

# THE HABIBIE CENTER

## ASEAN ROUND-UP



Regional news round-up for the week ending : 04 May 2015

### [China, Asean Are Strategically Interdependent](#)

*The Jakarta Globe - May 04, 2015*

China's relationship with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations as a regional entity has never been stable. It is like the two lovers who have to carefully navigate through their times of intimacy and trouble. While in terms of mutual trade and investment they are indispensable to one another and therefore seek to sustain regional stability, the situation is much more complicated when it comes to issues like territorial conflict and its resolution in the South China Sea.

### [Who Will Benefit from the ASEAN Economic Community?](#)

*The Diplomat.com - May 05, 2015*

One of the major projects of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations is the establishment of an ASEAN Economic Community, which aims to integrate Southeast Asia's diverse economies, a region with 600 million people and a combined gross domestic product of \$2.4 trillion. But several civil society organizations are moving to postpone the AEC and calling for a rethinking of its framework, which they claim is biased in favor of corporate interests and the traditional elite.

### [EU, ASEAN launch higher education platform](#)

*The Jakarta Post - May 07, 2015*

The EU and ASEAN have officially launched the first major technical support for the Southeast Asia region by establishing a platform that will contribute to the harmonization of ASEAN higher education standards. The project aims to achieve mutual recognition of accreditation and promote the mobility of students.

### [Advancing human rights after the AAC and the ASEAN](#)

*The Jakarta Post - May 07, 2015*

As organizers, Indonesia and Malaysia have just successfully held the Asian-African Conference and the 26th ASEAN Summit, respectively. At the two meetings, ASEAN countries largely discussed economic issues and engaged in almost no conversation about human rights. This is typical for ASEAN — member states historically have not welcomed the idea of enforcing human rights in other member states.

### [Investors Steer Clear of Southeast Asia](#)

*The Wall Street Journal - May 07, 2015*

As investors have piled into China, sending stocks soaring, markets nearby in Southeast Asia are languishing as some of the world's worst performers this year. Among the biggest losers is Indonesia, the region's largest economy and one of only a handful of markets globally in the red so far in 2015, with a loss of 1.5%. Some of the country's biggest companies have reported poor profit growth. Thailand and Malaysia have fared barely any better, with respective gains of less than 0.1% and 2.5%, compared with rises of more than 27% in Shanghai and nearly 16% in Hong Kong.

### [Will Indonesia Return to OPEC?](#)

*The Diplomat.com - May 08, 2015*

Indonesia is considering rejoining the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the Wall Street Journal reported May 7. According to the report, Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Sudirman Said said that he would ask President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo to consider rejoining OPEC as a member so the country would be "close to the market."

### [Singapore firms rush to Myanmar, a slice of good life in hand](#)

*Channelnewsasia.com - May 09, 2015*

Three years after Myanmar liberalised its economy, a second wave of companies from the Republic is flocking to the rapidly-developing South-east Asian country - setting up upmarket pre-school centres, swanky bars and eateries, as well as building posh condominiums. Quaich Bar and the Whisky Store, the Les Amis Group, as well as pre-school operator Modern Montessori were among the Singapore firms that have set up shop in Myanmar in the past 18 months, with the aim of cashing in on a growing middle class and the general population's rising affluence.

### [Myanmar, Laos open first friendship bridge](#)

*English.news.cn - May 09, 2015*

Myanmar and Laos on Saturday formally opened the first-ever friendship bridge across the Mekong River that links Myanmar's Tachileik in Shan state and Laungnamtha Province of Laos, according to the live report of MNTV Channel. Myanmar President U Thein Sein and his Laos counterpart Choummaly Sayasone jointly presided over the opening ceremony of Myanmar-Laos Friendship Bridge at Tachileik district in southern Shan State, the report said.

### [Asean's new consumer class could change the financial world](#)

*South China Morning Post - May 11, 2015*

Southeast Asia's economic boom is creating a new middle class, one which will help shift the balance of global demand over the next few decades to open up new opportunities for the region and the world. Growth in this region — particularly in member economies of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) — is changing from being primarily driven by exports and manufacturing to becoming one of the world's leading consumption hubs.

*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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