

## ASEAN Region – Press Review SEPTEMBER 2025

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For our readers in a rush, our editors recommend the following 11 news articles:

- Foreign-Backed Microloans Fuel Indigenous Land Dispossession and Rights Abuses, HRW Says ([link here](#))
- Malaysia's policy push turns Johor into top Asia Pacific data centre destination ([link here](#))
- Singapore inks carbon credit pact with Vietnam, its second South-east Asian partner ([link here](#))
- Laos Reaffirms Interest in Joining BRICS, Deepens Ties with Russia ([link here](#))
- Timor-Leste scraps plan to buy MPs free cars after protests ([link here](#))
- Indonesia, EU sign long-awaited trade deal ([link here](#))
- No sea, no sweat: Dry ports turn landlocked Laos into land corridor, eye trade to Middle East, Europe ([link here](#))
- Laos is 'on track to graduate from least developed country status': UN Assistant Secretary-General ([link here](#))
- WB, ADB to provide over 12 billion USD to green projects in ASEAN ([link here](#))
- Breaking up is hard to do: Germany, Nato and Asean's diplomatic lessons ([link here](#))
- EU and ASEAN announce two flagship biodiversity programmes worth €30 million ([link here](#))



### ASEAN and Southeast Asia Region

#### ASEAN

[Trump tariffs tilt Southeast Asia towards China](#) – Susannah Patton and Robert Walker | East Asia Forum  
[Outlook for Agriculture and ASEAN's Role in Southeast Asia's Food Security](#) – Elyssa Kaur Ludher and Paul Teng | Fulcrum  
[AIPA approves 42 resolutions on political, economic, social matters](#) | Borneo Bulletin  
[ASEAN economic ministers meet vital to boost trade amid lingering trade tensions](#) | Borneo Bulletin  
[ASEAN observer team inspecting border provinces](#) – Hong Raksmei | The Phnom Penh Post  
[WB, ADB to provide over 12 billion USD to green projects in ASEAN](#) | Nhan Dan  
[Indonesia's move to welcome PNG into ASEAN is a win-win](#) – Akhmad Hanan | The Interpreter  
[The Mango Flavour: India and ASEAN After a Decade of the Act East Policy](#) – Gurjit Singh | Fulcrum  
[China's Xi meets with ASEAN leaders amid stronger regional presence at WWII parade](#) | CNA

#### Southeast Asia

[Southeast Asia's clean energy transition marred by geopolitical and financial risk, survey shows](#) – Robin Hicks | Eco-Business  
[My Say: Thailand's Kra Isthmus Bridge a reckoning for Malaysia](#) – Mohd Safar Hasim | The Edge Malaysia  
[UN warns online scam centres hitting Southeast Asia moving to East Timor](#) – Erin Hale | Al Jazeera  
[Why are some Southeast Asian states buying Turkish warships, jets and missiles?](#) – Rashvinjeet S Bedi | CNA  
[Beyond Green Data Centres: Leaner, Smarter AI for Southeast Asia's Sustainable Digital Future](#) – Muyi Yang, Xiwei Xu and David Lo | Fulcrum  
[Why Southeast Asia must resist AI hegemony](#) – Ryan Hass | ThinkChina  
[Mekong region's chance to reset](#) – Than Tha Aung | Bangkok Post  
[Politics drive investment divide in South-East Asia's top markets](#) | The Star/Bloomberg



### Brunei

[Brunei underscores commitment to fostering regional security ties](#) | Borneo Bulletin

[Belait Peat Swamp Forest eyed as pilot for Brunei's forest carbon market](#) | The Star/Borneo Bulletin/ANN  
[EmpowHer Run 2025 unites Bruneians for women's rights and empowerment](#) – James Kon | Borneo Bulletin  
[Brunei explores future of drones](#) | The Star/Borneo Bulletin/ANN



