inputs. Unfortunately, even the idea of a central repository for disaster data is fraught with trust, technology and “not originated here” issues. A quick count shows 20-plus systems that are available in the open environment (of which APAN is one), with countless more at the individual level.

## Building Trust

What is needed is a catalyst to drive the civil-military community, which is dedicated to saving lives and alleviating suffering, to expand its view on information sharing among a team of participants that range from single-person do-gooders to local and national first responders, NGOs and local and foreign militaries.

We are in a technological age in which that supposition is possible and sustainable. It is possible to create an information-sharing environment — beyond a mere platform — that enables trusted sharing not only of data but also of query capabilities to search for answers efficiently without duplicating imagery or data requests that others have already answered.

Inherent challenges start with trust and standards. Despite the humanitarian foundation of many civic-minded disaster relief groups, individual organizations are typically not inherently trusting of each other and

certainly not of militaries or government agencies. Often, an NGO’s ability to generate sustenance revenue is based on its niche capability to serve a given need, and “giving away” that answer or data puts its existence at risk. Similarly, the government providers of data usually exist in a world of reduced trust to freely share data — especially where a perceived or real enemy can use that data to do harm.

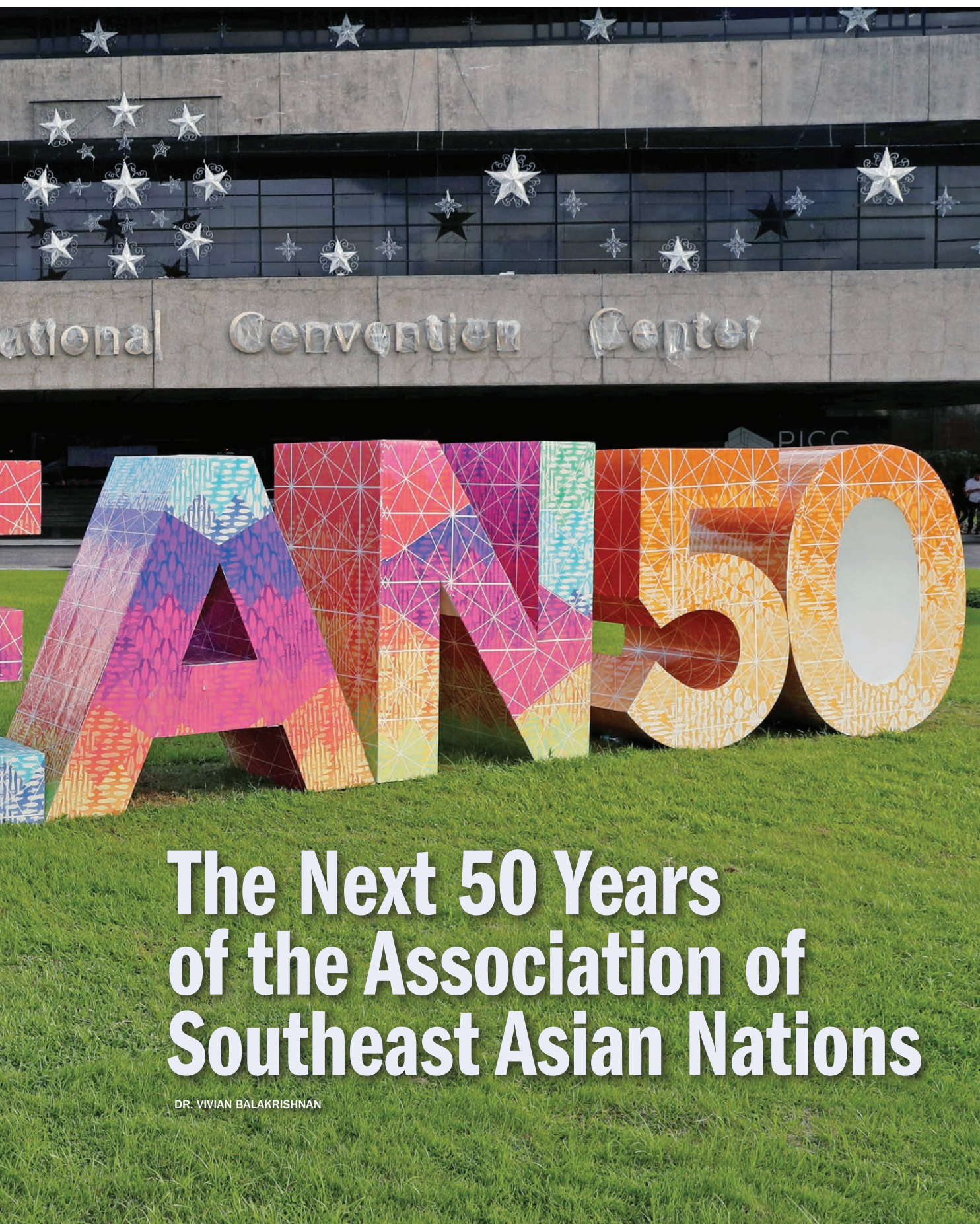
How an entity would be able to share and integrate data, information and knowledge from a range of systems and then provide answers to an even larger number of queries presents a seemingly dauntless challenge. As big data and artificial intelligence expand, these challenges can be resolved. Perhaps a trusted organization, which is neither military nor humanitarian, can fill this gap by providing the expertise in information collection and analysis, while maintaining the trust of all involved.

