

# THE HABIBIE CENTER

## ASEAN ROUND-UP



Regional news round-up for the week ending : 30 March 2015

### [Indonesia Economic Quarterly, March 2015: High Expectations](#)

*Worldbak.org - March 18, 2015*

After early reform progress in key areas like fuel subsidies, raising expectations, the government now faces challenges to implement further complex reforms amidst more subdued growth prospects.

### [Is China's Economic Power in ASEAN Overblown?](#)

*Thediplomat.com - March 20, 2015*

While a lot has been written about China's growing economic influence in Southeast Asia, the analysis is often based on a survey of certain ambitious initiatives that have yet to play out – like the Maritime Silk Road – or flowery statements and declarations by leaders rather than measuring its actual impact using hard data. I've pointed out the folly of this before, most recently in an article on Sino-Indonesian relations for The Diplomat.

### [ASEAN Banking Accord 'A Key Step Towards Economic Integration'](#)

*Dw.de - March 23, 2015*

Southeast Asian nations have agreed to allow qualified banks to operate in each other's markets freely. DW speaks to economist Rajiv Biswas about how the deal may boost economic integration in the ten-member ASEAN bloc.

### [Is ASEAN Still Relevant?](#)

*Thediplomat.com - March 26, 2015*

In a curious turn of events, recent days have seen an enthusiastic discussion on the option of "joint patrols" by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) members in the South China Sea. In fairness, the concept is not entirely alien to the region: since 2004, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and Thailand have been jointly involved in the Malacca Strait Patrols (MSP), collectively guarding one of the world's most important waterways against piracy and other non-traditional security threats.

### [Single Community Dream A Millstone Round Asean's Neck](#)

*Straitstimes.com - March 26, 2015*

With 2015 targeted as the year in which it becomes a single political-security and economic community, Asean has become the subject of numerous commentaries. In a commentary in these pages, for example, Mr Barry Desker (senior Singapore diplomat and former dean of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies) asks if Asean integration is a growing reality or an aspiration that remains unfulfilled.

### [ASEAN Connectivity and China's 'One Belt, One Road'](#)

*Thediplomat.com - March 26, 2015*

The ASEAN Master Plan for Connectivity (AMPC) and China's "One Belt, One Road" initiative share striking similarities and parallels. Both envisage transport connectivity as a way to bring member or

participating countries closer to one another, facilitating better access for trade, investment, tourism and people-to-people exchanges. Like the "One Belt, One Road" project, AMPC calls for a system of roads and railways to link contiguous Southeast Asian countries with one another, as well as a system of ports for RoRo (roll-on roll-off) vessels and short sea shipping to link insular Southeast Asian countries with one another as well as with mainland Southeast Asia. Given this shared vision, it is interesting to consider how the two could complement one another and what issues could stand in the way.

### [Workers in Asean: A Race To The Bottom Again?](#)

*The Jakarta Post - March 27, 2015*

The Asean region is about to enter one of its most ambitious integration schemes with the start of the Asean Economic Community (AEC) in December 2015. Despite the partial nature of the economic integration itself, it will inevitably bring a significant transformation to interactions between member countries.

### [ASEAN Accelerates Regional Banking Integration](#)

*Asiaone.com - March 27, 2015*

Southeast Asian banks will be able to operate more freely across the region due to a landmark agreement on banking integration. The move will pave the way for greater access to loan facilities across ASEAN's 10 member states and promote stable liquidity within the region's banking system, thus keeping out volatile inflows of "hot money" from developed markets.

### [SE Asia Moves Away From Death Penalty: OHCHR](#)

*The Jakarta Post - March 29 2015*

The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) for Southeast Asia has launched its latest publication on capital punishment, providing a comprehensive review of global trends in the declining implementation of the death penalty.

### [Asean Performing Arts Market at CCP](#)

*Inquirer.net - March 29, 2015*

The first Asean Performing Arts Market was held recently in Manila, offering opportunities for networking, showcasing of performance samplers and business matching of Asean performances within the Asean region and with the world.

*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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