

# THE HABIBIE CENTER

## ASEAN ROUND-UP



Regional news round-up for the week ending : 23 February 2015

### [Getting Ready for the AEC : Malaysia Has Its Priorities in Order for ASEAN Chairmanship](#)

*The Jakarta Globe, Indonesia*

ASEAN needs a ready and capable steward in 2015 and Malaysia looks to be in the right place at the right time. Malaysia has made clear that realizing the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) by the end of the year will be its main goal for its 2015 chairmanship of ASEAN. In this regard, a recent essay by Malaysia's Minister of International Trade and Industry Mustapa Mohamed provides subtle but significant indicators of the government's leadership objectives and the approach to accomplish this. While the essay by no means represents a definitive official policy statement, it provides an encouraging affirmation of the growing need to address non-tariff measures (NTMs) and to galvanize the concept of an ASEAN identity.

### [Redefining ASEAN Financial Integration](#)

*The Jakarta Post, Indonesia*

It is widely perceived that the 2010 eurozone crisis has somehow outweighed the benefits of financial integration, since coordination between member countries was arguably poor. For instance, France seemed reluctant to cut its budget deficit to 3 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

### [Singapore Turns to Service as Global Economy Weakens](#)

*Bloomberg.com*

Singapore is counting on its position as an Asian financial hub to bolster services exports as overseas demand for its goods falters amid an uneven global recovery. The growing importance of services has prompted the government to release quarterly figures on the sector, Ow Foong Pheng, permanent secretary of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, told reporters Tuesday. Services trade rose to almost 27 percent of the total last year from about 20 percent a decade earlier, she said.

### [Five Fail-Proof Engines Of Philippine Economic Growth \(And One Big Roadblock\)](#)

*Forbes.com*

Some country in Asia is always growing crazily on factory investment and a strong consumer base. Then when the West gets to idolizing it, the place slips. Japan is just now testing emergence from 20 years of sloth after a roaring 1980s that worried competitive Americans. China's growth is slowing year by year to what the Beijing government calls a "new norm."

### [Philippines Tech Startup Ecosystem](#)

*Aseanup.com*

The Philippines is an interesting place for tech startups: a large population, a growing economy and a vast base of Internet users who are very involved in social media. These factors make the Philippines more and more attractive as it develops an eco-system to accompany the launch, development and maturation of startups.

### [Chinese Investors Strongly Drawn Towards Thailand](#)

*Nationmultimedia.com*

Thailand is set to be a strategic investment destination for Chinese companies, not only to cash in on a huge domestic market, but also using the Kingdom as springboard to export products to Asean and other markets around the world.

### [Commentary: On Infrastructure, Challenges and Opportunities for Jokowi's Administration](#)

*Jakarta Globe, Indonesia*

There is hardly a discussion that goes by in business circles that does not raise the issue of infrastructure. Will Indonesia's government achieve the ambitious targets that it has set out? While there is hope there is also, because of past failures, major doubt and concern that the country will fall short in achieving its infrastructure goals.

### [Malaysia Wants an ASEAN Peacekeeping Force](#)

*TheDiplomat.com*

Earlier this week, Malaysian defense minister Hishammuddin Hussein reiterated his country's desire to establish an ASEAN peacekeeping force as the chair of the grouping this year. According to the Malaysian newspaper The Star, in an address to the defense ministry before beginning his visits to Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam, Hishammuddin said that he is in the process of visiting every one of the nine other ASEAN countries and that one of the things he would discuss would be the formation of an ASEAN peacekeeping force.

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

**For more details, please contact :**

The Habibie Center Building Jalan Kemang Selatan No. 98  
Jakarta 12560

Tel. 62-21 7817211 Fax. 62-21 7817212

Email : [thcasean@habibiecenter.or.id](mailto:thcasean@habibiecenter.or.id)

Website : [thcasean.org](http://thcasean.org)