The problem is not the lack of data. It is the lack of sharing, the lack of ability to analyze raw information, the lack of trust between the creators of the data and the organizations receiving it, and the lack of an organization to fill the gap among them. Each of these challenges has a solution, but it remains the responsibility of the community to decide when it wishes to tackle them. □

**Rescuers from Japan help search an apartment building that collapsed after a 6.4-magnitude earthquake hit Hualien County, eastern Taiwan, in February 2018.** THE ASSOCIATED PRESS







# The Next 50 Years of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

DR. VIVIAN BALAKRISHNAN

**T**he Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is at an inflection point today, and not just because it's 50 years old — it's because the world as a whole has changed, and we are living in uncertain times.

The geostrategic balance has changed dramatically. Never in human history have 2 billion people suddenly come online and connected to the global economy at the same time. Never have hundreds of millions of people been raised from poverty into a rising middle class. We've seen this transformation occur since 1978 in China and in 1991 in India. Rising economic power must inevitably mean increased diplomatic and military clout. So, there's no question that the entire geostrategic balance, and many of the assumptions and presumptions that we took for granted, no longer apply.

climate change. These phenomena are not confined to neat geographical boundaries, and they don't operate within the usual concepts of the Westphalian nation state. The only way to deal with these transboundary global threats is to mount a global consensus and global action, whether you're dealing with cyber, climate or terrorism. A case in point in Southeast Asia is the returning fighters from Iraq and Syria, where ISIS [the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria] has lost ground. We saw some more returning fighters in Marawi, in the southern Philippines. There are other potential hotbeds for terrorists in our region. Closer to home, we even saw a Singaporean in an ISIS recruitment video. Our concern about the problem in Rakhine state is also related to our anxiety that it becomes another sanctuary, another hotbed, for extremism and terrorism. So, the implication here is that these types of problems cannot be solved purely locally, and no single country can solve them alone. More collective effort will be needed to tackle these challenges. The global multilateral processes — the Law of the Sea, climate change, looking after the natural heritage of mankind — all these things become more salient. We need that approach — that multilateral mutual respect, interdependence and cooperation.

### AHEAD OF THE CURVE

Finally, ASEAN has had to contend with its own internal challenges. The 10 ASEAN member states are highly diverse in terms of our political, economic and social systems. In fact, I believe we may be the most diverse grouping in the world. You have 10 very different countries — in size, population, religion. We've got political systems that range from absolute monarchy to democracy to military arrangements.

Much has been asked about this ASEAN habit of consensus — of seeking consensus — and whether this is a bug or a design feature. In fact, it is a design feature. It is designed because of the great diversity within ASEAN, and consensus is a necessary fail-safe. It ensures that every member — regardless of size, politics, state of economic development — has an equal voice. Another way of expressing it: Every member has a veto.

Consensus forces us to take an enlightened long-term view of our own



**Singaporean Foreign Minister Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan speaks at the 15th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) lecture.**

REUTERS

Economic and political institutions are being questioned as never before, and the jobs of today are at risk of becoming obsolete. The real challenge is not to build walls or not just to redistribute accumulated past wealth. The real challenge is to ensure that our people have the right skills for the new jobs and that the new means of production are democratized and commoditized so that a new middle class can rise, with no one left behind.

Our global world order is being reshaped by the emergence of nonstate actors and transboundary challenges, including terrorism, cyber crime and



national interest regarding the larger, long-term regional interest. In a sense, that somewhat slower, more laborious process of achieving consensus nevertheless allows us to achieve more sustainable solutions. Because you know that when we've signed, everyone has thought through it, worked through the implications, and has agreed to stand by it. Consensus is a design feature and is the foundation of ASEAN unity. The fundamental question, however, whenever events and challenges arise, is to what extent can we make the optimal trade-off between pursuing our own national interests versus the broader, long-term regional interests.

Despite the challenges we face — internally as well as externally — I remain optimistic that our prospects are bright for the next 50 years.

It is also worth remembering that the original five member states of ASEAN consisted of noncommunist Southeast Asia. By getting together and having those first critical two to three decades of peace among ourselves and time to invest in our infrastructure, invest in our people, and to prove that an economic model of openness, of trade, of liberalization works. In fact, we were ahead of the curve. Today, you call it globalization. Today, virtually every region of the world operates on that, although as I have said earlier, there are some questions about the limits of globalization. And we must give credit to ASEAN for simply

preventing war among the original members, and subsequently when we included Vietnam in 1995, Laos and Myanmar [Burma] in 1997, and then Cambodia in 1999. The point I want to make is that there has been no outright conflict, war or battle between ASEAN member states. And in this day and age, this is an achievement worth celebrating.

