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The Asia Foundation is a non-profit, non-government organization committed to the development of a peaceful, prosperous and open Asia-Pacific region. We welcome your comments, which can be sent to info@asianfound-dc.org. Please feel free to forward this update to colleagues and friends.

Upcoming Events:

February 7-11 - The Asia Foundation will host Dr. Steven Rood, the Foundation’s Philippine Country Representative. Click here for more information on the Asia Foundation's activities in the Philippines.

February 10 - The Asia Foundation will host an Asian Perspectives on "The Philippines: Challenges and Opportunities for the New Aquino Administration." This panel will feature Mr. Manuel Quezon, III, Undersecretary of Communications and Strategic Planning, Office of the President; Mr. Raymund Jose G. Quilop, Assistant Secretary for Strategic Assessment, Department of National Defense; Ms. Yasmin Busran Lao, Founding Chair, Al-Majadilah Development Foundation, Inc; and, Dr. Steven Rood, Philippines Country Representative, the Asia Foundation.

The speakers will provide insight into political, security, and social challenges facing the Philippines under the new administration of President Benigno Aquino, Jr. The morning discussion will end with an opportunity for questions from the audience.

Past Events:

January 26 - The Asia Foundation hosted a luncheon discussion with Mr. Silas Everett, the Foundation’s Country Representative in Timor-Leste. Mr. Everett discussed current developments in Timor-Leste, including prospects for the UN withdrawal, pending elections, and transitional security. He also addressed the implications of Timor-Leste’s experience for post-conflict assistance and policy in other fragile states. For more information on the Foundation’s work in Timor-Leste, please click here.
January 20 - The Asia Foundation held a brownbag lunch discussion with Ruengrawee Pichaikul (Jieb), Senior Program Coordinator, in the Asia Foundation's Thailand office. She shared her insights on Thailand's programs, including updates on the conflict in southern Thailand, current domestic politics, and ongoing activities focusing on human trafficking and forensics. For more information on the Foundation's work in Thailand, please click here.

January 25 - The Asia Foundation hosted an event featuring Ms. Preeti Thapa, Senior Program Officer for Community Mediation, Conflict Transformation and Peace Building in the Asia Foundation’s Nepal office. Drawing on more than a decade of mediation experience, Ms. Thapa discussed the importance of increasing women’s influence in local mediation, as well as the challenges to safeguarding women’s rights and security through informal justice mechanisms. For more information on the Foundation’s work in Nepal, please click here.

Highlights from Asia:

Philippines

Experts Discuss Postponements in Philippine ARMM Elections

An article in BusinessWorld (Philippines) examines postponements in the elections in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). The Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy (PCID), supported by the Magbassa Kita Foundation Inc. (MKFI) and The Asia Foundation, held a roundtable discussion on a proposed postponement of the August 2011 ARMM elections. Read the full article: “Postponing the ARMM elections.”

Timor-Leste

The Asia Foundation’s Books for Asia Distribute Nearly 10,000 Books to Timor-Leste Libraries

The Asia Foundation’s Books for Asia program in Timor-Leste today distributed 9,942 books to more than 40 public, school, university and local NGO libraries as well as government agencies. Around 3,000 of the books are allocated toward book fairs to help increase awareness about the important role of reading.

“Since children and students often lack access to books, and the books that are out there often lack contemporary information, the main objective of the program is to provide access to information through reading materials. This book fair is about cultivating a culture of reading and literature and linking people together in today’s world,” said Hugo Fernandes, Books for Asia’s Program Manager in Timor-Leste. For the full article, please click here.
Publications of Interest:

From Analysis to Implementation: The Practice of Political Economy Approaches to Economic Reform

This paper sketches out the operational features of emerging political economy-based approaches to sectoral economic policy reform. Section 1 traces some of the literature on the political economy analysis of reforms. Section 2 outlines the international development community’s increasing recognition of the political economy aspects of economic governance, and their efforts to undertake sharper political economy analysis of reform challenges. Finally, in Section 3 the paper identifies elements of operational reform approaches that move beyond disengaged political economy analysis towards on-the-ground implementation of political strategies in policy reform processes. For the full report, please click here.