



ASIA CENTRE NEWSLETTER

ASIA TRENDS

READING TIME: 3 MINUTES

As we come to the end of 2020 year which, for our Center, as for all of us, has been very different from the previous ones, the reminders of the publications and public events we initiated have confirmed our capacity to transform ourselves, under necessity, but also by choice and thanks to a principle of creative evolution. These initiatives, these messages, this research and these advances, recalled as always on our website centreasia.eu, would not have been possible without the dynamism that the young team formed since the beginning of the year, in connection with the changes imposed by the health crisis, has instilled in our orientations. I am pleased to salute their dedication and the quality of their work in this last letter of the year. Without them, without the loyalty of a public and support that is now international, as the event of last November 10 around Korea demonstrated, Asia Centre could not have taken this new breath in 2020 either. But it is also with our network of relays in Asia, our researchers based there, in this spirit of "decentering" that has always presided over our choices and has long anticipated the economic, strategic and political shifts, that we are also preparing for 2021. With Christmas approaching, the end of the year marks the beginning of the "holiday" season in the West, but we are not forgetting the many festive periods that, from India in November (Diwali) to Thailand in December, punctuate the calendar of the last few months in Asia. For our eyes want to embrace points of view and open up our analyses more and more. Happy Holidays to all !

Jean-François Di Meglio, President of Asia Centre.

UPCOMING

Publications to come:

- Thai's space program: series of articles by **Hadrien T. Saperstein**
- The Japanese energy policy: "Japan: Assessment of nuclear energy, ten years after Fukushima" by **Florian Veslin**, Marketing and Strategy Manager at Orano Japan.
- **Asia Trends n°6 to come out at the beginning of 2021 year:** In collaboration with the Ricci Institute, this issue brings together various texts published in the *Coin des Penseurs* in an effort to better understand the intellectual history of China. **Commandes et articles disponibles à l'unité: centreasia.eu/asia-trends/**



For more than three weeks, Indian farmers have been occupying New Delhi to protest against the establishment of a new law that liberalizes the agricultural sector. This social movement of tens to hundreds of thousands of farmers is an unprecedented challenge to the government of Narendra Modi.

NEWS

THE SITUATION OF THE UYGHURS IS ATTRACTING MORE AND MORE INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION

On December 17, 2020, the European Parliament adopted a resolution condemning China's implementation of a system of forced labor against the Uighur, Khazakh and Kyrgyz minorities, victims of human rights violations that the communiqué assimilates to "crimes against humanity". Recently, Alibaba was accused of having designed facial recognition software capable of specifically identifying Uighurs and other ethnic minorities and of having explained on his website how to use it. Previous accusations had been made against Huawei.

TENSIONS BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT OF SOUTH KOREA AND THE PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

On December 16, 2020, Yoon Seok-youl, Attorney General, was suspended for two months by the Korean government. At the end of November, a first suspension of Mr. Yoon was announced by Justice Minister Choo Mi-ae, close to President Moon Jae-In. She had accused the Attorney General of blocking an internal investigation within the prosecutor's office, one of many wrongdoings of which he was accused. Yoon, however, counterattacked and won his return after a week's suspension, leading to Choo's establishment of a commission to investigate the charges against Yoon, which resulted in the December decision. Choo Mi-ae also passed a bill in the national assembly to establish a corruption investigation office, targeting the prosecutor's office and other high-ranking officials. While some speak of a "democratic tool", other criticize these measures as political interference against the rule of law. This argument is also used by the conservative opposition.

AN INVESTMENT AGREEMENT SOON TO BE SIGNED BETWEEN THE EU AND CHINA?

Some are talking about a potential signing on Tuesday 22 December of an investment agreement between China and the EU, whose negotiations started seven years ago but have accelerated considerably in recent weeks. The draft agreement was presented on December 18 to various representatives of the EU states. However, it must be approved by the states and the European Parliament.

LATEST PUBLICATIONS

MYANMAR: ASSESSMENTS AND LESSONS FROM THE ELECTIONS OF NOVEMBER 8 2020

More than a month has passed since the Union Election Commission issued its verdict on Myanmar's November 8 general elections. What is the outcome of these elections and what are the challenges ahead for the NLD? Article by **François Guilbert**.

THE HUNDRED DAYS OF PRIME MINISTER YOSHIHIDE SUGA: CONTINUITY AND COVID-19

More than 100 days have passed since the appointment of Yoshihide Suga as the next Prime Minister of Japan. An opportunity to look back at the PM's domestic and foreign policy and the challenges ahead. Article by **Jean-Yves Colin**.