It is also worth recalling that one of ASEAN's most high-profile diplomatic campaigns was in the aftermath of the Vietnamese intervention in Cambodia in 1979. ASEAN was swimming against conventional wisdom at the United Nations at that point in time. Nevertheless, ASEAN stood united and raised its point — that we do not stand or tolerate foreign intervention, and we want to assert the rights of self-determination for our member states. Again, as I said, against conventional wisdom, ahead of its time, but we succeeded. And when the Cold War ended, which in turn led to ASEAN's expansion, the point here is that if you think about it, ASEAN's formation, ASEAN's growth and ASEAN's challenges have always everything to do with what happens on the global stage.

### ASEAN UNITY AND CENTRALITY

So, it comes back to this point that our need for consensus and our need for unity to preserve our centrality and relevance in the rest of the world is always at play. It is worth contemplating the opposite scenario.

**Association of Southeast Asian Nations foreign ministers link hands "The ASEAN Way" at the opening ceremony of the 50th ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting at the Philippine International Convention Center in Manila, Philippines. From left, Malaysia's Anifah Aman, Burma's U Kyaw Tin, Thailand's Don Pramudwinai, Vietnam's Pham Binh Minh, Philippines' Alan Peter Cayetano, Singapore's Vivian Balakrishnan, Brunei's Lim Jock Seng, Cambodia's Prak Sokhonn, Indonesia's Retno Marsudi, Laos' Saleumxay Kommasith and ASEAN Secretary-General Le Luong Minh.**

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# Singapore's Aspirations as ASEAN Chair\*

## **FOCUS ON E-COMMERCE:**

We hope to establish an ASEAN Smart Cities Network. It will connect people and economies seamlessly; it will enable ideas and solutions to flow across our entire region.

## **BUILD RESILIENCE**

We hope to build and enhance collective resilience against common threats such as terrorism, violent extremism and transnational crimes. We need to step up collaboration on cyber security, and to step up urgently, because you can't have a smarter world, you can't have e-commerce, you can't have seamless digital transactions if you don't have cyber security. We will need a robust cyber security regime to provide assurances and opportunities for our people and our businesses. We will also work toward completing a Model ASEAN Extradition Treaty, which will be an important step in strengthening the regional rule of law.

## **INVEST IN PEOPLE**

Sixty percent of ASEAN's population of 628 million are below the age of 35. Just now, I referred to this issue of a demographic drought that has occurred in Northeast Asia and in some parts of Europe. The fact that ASEAN is young and we have not yet harvested our demographic dividend is a source of great opportunity. But, and there is a but, young people are a source of great opportunity and inspiration if we ensure that they have the relevant skills and that governments have invested in the

latest, up-to-date infrastructure, and that our social, political and economic systems give people opportunities, fair opportunities. If we can achieve this, then a young ASEAN, with a population larger than Europe, in a region of peace, and a region that connects Northeast Asia, South Asia including India, Australia and New Zealand, and across the Pacific, we are in the middle of all the action.

## **ENHANCE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIPS**

We want to give everyone a bigger stake in our region's continued prosperity. When we meet superpowers, my usual line to them is: It is in your own long-term interest for ASEAN to succeed, because ASEAN will ultimately be your biggest trading partner; ASEAN will be your great opportunity for investments. The key word, the key concept behind this, is interdependence. We believe the way to secure peace is to promote interdependence and then to tell everyone that you gain more by working together, by investing in one another, by trading with one another — win-win outcomes. Because the opposite scenario is to divide the world into rival blocs, insist on narrow independence, engage in zero-sum competition and ultimately proxy wars. So, economic, political interdependence is our recipe for peace and prosperity.

We will therefore step up our efforts to achieve a high-quality Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). This is a free-trade pact that includes all 10 ASEAN countries

and the six partners of ASEAN whom we already have free trade arrangements with. The six are China, India, Australia, New Zealand, Korea and Japan. If we put all these together, you account for more than 30 percent of global gross domestic product and about 40 percent of the global population. Of course, our longer-term aim is to achieve a free-trade area of the Asia-Pacific. Whether you talk about the RCEP or TPP [Trans-Pacific Partnership], to us, they are just multiple roads that lead to a larger destination.

## **INCREASE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES**

We will also bolster regional business opportunities, particularly for small and medium enterprises, by advancing the ASEAN single window and the ASEAN-wide self-certification regime. I should add that it is also worth emphasizing that at the recent ASEAN Summit in Manila, ASEAN and China formally announced the commencement of negotiations for the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. This has been long overdue. The Declaration of Conduct was signed in 2002, a long time ago. This is a very positive sign, an icon that both China and ASEAN countries want to achieve peace and stability, and to ensure that the South China Sea remains a calm sea. This is crucial because this is a critical artery for free trade, and free trade is essential for the economic development and transformation of our region.

\* Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong introduced Singapore's priorities as the incoming ASEAN chair in November 2017. Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan reiterated them during the 15th ASEAN lecture on December 5, 2017.

