

THE HABIBIE CENTER

ASEAN ROUND-UP



Regional news round-up for the week ending : 16 March 2015

[ASEAN Region Prepares To Sink Or Swim](#)

Worldfinance.com - March 9, 2015

On December 31, 2015, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will form an economic community (AEC) comparable to the EU but is this more rhetoric than reality?

The ASEAN region is entering a critical year as it prepares to declare itself an integrated economic community. As home to 10 percent of the world's population it will rank as the world's seventh largest market, with a combined GDP of \$2.4trn that is expected to grow 5.1 percent this year. This is well above the 3.5 percent global growth projected by the IMF, and, fuelled by an boost in annual FDI net flow, the region is expected to outperform the US, EU and Japan.

[Asia-Pacific To Strike Deal By Year-End](#)

The Jakarta Post, Jakarta - March 9, 2015

Sixteen nations across the Asia-Pacific region expect to conclude talks that will free up trade and investment in a region that covers 28 percent of the world's economy by the end of this year, say high-ranking officials from Indonesia and China. Substantive negotiations might conclude at the end of this year and a draft agreement could be reviewed and signed next year, according to Iman Pambagyo, chairman of the trade negotiation committee of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

[Malaysia Central Bank Predicts Economic Slowdown](#)

Bangkokpost.com - March 11, 2015

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysia's economic growth is expected to ease in 2015, slowing by up to 1.5 percentage points, the country's central bank said Wednesday.

"The external environment in 2015 will be more challenging ... While improving, downside risks to the global growth outlook remain given the continued weakness in a number of major economies." Bank Negara Malaysia's annual report said.

[China Slams ASEAN Chief For South China Sea Comments](#)

Reuters.com - March 11, 2015

China expressed anger on Wednesday at the Vietnamese head of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for comments he made on the disputed South China Sea, rejecting Chinese claims based on the so-called nine-dash line.

[2015 Economic Growth To Be Driven By Private Sector](#)

Dailyexpress.com - March 12, 2015

Kuala Lumpur: THE country's economic growth in 2015 will continue to be driven by private sector-led domestic demand with some support from expansion in exports, said Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM). Its Governor Tan Sri Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz said growth is expected to be sustained by broad-based expansion in

the services, manufacturing and construction sectors that now account for more than two-thirds of the economy.

[Indonesia's Interest Rate Cut Is Surprising But Justified](#)

Eastasiaforum.org - March 12, 2015

Bank Indonesia (BI) surprised everyone when it eased monetary policy at its February meeting. Moving into line with global trends, it cut the policy interest rate by 25 basis points to 7.5 percent, even though analysts had predicted no change. While the change is surprising, it has a sound rationale but is not without risk.

[Asean Integration A Work In Progress, Not An 'Illusion'](#)

Straitstimes.com - March 12, 2015

With his rich store of "insider" knowledge, my friend and colleague, Ambassador Barry Desker, has set out a case for believing that Asean has not achieved much in the way of regional integration in the five decades of its existence ("Asean integration remains an illusion"; last Wednesday). While acknowledging that Asean has been successful in "moulding a greater consciousness among policymakers", Mr Desker fears the worst for the regional grouping in the years ahead.

[RI Still Reluctant To Join ASEAN Trading Link](#)

The Jakarta Post, Jakarta - March 14, 2015

The Indonesia Stock Exchange (IDX) is still reluctant to join the ASEAN Trading Link, a cross-border trading gateway among ASEAN members, because of the lack of a dispute-settlement system, a senior official with the capital market watchdog has said.

[LIMA 2015 Begins With 9th Asean Defence Ministers' Meeting in Langkawi](#)

Nst.com - March 15, 2015

The defence ministers of all Asean member nations will arrive here later today for a two-day meeting, which will see several key issues discussed. Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein will host his counterparts at the Langkawi International Convention Centre, with an informal meeting this afternoon and an official dinner tonight, at the Ninth Asean Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM).

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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