## Cambodia

[Foreign-Backed Microloans Fuel Indigenous Land Dispossession and Rights Abuses, HRW Says](#) – Coby Hobbs and Seoung Nimol | CamboJa News  
[ADB approves 52-mln-USD loan for grid expansion project in Cambodia](#) | Xinhua  
[Vietnam emerges as Cambodia's largest trading partner in ASEAN](#) | Khmer Times  
[Opposition Politicians, Journalists Jailed as Treason Charges Rise; New Citizenship Law Stirs Alarm](#) – Khuon Narim | CamboJa News  
[US Sanctions More Cambodian Casinos, Regional Scam Networks](#) – Coby Hobbs and Khuon Narim | CamboJa News



## Indonesia

[Indonesian govt aims to finalize revised elections law bill by 2026](#) | Antara News  
[Indonesia parliament passes Prabowo's \\$231 billion budget for 2026](#) – Stefano Sulaiman | Reuters  
[Indonesia allocates a huge budget of US\\$604mil to boost agricultural downstreaming](#) | The Star/Xinhua  
[Indonesia sovereign wealth fund INA targets data centres, AI in healthcare, renewables](#) | The Business Times  
[Indonesia's president picks retired general as new security minister after deadly protests](#) – Niniek Karmini and Achmad Ibrahim | AP  
[Arrests of Indonesian protesters spur fears of censorship, more political chaos](#) – Resty Woro Yuniar | South China Morning Post  
[Can Indonesia's cabinet reshuffle restore public trust and calm protesters?](#) – Resty Woro Yuniar | South China Morning Post  
[Indonesia reopens Raja Ampat nickel mine despite reef damage concerns](#) – Hans Nicholas Jong | Mongabay  
[Batang SEZ Attracts Rp 1.5t EV Battery Investment from LBM](#) – Muawwan Daelami | Jakarta Glob.ID  
[India And Indonesia Reconnect – Analysis](#) – Gateway House, Rajiv Bhatia and Manjeet Kripalani | Eurasia Review  
[Indonesia detains former minister and Gojek co-founder as suspect in graft case](#) | The Straits Times/Reuters  
[Hundreds of women with brooms join protests as Indonesia leader flies to China](#) – Joel Guinto, Gavin Butler and Lesthia Kertopati | BBC



## Laos

[Sekong Targets Skilled Labour Growth Amid Rising Demand from Energy Sector](#) – Oulayvanh Sisounonth | The Laotian Times  
[Laos Reaffirms Interest in Joining BRICS, Deepens Ties with Russia](#) – Namfon Chanthavong | The Laotian Times  
[Laos, Timor-Leste Implement 30-Day Visa-Free Travel](#) – Thongsavanh Souvannasane | The Laotian Times  
[EDL to buy more power to meet rising demand](#) | Vientiane Times  
[Laos Signs Agreement to Develop Pumped-Storage Hydropower Project in Sekong](#) – Thongsavanh Souvannasane | The Laotian Times  
[Laos is 'on track to graduate from least developed country status': UN Assistant Secretary-General](#) | The Nation/The Vientiane Times/Asia News Network  
[Laos Grants Land to South Korea for Tourism Project in Phonhong](#) – Thongsavanh Souvannasane | The Laotian Times



## Malaysia

[Malaysia PM Anwar defends inviting Trump to ASEAN Summit after Mahathir calls for it to be revoked](#) | CNA  
[Nuclear energy can power Malaysia, create jobs for 3 generations, says group](#) – Danish Raja Reza | Free Malaysia Today  
[Malaysia's policy push turns Johor into top Asia Pacific data centre destination](#) | Malay Mail  
[Decentralising the politics of development in Malaysia](#) – Noraisah Yusop | Malay Mail  
[Is there way forward for Malaysia's social security?](#) – Ravindran Raman Kutty | Free Malaysia Today  
[The Policy Edge: AI in the 13th Malaysia Plan: Mainstreaming social and pro-social impact](#) – Anis Yusal Yusoff | The Edge Malaysia  
[Anwar Calls For Thailand-Cambodia Issues To Be Resolved Through JBC](#) | Bernama  
[Is Anwar Shining Abroad but Struggling at Home?](#) – Tan Sing Pei | Strat Sea  
[Malaysia's anti-graft blockbuster: Who is in the crosshairs?](#) – Tan Ai Leng | The Business Times  
[Commentary: Malaysia has something great powers want](#) – James Chai | CNA  
[Malaysia inks RM1 billion in digital MOUs as it races to close Asean cloud gap](#) – Chuah Bee Kim | The Business Times



