

Editor's Note

The October newsletter of Taiwan Brain Trust covers the coming local elections in Taiwan, cross-strait developments, the protests in Hong Kong, and the latest foreign policy moves of the new Indian government and the inscrutable North Korean regime; also in this issue, what can we learn from the Scottish Independence Referendum?

First, in *Political Observations on Elections for Local Public Offices*, former Minister of Examination Lin Chia-cheng discusses the political implications of the coming municipal elections in the context of Taiwan's democratic progress and offers caveats and advice.

TBT President Liu Shih-chung discusses how respective domestic affairs in Taiwan, China, and Hong Kong would influence cross-strait relations in *Factors Affecting Cross-Strait Policy in 2015*. He also urges the DPP leadership to cultivate American connections in order to reestablish working relationships with Washington before the 2016 presidential election.

Lai I-chung, vice president of Taiwan Thinktank, sums up Prime Minister Modi's travels in *India's New Foreign Policy – Cozying up to Japan, Befriending America, Appeasing China* and concludes that the guiding principal of Modi's foreign policy is to secure India's leadership in South Asia and the Indian Ocean, which leads him to prioritize bilateral relations with major nations like Japan, the U.S., and China in descending affinity.

Professor Chen Wen-jenq in *The U.S.-Taiwan Defense Industry Conference Heralds A Brighter Future* gives a first-hand observations of the optimistic atmosphere at this year's meeting, which was just concluded in early October. He assesses that as domestic politics have changed in both countries, the prospect of arms procurement is looking up.

Li Ming-juinn, TBT director of research, makes a bold prediction that the six-party talks will restart soon in *North Korea's Recent Moves Alters the Situation in Northeast Asia*. He traces various foreign trips of North Korean officials and deduces that the shifting ground will lead to a more stable peninsula.

In *Political Calculations and Democratic Principles in the Scottish Independence Referendum*, TBT assistant research fellow Chen Hsiao-hsuan offers a clear-eyed assessment of the Sep. 18 independence referendum and an implicit critique of Taiwan's current Referendum Act. The procedure of the vote shows that the British government, while advocating for the union with all its might, did not sacrifice democratic principles in the interest of union, a demonstration of true integrity of a nation.

We at Taiwan Brain Trust believe that an island nation should avail itself to the world and bring the world to its shores. We hope you will find this month's offerings stimulating and sincerely invite your feedback. To contact us, please write to the editor at info@braintrust.tw.