ASEAN Region – Press Review March 2021

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**ASEAN**

### ASEAN's Myanmar crisis out of control (Bangkok Post, DW, East Asia Forum, the Diplomat, Nikkei Asia)
- [https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Indonesia-s-fractured-political-system-faces-further-splintering](https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Indonesia-s-fractured-political-system-faces-further-splintering)
- [https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Myanmar-Coup/Myanmar-violence-raises-pressure-on-ASEAN-to-de-escalate-crisis](https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Myanmar-Coup/Myanmar-violence-raises-pressure-on-ASEAN-to-de-escalate-crisis)

### ASEAN eyes digital vaccine certificate for post-COVID travel (Nikkei Asia, the Diplomat)

**Brunei**

### Brunei: Health Minister assures all that vaccines are safe (The Star, Borneo Bulletin)

### Report: More Bruneian women in managerial jobs but political participation lowest in ASEAN (The Scoop)

**Cambodia**

### European Parliament turns up the heat on Cambodia’s Hun Sen (The Diplomat, Radio Free Asia)
- [https://thediplomat.com/2021/03/european-parliament-turns-up-the-heat-on-cambodias-hun-sen/](https://thediplomat.com/2021/03/european-parliament-turns-up-the-heat-on-cambodias-hun-sen/)

### In another flip, Hun Sen now says he will rule indefinitely (VOA Cambodia)

**Indonesia**

### The Democrat Party split: Dynastic versus all-party politics (Fulcrum, Nikkei Asia, Asia Times, the Straits Times, Tempo)
- [https://fulcrum.sg/the-democrat-party-split-dynastic-versus-all-party-politics](https://fulcrum.sg/the-democrat-party-split-dynastic-versus-all-party-politics)
- [https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Indonesia-s-fractured-political-system-faces-further-splintering](https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Indonesia-s-fractured-political-system-faces-further-splintering)
- [https://en[tempo.co/read/1443287/undermining-democrat-is-undermining-democracy](https://en[tempo.co/read/1443287/undermining-democrat-is-undermining-democracy]
Indonesia cathedral rocked by Palm Sunday suicide bombing (Bangkok Post, BBC, Reuters, CNA)
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-indonesia-blast-explosion-rocks-church-in-indonesia-police-idUSKBN2BK02C

Selfish or sensible? How Indonesia is charting its own course with private vaccines (the Sydney Morning Herald, the Diplomat, CNA)
https://thediplomat.com/2021/03/the-trouble-with-indonesias-dual-track-vaccination-scheme/

Laos

Laos grants 25-year concession to Chinese company to manage power grid (Radio Free Asia, the Diplomat)
https://thediplomat.com/2021/03/laos-grants-25-year-power-grid-concession-to-chinese-majority-firm/

New Laos president faces rising China debt and battered economy (Nikkei Asia)

Villagers worried about premature construction on Laos’ Luang Prabang dam (Radio Free Asia)

Malaysia

Malaysia’s UMNO dumps Muhyiddin-led coalition ahead of polls (Nikkei Asia, South China Morning Post)

Malaysia pays S$102.8 million in compensation for terminated KL-Singapore HSR project (CNA, Nikkei Asia)
https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Malaysia-pays-Singapore-76m-for-scraped-high-speed-rail-project

Myanmar

Myanmar crackdown death toll passes 500 (CNA, Reuters, Nikkei Asia, Frontier Myanmar)
### Thousands flee to Thailand after Myanmar army's air strikes on villages

(Bangkok Post, Reuters, Myanmar Now)


### Myanmar junta crushes journalists, but news still gets out

(Nikkei Asia, Myanmar Now, CNA)


### Philippines

#### Philippines battles COVID surge a year after protracted lockdown

(AI Jazeera, CNN, Bloomberg, South China Morning Post)


#### Duterte’s Covid response under hot fire in Philippines

(Assia Times, Rappler, Inquirer)


#### New anti-Duterte coalition: 'Unless we are united, we cannot win in 2022'

(Rappler, Inquirer, ABS-CBN)

- [https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1410683/we-cannot-accept-anyone-within-duterte-political-dynasty-says-carpio](https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1410683/we-cannot-accept-anyone-within-duterte-political-dynasty-says-carpio)

### Singapore

#### Singapore studying new laws to protect Republic from foreign interference, says Josephine Teo

(the Straits Times, the Online Citizen)

- [https://www.th ONLINE CITIZEN.com/2021/03/02/josephine-teo-trucks-out-the-old-and-tired-argument-of-the-foreign-bogeyman-once-more/](https://www.th ONLINE CITIZEN.com/2021/03/02/josephine-teo-trucks-out-the-old-and-tired-argument-of-the-foreign-bogeyman-once-more/)

#### Blogger Leong Sze Hian ordered to pay PM Lee $133,000 for defamation over sharing of article

(the Straits Times, South China Morning Post, Bangkok Post)

### Thailand

**Thailand protests collapse as leaders languish in jail** (Nikkei Asia, the Diplomat)
https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Turbulent-Thailand/Thailand-protests-collapse-as-leaders-languish-in-jail
https://thediplomat.com/2021/03/amid-legal-crackdown-thai-protest-movement-regains-momentum/

**Thai police charge Thanathorn with insulting King over vaccines** (Nikkei Asia, Reuters, Bangkok Post)
https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Thai-police-charge-Thanathorn-with-insulting-king-over-vaccines
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-thailand-politics-vaccine/thai-police-charge-politician-for-insulting-king-over-vaccine-remarks-idUSKBN2BM0UG?
https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/politics/2092127/thanathorn-acknowledges-royal-insult-charges

**Prayut: People fleeing Myanmar violence will not be turned away** (Bangkok Post, Nikkei Asia)
https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/2092107/prayut-people-fleeing-myanmar-violence-will-not-be-turned-away
https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/2092191/we-wont-push-back-refugees

### Timor-Leste

**East Timor imposes first coronavirus lockdown over outbreak fears** (Reuters, Asia Pacific Report)

**Why is Timor-Leste still unable to diversify its economy?** (the Diplomat)

### Vietnam

**Pham Minh Chinh’s potential to shape Vietnam’s political system** (East Asia Forum, Fulcrum)
https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2021/03/01/pham-minh-chinh-s-potential-to-shape-vietnams-political-system/
https://fulcrum.sg/vietnams-expected-next-prime-minister/

**Vietnam promotes renewable energy for sustainable development** (Vietnam Plus)
https://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnam-promotes-renewable-energy-for-sustainable-development/198137.vn

**Vietnam proves immune to China’s vaccine diplomacy campaign** (Nikkei Asia, South China Morning Post)