If ASEAN had not been formed, if we had not insisted on consensus as a design feature, I think the opposite scenario for Southeast Asia in the past 50 years without ASEAN is that we would have been a collection of proxies and vassal states to the major powers of the day. And that would not have been a recipe for peace, prosperity and the economic transformation that we have witnessed over the past 50 years. Therefore, unity and centrality for ASEAN are key for our survival. As Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong has put it, ASEAN today is a lifeboat for all 10 member states to come together, to work together and to have our voice heard on the global stage.

It is imperative that we do not break ranks, and we do not sacrifice the long-term regional good in favor of narrower short-term national interests. Otherwise, no one will take us seriously.

I'm always amazed at ASEAN summits and at the [East Asia Summit] that the leaders from America, China, Russia, Australia, New Zealand, India all bother to come and engage us. If ASEAN was not successful, if ASEAN was not united, if ASEAN didn't matter, I don't think those leaders would bother to come and see us every year. For ASEAN to remain credible, relevant and central is an imperative for us. It is also in our hands, in our leaders' hands, to get the right balance between emphasizing regional unity while still guarding our long-term national interests.

ASEAN is always going to be affected by what happens externally. and our short history of 50 years has illustrated that. The challenge is whether we allow these external tsunamis to overwhelm us, to divide us, or whether we collectively build a bigger, stronger ship that will allow us to navigate out of danger and to expand opportunities for all our people. We need and we want ASEAN to be adaptable, and we want ASEAN to seize the new opportunities that the ongoing digital revolution will bring and to formulate innovative ways to deal with these new challenges, especially the transboundary challenges that I have outlined earlier.

That's why Singapore, as the chair of ASEAN, wants to focus on strengthening ASEAN's resilience and expanding our innovative capacity. Resilience and innovation will underpin cooperation across all three community pillars of ASEAN under our chairmanship.



We've come a long way. There's much to celebrate, much to be proud of. The challenges that we've overcome are also salutary reminders — reminders that ASEAN will always be subject to external forces, and we have to take the world as it is and make the necessary adjustments. It's a reminder that there will always be a premium on maintaining ASEAN unity for us to remain relevant and to give truth to this concept of ASEAN centrality. It is also a reminder that we remain a region with tremendous potential. Achieving that potential will require that we pay attention to some fundamentals and that we get the balance right — between protecting regional unity and relevance while at the same time advancing our own long-term national interests.

Our prospects remain bright. Singapore, as ASEAN chair, will do our best as ASEAN makes its first steps into the next 50 years toward that bright future that our people demand and expect. □

**Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj, right, welcomes her Singaporean counterpart, Vivian Balakrishnan, in New Delhi, India.**

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This article was excerpted from a speech by Singaporean Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan at the 15th ASEAN Lecture, "ASEAN: Next 50," at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies-Yusof Ishak Institute in Singapore on December 5, 2017. It has been edited for length and to fit FORUM's format.



Members of the Amis indigenous group dance during the traditional harvest festival in Hualien, eastern Taiwan.

Taiwan's tribal  
matchmaking  
festival celebrates  
a tradition

Known as "Lovers' Night," it is the grand finale of the annual harvest festival in the settlement that belongs to the Amis tribe, the largest of the 16 recognized indigenous groups in Taiwan.

Near the island's rugged east coast, the village of Mataian is a collection of basic, low-lying houses along meandering streets, located in a valley between two mountain ranges.

The harvest festival usually runs between June and August, with each village holding it at a different time. It is the biggest and most important celebration for the Amis tribe. In Mataian, it culminates with single women

taking their pick of eligible bachelors.

The centuries-old custom is a reflection of the tribe's matriarchal system, which sees that women make key decisions, including managing finances, and men marry into their wives' families.

As the singing and dancing men pick up their pace, the women move

in behind their chosen love interest and tug on a multicolored cloth bag slung on their target's shoulder.

To spark interest, the men wiggle and flex their muscles, the most popular among them accruing a queue of interested women. If a man reciprocates the approach, he will give his bag — known as an alufo — to the woman, marking the beginning of a courtship.

In the past, the ritual would commonly lead to marriage and even now still sparks

relationships, but it is also a chance for Amis community members who are working in the cities to return and socialize.

"Lovers' Night is to make friends," said Cheng Ying-hsuan, who is in her early 20s.

Dressed in a red traditional outfit adorned with green beads and her own sequined alufo, she had returned to the village from the city of Hualien, where she now lives, an hour's drive away. Asked if she hoped to find a boyfriend, she laughed and said coyly: "That's also a possibility."

Mataian is one of the biggest Amis settlements and is home to about 500 people, mostly elderly people and children.

"We like the feeling of everyone coming back together and reconnecting. For us this is the most important," said Liao Ching-tung, 28, who lives in the capital, Taipei.

Each harvest festival, hundreds who have moved away to work or study return to join in the festivities. The indigenous community, which remains a marginalized group in Taiwan society, has seen its traditional culture eroded since immigrants started arriving from mainland China centuries ago.

Since President Tsai Ing-wen came to power in May 2016, her government has been pushing for greater indigenous rights and preservation of tribal languages and culture.

Some groups, however, have criticized Tsai for not going far enough, and they have clashed with authorities over land-rights policy, demanding their ancestral areas be returned.

