SPECIAL FEATURE

5 The Chinese Communist Party and Politics 2019/2020
by CHEN Gang

China is at a crucial juncture of fulfilling its ambitious national targets of “two centenaries” set by Xi Jinping after he came into power at the 18th Party Congress in 2012. The COVID-19 pandemic has not only posed challenges to the Chinese government in realising its ambitious economic blueprint, but also tested Xi’s plan on governance capacity-building, one of the main highlights at the Fourth Plenum.

15 Chinese Foreign Policy in 2019: Coping with Hard Times
by Lance L P GORE

China pursued an active diplomatic agenda in 2019. Xi Jinping made seven trips to 13 countries in the same year but the prospect for China’s foreign policy in 2020 is not any brighter. As a counterstrategy to Donald Trump’s unilateralism, China continues to showcase its multilateral diplomacy. In January 2020, China and the United States formally signed the “phase one” trade deal, in which China made substantial concession after back-pedalling its tough stand in May 2019.

29 Hong Kong’s Tumultuous Year: The Challenges of Democratisation, Localist Nationalism to China’s “One Country, Two System” Principle
by Victor TEO

What started off in Hong Kong as protests against the extradition bill mounted up to become a broader call for political reforms by mid-summer and to full revolt against the government from August through December 2019. Many Hong Kongers also do not understand that “high degree of autonomy” is different from “complete” autonomy, and that “autonomy” is also conceptually different from and should not be equated with sovereignty.

45 Taiwan’s 2020 Presidential, Vice Presidential and Legislative Election: Testing Election Theories
by John F COPPER

In January 2020, Tsai Ing-wen and the ruling Democratic Progressive Party won re-election handily. Three popular theories, namely the watermelon or continuity theory, the pendulum or rotation of parties theory, and the pocketbook or economic theory of elections, as well as other constructs and ideas are analysed to explain the election outcome.
South Korea in 2019: Unfulfilled Ambitions, Debilitating Troubles
by RYU Yongwook

The Moon Jae-in administration had an arduous year in 2019 for its foreign policy as it failed to develop inter-Korea relationship for North Korea’s complete denuclearization, and its bilateral relations with the United States and Japan were strained. With high-ranking officials of his administration embroiled in two major scandals, Moon’s domestic political fortune did not fare any better in 2019.

North Korea 2019–2020 by KIM Sung Chull

If North Korea refrains from major provocations such as rocket launches and missile tests, Washington would possibly restart the momentum of nuclear negotiations. However, the United States’ leading role in North Korea’s denuclearisation has diminished, given the failure of the Hanoi summit and the regional dynamics surrounding a rising China. China and Russia are likely to break the stalemate with the suggestion of the revival of the Six-Party Talks.

Techno-nationalism in China–US Relations: Implications for Universities
by Paul EVANS

Strategic rivalry between the United States and China is unlikely to diminish during or after the COVID-19 pandemic. Techno-nationalism and the push for decoupling may strengthen as countries attempt to rebuild their economies with a preference for domestic industries. China is however central among foreign players in the US innovation system that largely depends on foreign researchers and partnerships.

South Korea’s China Policy by CHOO Jaewoo

The US Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) deployment is a major hurdle in China–South Korea relations. South Korean President Moon Jae-in’s main China policy goal is to remove the punitive measures that Beijing imposed on Korea. Moon has emphasised Korea–China cooperation in third-party markets in the context of Korea’s New Northern Policy and New Southern Policy.

Turkey and China: Contemporary Political, Economic and Strategic Relations
by Colin DUERKOP

Turkey–China relations have yet to develop into a comprehensive strategic partnership and such a mechanism would not be expected. Among the converging issues are mainly economic interests like investment, trade and Turkey’s inclusion in the Belt and Road Initiative. However, the Uyghur problem in Xinjiang, the cancellation of a major arms contract and the Syrian war have led to occasional tensions between Turkey and China.