## Myanmar

[Myanmar military surging to clear a path to elections](#) – Anthony Davis | Asia Times  
[For Myanmar's Garment Sector, Tariffs are a Setback, not a Knockout Blow](#) – Jared Bissinger | Fulcrum  
[Northern Myanmar: The latest stop in Trump's rare earths escapade](#) – Henry Storey | The Interpreter  
[Exclusive: India explores rare-earth deal with Myanmar rebels after Chinese curbs](#) – Neha Arora and Naw Betty Han | Reuters  
[Satellite data show burst of deforestation in Myanmar rare earth mining hotspots](#) – Latoya Abulu, Sonam Lama Hyolmo | Mongabay  
[Militarized Pipelines: How China's Security Priorities Harm Local Communities](#) – Athena Awn Naw | The Irrawaddy  
[Addressing Food Insecurity Amid Conflict and Climate Shocks in Myanmar](#) – Eve Cherry Lynn, Joel Mangahas and Asian Development Bank | Development Asia  
[Involuntary Degrowth and Local Resilience Amid Myanmar's Polycrisis – Analysis](#) – Shwetaungthagathu Reform Initiative Centre and Pyae Phyo Mon | Eurasia Review  
[Myanmar's Wartime Polls: Managing Expectations](#) – Kai Ostwald | Fulcrum  
[Trump's rare earth push hits a Chinese wall in Myanmar](#) – Richard S Ehrlich | Asia Times



## Philippines

[Philippine coconut farmers' woes in the spotlight at World Coconut Congress](#) – Buena Bernal and Louisa Tang | CNA  
[Philippines: Marcos Jr. touts press freedom despite threats](#) – David Hutt | DW  
[As Philippines plans ambitious offshore wind pipeline, energy chief warns of costly infrastructure buildout](#) – Hannah Alcosoba Fernandez | Eco-Business  
[ICC charges Rodrigo Duterte with crimes against humanity](#) – Natasha Preskey | BBC  
[Can Filipinos Transcend Polarised Politics to Protest Against Grand Corruption?](#) – Alvin Ang and Aries A. Arugay | Fulcrum  
[Protests vs corruption continue to grow after September 21](#) – Kurt Dela Peña | Inquirer  
[\[Rear View\] Marcos offers cousin's head on a plate. But is that enough?](#) – Joey Salgado | Rappler  
[Philippines 'strongly protests' China nature preserve in South China Sea](#) | Al Jazeera  
[Philippines protects huge coral hotspot off the coast of Panaon Island](#) – Shanna Hanbury | Mongabay  
[Philippine groups demand independent probe into 'excessive corruption' in government projects](#) | The Straits Times/Reuters



## Singapore

[Singapore to update carbon credit eligibility list following first purchase of nature-based credits](#) – Shabana Begum | The Straits Times

[Singapore inks carbon credit pact with Vietnam, its second South-east Asian partner](#) – Ang Qing | The Straits Times

[Singapore to launch mandatory AI literacy course for public servants: DPM Gan](#) – Abigail Ng | CNA

[Long-term planning and political will needed to tackle climate change in Singapore: Zaqy](#) – Chin Hui Shan | The Straits Times

[MPs raise concerns over jobs, AI disruption and support for caregivers during debate](#) – Chin Soo Fang | The Straits Times

[Singapore and India set out road map to take Comprehensive Strategic Partnership forward](#) – Davina Tham | CNA



## Thailand

[Thai PM Anutin outlines key goals](#) – Mongkol Bangprapa and Aekarach Sattuburuth | Bangkok Post