In Mataian, tradition is alive and kicking.

Lamen Panay, 41, who goes by her tribal name, says the matchmaking event is still meaningful to her even though she is no longer single. She has a collection of lovers' bags from past harvest festivals, but has since settled down with her long-term boyfriend, living with him in Taipei.

The couple are both from the village, and Lamen still makes a point of picking him out during the matchmaking ritual. "We are both usually very busy with work," she said. "It's necessary to rekindle the flames."

# Girl Meets Boy

STORY BY AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
PHOTOS BY AFP/GETTY IMAGES



Male members of the Amis indigenous group participate in an ancient matchmaking ritual known as "Lovers' Night."

# Norway Powers Ahead:

## Over Half of New Car Sales Now Electric or Hybrid

Sales of electric and hybrid cars rose above half of new registrations in Norway in 2017, a record aided by generous subsidies that extended the country's lead in shifting from fossil-fuel engines, January 2018 data showed.

Pure electric cars and hybrids, which have both battery power and a diesel or petrol motor, accounted for 52 percent of all new car sales in 2017 in Norway compared to 40 percent in 2016, the independent Norwegian Road Federation (OFV) said.

"No one else is close" in terms of a national share of electric cars, OFV chief Oeyvind Solberg Thorsen said. "For the first time we have a fossil-fuel market share below 50 percent."

Norway exempts new electric cars from almost all taxes and grants perks that can be worth thousands of dollars a year in terms of free or subsidized parking, re-charging and use of toll roads, ferries and tunnels.

It also generates almost all its electricity from hydropower, so the shift helps to reduce air pollution and potentially the effects of climate change.

In 2017, the International Energy Agency said Norway was far ahead of other nations such as the Netherlands, Sweden, China, France and Britain in electric car sales.

Norwegian car sales in 2017 were topped by the Volkswagen Golf, BMWi3, Toyota Rav4 and Tesla Model X. The Tesla is pure electric, and

others have electric or hybrid versions.

In many countries, high prices of battery-driven cars, limited ranges between recharging and long charging times discourage buyers. Carmakers say the disadvantages are dwindling over time with new models.

"We view Norway as a role model for how electric mobility can be promoted through smart incentives," a spokesman at BMW's Munich HQ said. "The situation would probably be different if these incentives were dropped."

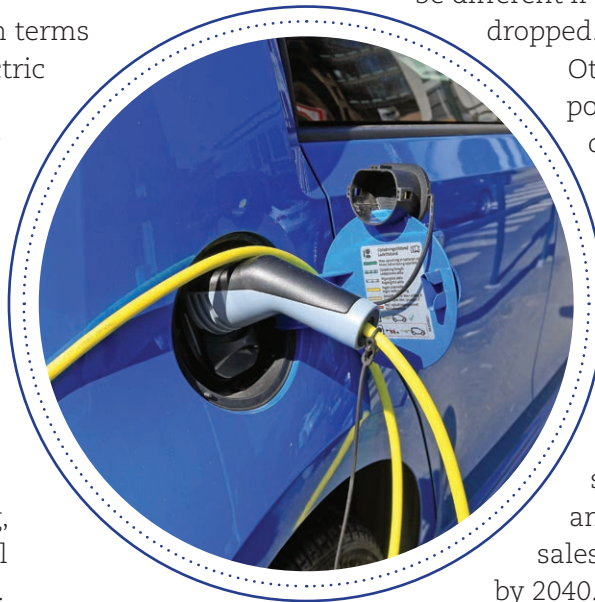
Other "good examples" of policies to spur electric-car demand include Britain, California and the Netherlands, he said.

In 2017, Norway's parliament set a nonbinding goal that by 2025 all cars sold should emit no exhaust gas from the onboard source of power. France and Britain plan to ban sales of petrol and diesel cars by 2040. Overall, sales of zero-emissions cars in Norway rose in 2017

to 21 percent from 16 in 2016.

Norway's electric car policies are hard to imitate. Norway can be generous because high revenues from oil and gas production have helped it amass the world's biggest sovereign wealth fund, worth U.S. \$1 trillion.

Even in Norway, the benefits strain finances. Norway's 1.3 trillion Norwegian crown budget projects a loss of tax revenues of 3 billion crowns a year because of electric cars. Reuters



# CHINA'S ONLINE QUIZ CRAZE LURES PRIZE SEEKERS, TECH GIANTS

It seems like a game everyone wins: Some of China's biggest tech companies, looking to hook in new consumers, are using cash prizes to draw millions of contenders to mobile-based online quiz shows.

Up to 6 million people at a time log into the free, live games on their smartphones to answer a series of rapid-fire questions in an elimination battle, with those remaining sharing the prize money. For example, *Baiwan Yingjia*, or *Millions Winner*, an online quiz game by live streaming app Huajiao, is seen on a mobile phone in this January 2018 image.

Search engine giant Baidu Inc. and video game maker NetEase Inc. launched their own online shows, joining news feed platform Toutiao, Alibaba Group Holding Ltd.-owned UCWeb and Wang Sicong, the scion of Chinese billionaire Wang Jianlin.

