

Given the challenging security environment in Afghanistan, The Asia Foundation has put into place a plan that prioritizes the safety of our staff and their families. We are suspending activities at this time. With a deep and enduring commitment to Afghanistan's development, we will continue efforts to contribute to a positive path forward for the people of Afghanistan as possible.

Donate now to the [Afghanistan Rapid Relief Fund](#).

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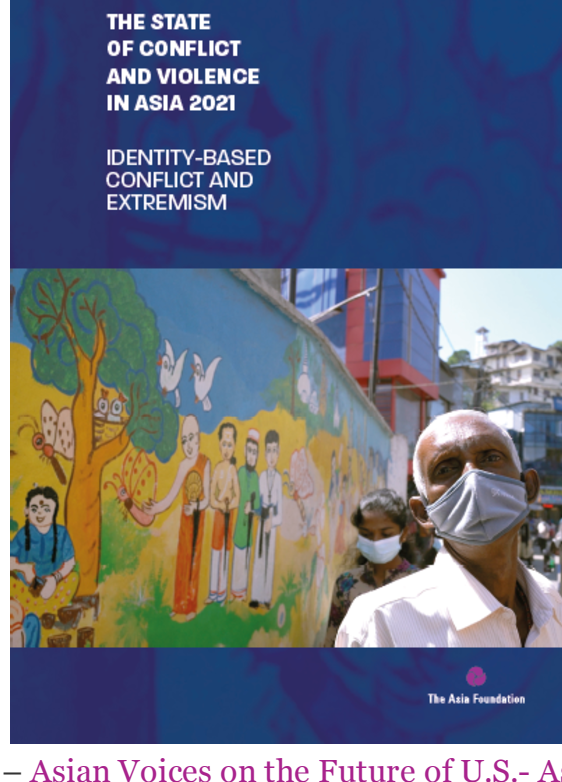
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EVENTS

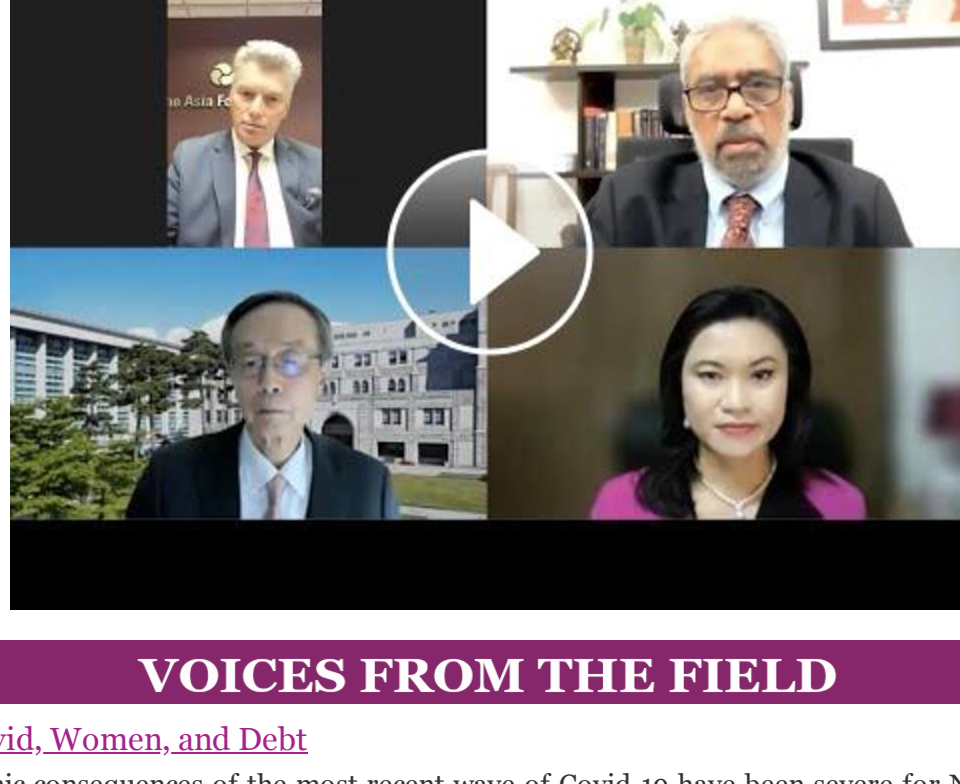
Upcoming Virtual Event - [Launch of *The State of Conflict and Violence in Asia, 2021: Identity-based Conflict and Extremism*](#)

OCTOBER 20, 2021 – In Asia, political violence and organized conflicts continue to be fueled by the rising trend toward more authoritarian governance, the resurgence of identity-based politics, the contraction of democratic space, and violent extremism—often exacerbated by online disinformation. Long-term fragility has been accelerated and compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic. In this event, [Adam Burke](#), Regional Director of [Conflict and Fragility](#) at The Asia Foundation and lead author of the report, along with [Sidney Jones](#), Senior Advisor at the Jakarta-based [Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict \(IPAC\)](#) and guest contributor to the report, will reflect on the second edition of The Asia Foundation's State of Conflict and Violence in Asia report which explores patterns of conflict and factors that contribute to violence. Read the [previous edition](#) and [register here](#) for the event.



