

ASEAN Region – Press Review March 2026

Contact: info@th.boell.org

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

- Updated fuel control measures to safeguard national energy supply effective April 1 ([link here](#))
- Cambodia turns to Singapore, Malaysia for fuel as Vietnam, China restrict supplies ([link here](#))
- Myanmar's rice farmers scrounge for diesel as Iran conflict dries up supply ([link here](#))
- Thai telcos monitor submarine internet cables round the clock for disruptions caused by Mid-East war ([link here](#))
- Ramos-Horta warns Middle East tensions could impact Timor-Leste's economy ([link here](#))
- Solar could save Vietnam nearly \$600 million on fuel imports amid Iran war: report ([link here](#))
- ASEAN ministers urge halt to Middle East war as crisis rattles energy and trade ([link here](#))
- US war in Iran: China casts itself as savior of SE Asia ([link here](#))
- Southeast Asia faces spillover cyber risk from Iran war as 'blast radius' widens ([link here](#))
- Southeast Asia shuts offices, limits travel as oil crisis deepens ([link here](#))
- Enhancing ASEAN–EU Cooperation on Subsea Cable Security ([link here](#))



ASEAN and Southeast Asia Region

ASEAN

[ASEAN summit to go ahead in May, but shortened to 'bare bones' programme due to Middle East conflict](#) |

Reuters

[ASEAN's Geoeconomic Turn is Real- But Its Institutions are still too Weak](#) – Atin Prabandari | Modern Diplomacy

[Philippines seen as key player in ASEAN efforts against illicit trade](#) | Inquirer

[Protecting Critical Undersea Infrastructure: Accelerating the Momentum in ASEAN](#) – Jane Chan Git Yin, Lim Chye Khiang, Nicholas | RSIS

[ASEAN ministers urge halt to Middle East war as crisis rattles energy and trade](#) – Mikhail Flores and Nestor Corrales | CNA

[Decarbonization now a security, economic imperative for Asean](#) | Inquirer/The Straits Times/Asia News Network

[ASEAN Services Liberalisation: Big Promises, Modest Progress](#) – Tham Siew Yean | Fulcrum

[Super El Niño could bring severe drought to ASEAN and push 2027 to record heat](#) – Krittapol

Sutheepattarakool | The Nation

[ASEAN's incremental diplomacy in the South China Sea](#) – Pheng Thean | East Asia Forum

[Navigating Our Future Together? The Philippine Chairmanship in a Year of Strategic Tension](#) – Joanne Lin and Aries A. Arugay | Fulcrum

[ASEAN's real strength lies in strategic ambiguity](#) – Hiba Malik | Modern Diplomacy

[ASEAN calls Middle East escalation 'regrettable,' urges ceasefire after US-Israel strike on Iran](#) – Mara Cepeda | Asia News Network/The Straits Times

[Irena launches programmes to scale clean energy in Asean; has plans for investor forum in S'pore](#) – Chin Hui Shan | The Straits Times

Southeast Asia

[US war in Iran: China casts itself as savior of SE Asia](#) – David Hutt | DW

[Southeast Asia revisits nuclear power plans for AI data centers as Iran war disrupts energy supplies](#) – Anton L. Delgado | AP

[Bus trips home for Songkran delayed by lack of fuel? From Bangkok to Hanoi, fears grow over fuel](#) – May Wong

[Southeast Asia is paying the environmental price of the rare earth boom](#) – Mohd. Yunus | The Interpreter

[Southeast Asia faces spillover cyber risk from Iran war as 'blast radius' widens](#) – Iman Muttaqin Yusof | South China Morning Post

[Russia's cyber push tilts Southeast Asia's strategic balance](#) – Benjamin Mason | East Asia Forum

[What is Shaping Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) Governance Policies in Southeast Asia?](#) – Kristina Fong Siew Leng | Fulcrum

[High transport costs, slow hiring: Southeast Asia businesses brace for impact amid Middle East war](#) – Izzah Aqilah Norman and Savanna Tai | CNA

[Southeast Asia shuts offices, limits travel as oil crisis deepens](#) – Erin Hale | Al Jazeera