How they will cash in on the games and stay on the right side of government censors might prove to be a tricky question. The trivia games have drawn some controversy, heightened by a broader crackdown on online content during the past year under President Xi Jinping, from livestreams and blogs to a campaign against internet addiction.

In January 2018, *Millions Winner*, backed by internet security company Qihoo 360, apologized after it was chastised by a regulator for listing Taiwan and Hong Kong, over which China claims sovereignty, as independent countries in a question.

How firms will monetize the craze is also not yet clear, though some companies, such as online retailer JD.com Inc., have already jumped on the trend, sponsoring shows to help raise their profiles. Many of the games show ads to players.

"If you ask me why I do this, to be honest, I don't really know if I can make money," Zhou Hongyi, chairman of Qihoo, said at an event where he presented a contestant with a 1 million yuan (U.S. \$156,115.84) prize.

The quiz mania underlines the fierce appetite of China's consumers for internet entertainment, a trend helping to drive billions of dollars of

investment into digital news portals, online gaming, internet advertising and television content.

Questions, read by a live host, might include: "From which country were pineapples imported to China in the 16th century?" "In which dynasty was the lamb hot pot invented?" or "How many fingers does Mickey Mouse have?"

Contestants get 10 seconds, a time frame designed to prevent cheating, to select the correct answer from a choice of three. Winnings can be up to 3 million yuan per game, but are often split among many winners.

Toutiao, a highly popular news feed app, was valued at U.S. \$20 billion in a fund-raiser in 2017, sources close to the company said.

Raymond Wang, managing partner at Beijing law firm Anli Partners, said the shows were a "relatively low-cost way to get to users," but cautioned there were political and technical risks.

Wang Ran, a prominent investor and head of Beijing-based private investment bank CEC Capital Group, posed a question on his WeChat account about the future of the online quiz show trend. "A) Growing numbers will jump into the market. B) Someone will win 10 million yuan in one go. C) Authorities will strictly crack down on it. 10 seconds. Go!" Reuters



## Accessible EDUCATION

South Africa is pushing ahead with a plan to offer free university education to students from poor households, Finance Minister Malusi Gigaba said in January 2018.

President Jacob Zuma said the government would bankroll the tuition without giving details of how it would be funded. The announcement rattled financial markets, and critics said it was a populist promise that risked widening an already gaping budget deficit.

A government report and the treasury said the plan is unaffordable. Some critics also said the timing of the announcement, which came days before Zuma stepped down as leader of the ruling African National Congress, showed he no longer cared about fiscal responsibility.

Gigaba told reporters at a televised briefing in the capital, Pretoria, that cost estimates were completed, and the plan would be implemented over eight years.

"The president found himself in an invidious position. ... It is about how to manage the process and implement it in a sustainable manner without having to breach the fiscal expenditure ceiling," he said.

"If the president had not acted this year to provide some funding, it would have resulted in further protests," Gigaba said.

Since 2015, protests by students demanding free education rocked campuses across the country, disrupting teaching and examinations and culminating in a march to Zuma's offices in Pretoria that saw the president freeze tuition increases.

Reuters



PAUL G. ALLEN PHILANTHROPIES

### ANTARCTICA

## DEEP-DIVE DRONES

A University of Washington (UW) researcher heaved a half-million U.S. dollars' worth of robotic sensors into the frigid waters off Antarctica and hoped for the best.

If all goes well, the drones could gather some of the most extensive measurements ever from beneath the continent's vast and vulnerable western ice shelf. If things go wrong, the bots could vanish into the labyrinth of cavities and crevasses under the ice, never to be heard from again.

"The environment is just insanely harsh and remote," said oceanographer Craig Lee of the UW's Applied Physics Laboratory in Seattle. "This is very high risk."

The goal is to answer one of the biggest questions in climate science: How much and how quickly will sea level rise due to melting Antarctic ice sheets?

The uncertain odds of success made the project a long shot for federal research grants. Instead, Seattle billionaire Paul Allen is bankrolling the expedition. He has built a reputation for funding risky research with the potential for major impact.

Paul G. Allen Philanthropies put up U.S. \$1.8 million for the Antarctic field test to see if the robots can navigate the treacherous interface where ice shelves and ocean meet, gather data, and transmit it to Seattle.

If the probes pass muster, fleets of the relatively inexpensive instruments could be deployed in the future to

provide long-term measurements of ocean currents, water temperatures and the rate of melting.

"This will be a technological feat if we can pull it off," said Spencer Reeder, director of climate and energy for Allen Philanthropies. "We're willing to shoulder that initial risk, and if we can demonstrate it's possible, then others can follow suit."

Current projections of global sea-level rise by 2100 vary widely — from 0.3 meters to almost 2 meters — largely because scientists can't predict the fate of the massive ice sheets that cover Antarctica and Greenland. West Antarctica alone holds enough ice to raise sea levels worldwide nearly 3 meters.

"We don't think that's going to happen anytime soon," said UW glaciologist Knut Christianson. "But losing even a fraction of that ice could create a substantial challenge for coastal communities."