[Thai PM says he will dissolve parliament by end-January](#) | Reuters

[Thailand stresses international cooperation in tackling transnational crime at UNGA side event](#) | The Nation

[Defections test government pact](#) – Aekarach Sattuburuth and Mongkol Bangprapa | Bangkok Post

[Bangkok and four northern provinces officially declared pollution control zones](#) | The Nation

[Hot demand, shrinking harvests: Thai coffee faces boom and doom paradox](#) – Jack Board | CNA

[Thailand grants Myanmar refugees working rights](#) – Zsombor Peter | DW

[PM pushes ahead with 1-trillion-baht Land Bridge mega-project to boost long-term growth](#) | The Nation

[Thai PM Anutin urges swift rewrite of charter](#) – Aekarach Sattuburuth | Bangkok Post

[US capital moves from China as Thai industrial estates expand 34,000 rai in three years](#) | The Nation

[Thailand launches first blue bonds to support sustainable coastal and ocean economy](#) | The Nation

[From Deadlock to Dealmaking: Thailand's Chaotic Search for a New Prime Minister](#) – Napon Jatusripitak | Fulcrum

[Thailand names third prime minister in two years](#) – Jonathan Head and Joel Guinto | BBC



## Timor-Leste

[Timor-Leste: Lifelong pension for politicians a 'waste of people's money' – PM](#) – Lusa | Macua Business

[Timor-Leste scraps plan to buy MPs free cars after protests](#) – Koh Ewe and Kelly Ng | BBC

[Indonesia assists Timor-Leste in aviation carbon reduction plan](#) | Antara News

[Transforming Research Ecosystem in Timor-Leste](#) | UNESCO



## Vietnam

[Vietnam requires up to US\\$92 billion for climate adaptation by 2030](#) | Saigon News/Vietnam Plus

[Vietnam to reform energy market for fairness, innovation, and security](#) – Tran Thuong | Vietnam Net

[Hue launches Southeast Asia's first deposit and return recycling system](#) | Vietnam Plus

[Party chief highlights nuclear power development as long-term strategy](#) | Vietnam Plus

[Vietnam opting for electric motorbikes over fossil fuel](#) – David Hutt | DW

[In Vietnam's case, what, exactly, is the target of Trump's "transshipment" tariffs?](#) – Jackson Lopez | The Interpreter



## ASEAN/ Southeast Asia Region and Germany/ EU

[Việt Nam, Germany look to new momentum after 50 years of diplomatic ties: ambassador](#) | Vietnam News

[Indonesia: Palm oil sellers fear new barriers after EU deal](#) – Fika Ramadhani | DW

[CEO: Tariffs sped up EU-Indonesia trade deal \(video\)](#) | DW

[Indonesia, EU sign long-awaited trade deal](#) | CNA/AFP

[How Asean can rewrite the global supply chain map](#) – Chris Humphrey | The Business Times

[No sea, no sweat: Dry ports turn landlocked Laos into land corridor, eye trade to Middle East, Europe](#) – Goh Ruoxue | The Business Times

[Breaking up is hard to do: Germany, Nato and Asean's diplomatic lessons](#) – Phar Kim Beng and Luthfy Hamzah | MalayMail  
[Vietnam – Hessen cooperation enriches bilateral relations](#) | Vietnam Plus  
[European firms keen on Thailand](#) – Nareerat Wiriyapong | Bangkok Post  
[Southeast Asia set to export surplus biofuels to Europe, Petronas executive says](#) | Reuters  
[EUDR implementation comes laden with potential unintended consequences](#) – Sean Mowbray | Mongabay  
[EU Urges Cambodia and Thailand to Uphold Ceasefire, Avoid Escalation](#) | Khmer Times  
[EU and ASEAN announce two flagship biodiversity programmes worth €30 million](#) | EEAS  
[Secretary-General of ASEAN participates in the inaugural ASEAN-EU Ministerial Dialogue on Environment and Climate Change](#) | ASEAN  
[Secretary-General of ASEAN meets with European Commissioner for Climate, Net Zero and Clean Growth](#) | ASEAN