[Global financial tightening makes South and Southeast Asia's food security fragile](#) – Luca Mattei | East Asia Forum

[Southeast Asia faces sweltering heat as war limits energy supply](#) | Bangkok Post/Bloomberg

[Southeast Asian currencies weaken as oil prices surge amid escalating Middle East tensions](#) – Hien Nguyen | VN Express

[Women Farmers: First Defenders of a Warming Southeast Asia](#) – Elyssa Kaur Ludher | Fulcrum

[Chinese investment and economic security in Southeast Asia](#) – Trissia Wijaya | East Asia Forum

[Southeast Asia's nuclear weapons-free zone needs reinforcement](#) – Brendan Taylor | The Interpreter

['Like sitting ducks': Fear and uncertainty mount for Southeast Asians stranded in Middle East](#) – Savanna Tai | CNA

[Vietnam AI law takes effect, first in South-east Asia](#) | The Straits Times/AFP

[Climate Action in Southeast Asia: Responses from ASEAN and the Philippines](#) – Virgемarie A. Salazar | Kyoto Review



Brunei

[Updated fuel control measures to safeguard national energy supply effective April 1](#) | Borneo Bulletin

[Minister highlights achievements in digital transformation](#) | Borneo Bulletin

[Brunei shows interest in Indonesia's energy transition plans: Minister](#) | Antara

[Brunei to boost investments in schools, healthcare and housing](#) | Xinhua

[Brunei Sultan calls for strategic action, stronger resilience at Legislative Council opening](#) | The Star/Borneo Bulletin/ANN

[Brunei waters cleared of red tide, seafood safe to consume](#) | Asia News Network/Borneo Bulletin

[Brunei denounces US-Israeli strikes on Iran following assassination of supreme leader](#) – Ain Bandial | The Scoop



Cambodia

[Cambodia turns to Singapore, Malaysia for fuel as Vietnam, China restrict supplies](#) – Sudarshan Varadhan | Reuters

[Cambodia Unveils Plans for First Carbon-Neutral Island by 2026](#) – Yatt Malai | Kiri Post

[Has Cambodia really cut cybercrime by half?](#) – David Hutt | DW

[Cambodia's blue economy problem](#) – Nory Ly | The Interpreter

[Cambodia's scam crackdown must now target visa fraud: Comment](#) – Panhavuth Long | The Star/The Phnom Penh Post/ANN

[Strategy outlined to strengthen Cambodia's GI pepper](#) – Chea Vanyuth | Khmer Times



Indonesia

[Prabowo eyes nationwide shift to electric transport to reduce fuel imports](#) | Borneo Bulletin

[Indonesia, Japan Ink Nuclear Power Deal](#) – Jayanty Nada Shofa | Jakarta Globe.ID

[Indonesia's orangutan trafficking cases reveal need for a change in approach \(commentary\)](#) – Onrizal Onrizal | Mongabay

[Indonesia to Phase Out Diesel Power Plants as Solar Projects Begin](#) – Calvin Moniaga Sipahutar | Jakarta Globe.ID

[Inside Indonesia's illegal gold rush \(video\)](#) – Ferdinand Himawan | DW

[A sacred tradition - why this Indonesian community stockpiles rice to last nearly 100 years \(video\)](#) – Wisnu Agung Prasetyo | CNA

[Nickel nationalism holds back Indonesia's clean tech ambitions](#) – Riandy Laksono | East Asia Forum

[Women in the tech industry: Indonesia's new trailblazers \(video\)](#) – Yannick Beierlein | DW

[Indonesia Picks China as Its Waste-to-Energy Partner](#) – Jayanty Nada Shofa | Jakarta Globe.ID

[Indonesia Seeks WTO Approval to Suspend EU Trade Concessions Over Palm Oil Dispute](#) | Jakarta Globe.ID/Antara

[Indonesia farmers count the costs as rains wash out Java durian harvest](#) – L. Darmawan | Mongabay

[Indonesia Secures \\$1.4 Billion Investment for Solar Power Expansion](#) – Calvin Moniaga Sipahutar | Jakarta Globe.ID