The glaciers that cover Antarctica are buttressed by floating ice shelves up to about a half kilometer thick. If global warming causes the shelves to collapse or melt, the glaciers could flow more rapidly into the ocean and accelerate sea-level rise.

The UW team plans to focus on Pine Island Glacier, Antarctica's fastest-melting ice sheet, where a huge iceberg broke off this fall. The glacier's flow has sped up nearly 75 percent in the past 40 years, possibly due to thinning of the floating ice shelf.

The Associated Press

# Partial Fossil of Turkey-Size Dinosaur Found in Australia

**I**n sandstone, next to the high-tide mark at the edge of Bass Strait in southeastern Australia, scientists have unearthed fossils of a two-legged, turkey-size, plant-eating dinosaur apparently swept away in a large, powerful ancient river.

Paleontologists in January 2018 said the partial skeleton of the previously unknown beast, named *Diluvicursor pickeringi*, that lived about 113 million years ago. It provides insight into the array of dinosaurs during the Cretaceous Period that inhabited Australia when it was still connected to Antarctica.

"Skeletons of dinosaurs from Australia are very rare," said University of Queensland paleontologist Matthew Herne, noting that *Diluvicursor* brings the number of Australian dinosaurs that have been named to 19.

Scientists found *Diluvicursor*'s remains among a jumbled collection of large fossilized tree trunks also apparently swept down

the river during a flood. The site is on the south coast of the state of Victoria, about 170 kilometers from Melbourne.

*Diluvicursor* was about 2.3 meters long. Herne said it was "comparable to a large domesticated turkey in weight, but of course much longer than a turkey because of its tail." The fossils included an almost complete tail, the lower part of the right leg and most of the right foot.

It lived alongside meat-eating dinosaurs about 6 meters long, as well as armored dinosaurs, turtles, shrew-size mammals and flying reptiles called pterosaurs. *Diluvicursor*, a member of a dinosaur group called ornithopods, was similar to another small, two-legged herbivorous dinosaur called *Leaellynasaura* that lived at about the same time and whose remains were unearthed about 15 kilometers away, Herne said.

The two may have occupied different ecological niches and eaten different plants.

*Leaellynasaura* was more lightly built, had a longer tail and may have been a more agile runner.

"An analogy can be seen in the kind of diversity seen in the kangaroos and wallabies in present-day Australia who occupy very different niches, from open plains to dense forest habitats," Herne said.

*Diluvicursor* roamed a forested broad rift valley flood plain between Australia and Antarctica, which remained connected until about 45 million years ago.

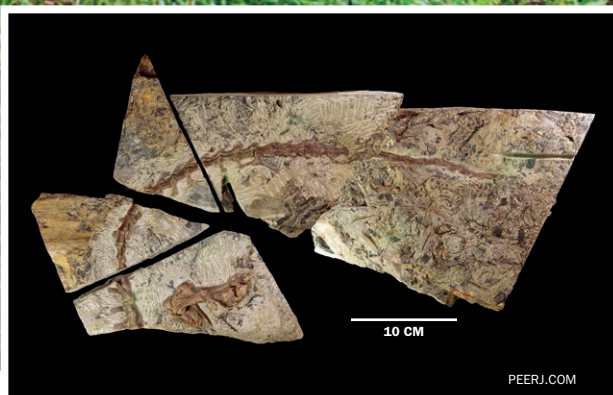
"The jury's out on the climate," Herne said. "Some believe that the climate was cold with winter ice, while others suggest the climate was warmer or more temperate."

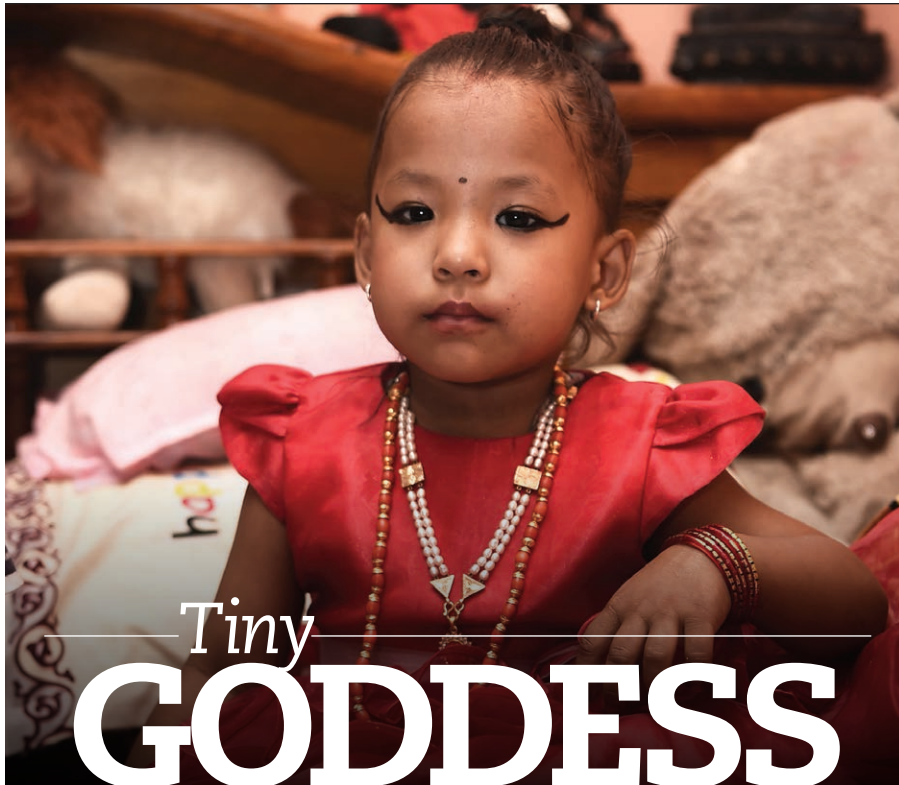
Its genus name, *Diluvicursor*, means "flood runner." Its species name, *pickeringi*, honors the late paleontologist David Pickering.