THE SKILLFUL CHINESE HELMSMEN IN THE COMMERCIAL DEPRESSION: THE "RCEP" SIGNATURE

No less than fifteen Asian countries have signed the RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership). This free trade agreement presents many opportunities but also ambiguities. Article by **Jean-François Di Meglio** and **Clément Durif**.

AFTER THE QUAD AND THE 2+2: THE INDIA-US STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AT A TIME OF TENSIONS WITH CHINA

The last QUAD meeting and the third American 2+2 meeting between India and the United States were held during this month of October. However, the strategic ambiguity of India in the Indo-Pacific needs to be analyzed. Article by **Jean-Luc Racine**.

THE FABLE OF THE THWARTED ANT

The suspension of the marketing of the Alibaba Group's Ant Financial capital on the market was a major blow to the financial industry outside of periods of crisis. Article by **Jean-François Di Meglio**.

WHEN ONLINE MEME WAR TRANSFORMED INTO A PAN-ASIAN ALLIANCE: MILK TEA AS SHARED IDENTITY OF THE YOUTH AGAINST AUTHORITARIANISM

As like-minded netizens are gathering within the Milk Tea Alliance in countries like Taiwan, Thailand and Hong Kong, this pan-asian alliance is illustrating a shared identity of the youth fighting authoritarianism. Article of **TSENG Tsing-Hsuan (曾婷瑄)**.

IMPRISONMENT OF THE FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH KOREA LEE MYUNG-BAK

The imprisonment of the former President of the Republic of Korea Lee Myung-Bak raises questions about the social and political fractures of a democracy where justice is nevertheless applied rigorously and swiftly. Article by **Jean-Yves Colin**.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. THE NEW STRATEGY OF ECONOMIC "DUAL CIRCULATION": ONE SLOGAN TO REPLACE ANOTHER?

While some observers present the PRC's economic "dual circulation" as an unprecedented turnaround, this phenomenon seems to be more the result of the evolution of the Chinese economy. Article by **Clément Durif**.

VIETNAM: THE AUTHORITIES FACING THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES OF THE POST-COVID ERA

While Vietnam's exemplary management of the pandemic and satisfactory macro-economic results allow the country to benefit from communication favorable to FDI, the reality seems more contrasted. Article by **Jean-Philippe Eglinger**.

THAILAND-RELATED ARTICLES:

- **The Royal Thai Navy's Theoretical Application of the Maritime Hybrid Warfare Concept** Article by **Hadrien T. Saperstein**
- **Mapping the 2020 Thai Political Crisis** Article by **Hadrien T. Saperstein**
- **La chute de Prayut ne mènera pas à une Thaïlande en bonne santé** Article by **Hadrien T. Saperstein**

INTERVIEWS

Inde: "Très peu de paysans pensent qu'un libre marché leur apportera de meilleurs revenus"

Jean-Luc Racine, *RFI*, 8 décembre 2020

Chine: Champion de la transition... et du charbon

Jean-François Di Meglio, *France Culture*, 8 décembre 2020

L'hinduvta, qu'est-ce à dire? et *Débat final*,

Jean-Luc Racine, *Fondation Res Publica*, 2 décembre 2020

Jean-François Di Meglio (Asia Centre): Asie-Pacifique, un accord commercial historique

Jean-François Di Meglio, *BFM Business*, 16 novembre 2020

Le rebond de l'économie chinoise pourrait être "limité par la dépendance du pays aux autres nations"

Jean-François Di Meglio, *RT*, 20 octobre 2020

MEDIA

China's foreign and security policy institutions and decision-making under Xi Jinping

Jean-Pierre Cabestan (article), *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 10 décembre 2020

L'élection de Joe Biden peut rebattre les cartes en Asie-Pacifique

Jean-François Di Meglio (citation), *Slate*, 23 novembre 2020

A Hong Kong, la dictature chinoise étouffe les élus pro-démocratie.

Jean-Pierre Cabestan (citation), *Libération*, 11 novembre 2020

Chine: la visite du président Xi Jinping disqualifie Hong Kong la rebelle

Jean-Pierre Cabestan (citation), *RTBF*, 13 octobre 2020

"Si Pékin pousse trop loin, Taïwan va riposter, tirer des missiles"

Jean-Pierre Cabestan (entretien), *Ouest France*, 25 septembre 2020

WEBINAR



On November 10, 2020, Asia Centre organized a conference entitled "EU-Korea convergence and partnerships 10 years after the EU-Korea FTA, in the post Covid era and within the US-China trade war" in the company of Lukas Mandl (chairman of the European Parliament's Delegation for Relations with the Korean Peninsula) and ten European researchers.

Replay is available on Asia Centre YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QA9sIO3TUIE&t=293s>