

THE HABIBIE CENTER ASEAN ROUND-UP



Regional news round-up for the week ending : 09 March 2015

[Malaysia Still No 1 Destination For Muslim Travellers, Says Report](#)

TheMalaymailonline.com - March 4, 2015

Malaysia is the most preferred global destination in the fast-growing Muslim travel market, despite two catastrophic air disasters that hit the country's flag-carrier in 2014, a survey showed today.

[Thailand Must Stand Firm In Trade Deal Talks](#)

Bangkokpost.com - March 4, 2015

Industrialised countries have long pushed for multilateral norms that facilitate the liberalisation of international investment. The envisaged multilateral investment regulation, if adopted, will not only impose obligations on individual members to open markets in specific sectors to foreign companies, but can also affect very sensitive aspects such as national sovereignty by diminishing state power to regulate commerce and to support its domestic enterprises.

[Indonesia Makes Play for Infrastructure Funding](#)

The Wall Street Journal - March 5, 2015

Indonesia's president wants to pour billions of dollars into state-owned firms to encourage the private sector to invest in infrastructure. Investors have their doubts. Last month, as part of his administration's first budget, Mr. Widodo announced that the government is investing a record \$22 billion in infrastructure projects. He said the government will also inject \$3 billion directly into state firms, most of it for companies.

[Minister Prepares Language Proficiency Test](#)

The Jakarta Post, Jakarta - March 5, 2015

Manpower Minister Muhammad Hanif Dhakiri is set to make proficiency in the Indonesian language a requirement for both existing expatriates in Indonesia and prospective foreign workers. Hanif said his ministry was planning to establish some kind of online Indonesian language proficiency test for expat workers. The test would be accessible outside Indonesia for workers yet to come to the country.

[Vietnam, Laos Okay Zero Tariffs On Most Traded Goods](#)

Asiaone.com - March 5, 2015

Tariffs are scheduled to be eliminated on more than 95 per cent of goods between Viet Nam and Laos. A document to this effect was signed by Minister of Industry and Trade Vu Huy Hoang and his Lao counterpart Khemmani Pholsena on March 3 in Vientiane, Laos. It replaces the 1998 trade agreement.

[Asean's Missing Links Need To Be Bridged](#)

Straitstimes.com - March 5, 2015

The first milestone towards an integrated Asean Community is coming up by the end of this year. Despite the overall progress towards closer regional integration, there is much speculation on the challenges and prospects of Asean's community-building efforts. This arises from the remaining obstacles for achieving a better connected region that brings its peoples closer together through more efficient procedures and practices.

[ASEAN Integration Remains An Illusion](#)

Asiaone.com - March 5, 2015

For the ASEAN member states, the benchmark of successful regionalism has been ASEAN's effectiveness in bringing the region closer. ASEAN has provided a forum for closer consultations while promoting the habit of cooperation.

[ASEAN: Media Must Play A Role To Form Perception Of AEC](#)

Bernama.com - March 5, 2015

The media must play an important role in building and forming the perception of the ASEAN community with regards to ties among the countries in the region, especially economically. Malaysia-Indonesia Journalist Friendship Alliance (ISWAMI) chairman Datuk Zulkefli Salleh said ASEAN nations had a large market in the economic network, and as such, media announcements on the matter could realise the aspiration of ASEAN to shape a successful community.

[SEC Signs Asean MoU On Securities](#)

Bangkokpost.com - March 6, 2015

The Securities Commission Malaysia, the Monetary Authority of Singapore, Thailand's Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Singapore Exchange have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to establish a Streamlined Review Framework for the Asean Common Prospectus.

ASEAN Studies Program of The Habibie Center conduct monthly discussion and bi-monthly policy brief on ASEAN and its current development.

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