The research was published in the scientific journal *PeerJ*. Reuters

**Artist's impression of two *Diluvicursor pickeringi***

PETER TRUSLER/PEERJ.COM





AFP/GETTY IMAGES

# Tiny GODDESS

**H**indu priests have anointed a 3-year-old girl as the new “living goddess,” or kumari, of Kathmandu. She will remain at a palace in the historic center of the Nepali capital until she reaches puberty.

Wearing a red dress, Trishna Shakya, the new kumari, was taken from her home to the ancient Durbar Square for a short initiation ceremony.

Her father then carried her across

the cobbled square — which still bears the scars of a powerful earthquake that hit in 2015 — to the temple and palace where she will live under the care of specially appointed guardians.

Trishna was flanked by her family and barefoot men in red tunics on the short walk — the last time she will be seen in public without the elaborate makeup of the kumari until puberty.

“I have mixed feelings. My daughter

has become the kumari, and it is a good thing. But there is also sadness because she will be separated from us,” said her father, Bijaya Ratna Shakya.

Trishna leaves behind a twin brother, Krishna, who cried as his sister was taken from the family home.

As the kumari, Trishna is considered the embodiment of the Hindu goddess Taleju and will only be allowed to leave the temple 13 times a year on special feast days.

Hindu priests perform a midnight animal sacrifice as part of the new kumari’s initiation as a living goddess. Historically, 108 buffalo, goats, chickens, ducks and eggs were slaughtered as part of the ritual — a number considered auspicious in Hinduism — but the number has been scaled back under pressure from animal rights activists.

The tradition of the kumari, meaning “princess” in Sanskrit, comes from the Newar community indigenous to the Kathmandu Valley. It blends elements of Hinduism and Buddhism and the most important kumaris represent each of the three former royal kingdoms of the valley: Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur.

The practice was once closely linked to the royal family but has continued despite the end of Nepal’s Hindu monarchy in 2008. *Agence France-Presse*

## DON'T BLINK!

Chinese street barber Xiong Gaowu deftly scrapes a straight razor along the inside of his customer’s eyelid.

“You should be gentle, very, very gentle,” said Xiong, who performs traditional eyelid shaves at his roadside location in Chengdu, the capital of the southwestern province of Sichuan.

Customers swear by the practice of “blade wash eyes,” as it is known in Mandarin, saying they trust Xiong’s skill with the blade.



“No, it’s not dangerous,” said 68-year-old Zhang Tian. “My eyes feel refreshed after shaving, and I feel comfortable.”

Xiong, in his early 60s, said he learned the technique in the 1980s and serves up to eight customers a week, charging 80 yuan (U.S. \$12) per shave. “It was difficult at the beginning, but it became a piece of cake afterward,” he said.

The technique appears to unblock moisturizing sebaceous glands along the rim of the eyelid, said Qu Chao, an ophthalmologist who works at a nearby hospital in Chengdu. “Patients will feel their eyes are dry and uncomfortable when the glands are blocked,” she said. “When he is shaving, it is most likely that he is shaving the openings of these glands.”

She said there is a risk of infection if the equipment is not sterilized. “If he can properly sterilize the tools that he uses, I can still see there is a space for this technique to survive,” Qu said.

While customers insisted their eyes felt better after a shave, onlookers cringed at the sight of Xiong wielding his razor. “I am afraid to do it,” said He Yiting, 27, who winced as she watched. *Reuters*



# STRIKE UP THE BAND

A Vietnamese military band performs during a welcoming ceremony for U.S. President Donald Trump at the Presidential Palace in Hanoi, Vietnam, on November 12, 2017. The official protocol opens with renditions of the U.S. and Vietnamese national anthems, followed by a presentation of the Vietnamese military and an inspection by Vietnam's President Tran Dai Quang and Trump. "The president's state visit to Vietnam marks a milestone in Vietnam-U.S. relations, creating strong momentum for the substantive, effective and stable development of the bilateral, comprehensive partnership," Quang said, according to Voice of America.

Photo By: **NGUYEN HUY KHAM** | Reuters

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