Recent Virtual Event – [Asian Voices on the Future of U.S.- Asia Relations](#)

SEPTEMBER 30, 2021 - While vocal minorities in Asia oppose any U.S. presence, Asian nations, big and large, want a United States that is engaged in their region. But what should America's role be? To help address this question, a select group of leading political, security and economic, and trade specialists from across Asia were charged with writing a report and recommendations for U.S. policymakers. During this event, authors shared their perspectives on U.S. policies and prospects in Northeast, South, and Southeast Asia. [Watch the event here](#), [read the report](#), and [listen to the recent InAsia podcast](#).



VOICES FROM THE FIELD

[Nepal: Covid, Women, and Debt](#)

The economic consequences of the most recent wave of Covid-19 have been severe for Nepali women and their families. Many women are left out by Nepal's rigid formal lending rules and increasingly rely on informal lending with significantly higher interest rates to meet everyday needs. Disproportionate rates of unemployment among women and the lack of a social safety net have led to rising levels of debt among vulnerable groups, and the growing danger of default in the volatile pandemic economy. Authors call for government action that better serves women and promotes equal access to economic services. Learn more about our work in [Nepal](#).

[Bangladesh: Cyber-Safe and Cyber-Positive Teens](#)

The expansion of information communication technology, availability of affordable internet, and online education during the pandemic have thrust hundreds of thousands of teens in Bangladesh into cyberspace. However, many lack digital media literacy and online safety skills. *Being Safe, Being Cyberpositive*, funded by the U.S. State Department's South Asia Governance Fund and administered by The Asia Foundation, employs a cyberpositive approach that responds to teenagers' needs and wishes. Through mentorship and workshops, the project encourages and equips participants with the skills to navigate the virtual world safely. Learn more about the Foundation's work with [technology and development](#).

[InAsia Podcast: Political Unrest Unsettles Myanmar's Borderlands](#)

The February 1st coup and resulting political upheaval in Myanmar overplays the Covid-19 pandemic and amplifies the growing economic and humanitarian crisis. On this episode of InAsia, Foundation Senior Program Officer, Tabea Campbell Pauli discusses how borderland communities bear the burden of increased conflict amid shifts in the broader political economy of Myanmar's conflict landscape. Learn more about the Foundation's work in [Myanmar](#), as well as in [conflict and fragile conditions](#).



A bamboo house in Putao Township, Kachin State (Photo: Sinwal / Shutterstock)

[InAsia Podcast: The Pursuit of Democratic Resilience](#)

[Myanmar's](#) rollout into military rule is a recent and catastrophic example of the trend of democratic decline throughout Asia. In this context, The Foundation is working to foster democratic resilience through Reclaiming Civic Space to Promote Democratic Resilience, a pilot program in Indonesia. The initiative focuses on espousing local political participation to empower citizens to shape a political agenda that is centered on shared needs and interests to ward off sectarian narratives and polarization.



Participants speaking out against sectarian narratives and identity politics.

PUBLICATIONS

Southeast Asia: [GovAsia Issue 3 – Barely Staying Afloat: The Impact of Covid-19 on MSMEs in Southeast Asia](#)

The latest issue of GovAsia explores the impact of early Covid-19 lockdowns on micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in Southeast Asia. While businesses have struggled to respond and adapt to the economic crisis caused by the pandemic, there are numerous opportunities for governments and the private sector to support MSMEs. This is all the more urgent as the region enters a new wave of the pandemic and recovery remains a long way off. Read [GovAsia issues 1 & 2](#).

[Timor-Leste: Covid-19 Survey – Synthesis Report](#)

From May 2020 to May 2021, The Asia Foundation conducted six rounds of public perception surveys on Covid-19 and government response in Timor-Leste. While most respondents appreciated the actions taken by the government, there was consensus that the government should have offered more support. This research aims to provide policymakers with the data to inform strategic responses to Covid-19. Learn more about our work in [Timor-Leste](#).



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