[Indonesia targets first nuclear power plant by 2032–2034](#) | Antara

[Third Regional Leader Arrested This Year in Indonesia Corruption Sweep](#) – Yustinus Paat | Jakarta Globe.ID

[From Long-term Plans to Flagships: Indonesia's Reordered Development Agenda](#) – Deasy Pane and Dharendra Wardhana | Fulcrum

[Too close to Trump: How Indonesian President Prabowo gambles sovereignty, humanity for US' approval](#) – Jo Adetunji | The Conversation

[Indonesia pauses talks on Board of Peace amid Iran conflict](#) – Arlina Arshad | The Straits Times

[Indonesia to import more crude oil from US as Middle East conflict escalates, minister says](#) | Reuters

[Every \\$1 Oil Rise May Cost Indonesia Up to Rp 4 Trillion, Economist Warns](#) | Jakarta Globe.ID/Antara



Laos

[Laos Reviews Minimum Wage Increase as Living Costs Rise](#) – Phoudasack Vongsay | The Laotian Times

[Govt sets 6 percent growth target, pushes for self-reliant economy](#) | Vientiane Times

[PM leads talks on fuel reserves amid slowing supply from Middle East](#) | Vientiane Times

[Lao Government, Thai Firm Sign Deal for 100MW Solar Farm in Bolikhamxay](#) – Thongsavanh Souvannasane | The Laotian Times

[Laos, China Boost Oversight of Key Projects Ahead of 65th Anniversary](#) – Phoudasack Vongsay | The Laotian Times

[Laos seeks to strengthen sustainable food systems](#) | The Star/Xinhua

[Governance, development plans top agenda at Party meeting](#) | Vientiane Times

[No fuel shortage in Laos, officials assure public](#) | Vientiane Times



Malaysia

[Malaysia's nuclear energy plan under review](#) | The Straits Times/The Star/Asia News Network

[Middle East conflict and the surge in oil prices: A test of Malaysia's economic resilience](#) – Haim Hilman Abdullah | Malaysia Gazette

[LGBTQ Issues in Malaysia and the Politics of Conservative Modernity](#) – Syaza Shukri | Fulcrum

[Malaysia is the first country to cancel the US tariff agreement](#) – Lisa Monica and Ramdhani Pratama | IDN Financials

[Criminalising dissent endangers Malaysia's democratic progress](#) – Charles Santiago | Free Malaysia Today

[Malaysia's curb on non-AI data centres seen as 'strategic throttle', but challenges remain](#) – Amir Yusof | CNA

[Running of Kuala Lumpur: When Demographics Stand in the Way of Direct Polls](#) – Ooi Kok Hin | Fulcrum

[Regulators invite feedback for new Malaysia sustainable finance taxonomy](#) – Samantha Ho | Eco-Business

[As snap poll rumblings grow, Malaysia PM Anwar hobbled by internal strife and widening anti-graft controversy](#) – Leslie Lopez | CNA

[Malaysia's parliament fails to pass Bill limiting PM's tenure to 10 years](#) | CNA/Reuters

[PM term limit amendment will not affect King prerogative powers](#) – Amalia Azmi, Hakim Mahari | The New Straits Times

[Election rivals or allies? Coalition partners must know, say analysts](#) – Nora Mahpar | Free Malaysia Today

[Malaysia renews Lynas Rare Earths' license for 10 years, orders end to radioactive waste by 2031](#) – Eileen Ng | AP



Myanmar

[Myanmar's rice farmers scrounge for diesel as Iran conflict dries up supply](#) | The Straits Times/Reuters
[Myanmar Junta Imposes Twice-Weekly Refill Limit as Fuel Pumps Run Dry](#) – Myo Pyae | The Irrawaddy
[Myanmar's parliament meets for the first time in 5 years with the military controlling most seats](#) | AP
[Myanmar's "Election" Reveals Hairline Cracks in Military Rule](#) – Ben Dunant | Fulcrum
[Myanmar Fuel Prices Surge as Digital Rationing Triggers Chaos](#) – Myo Pyae | The Irrawaddy
[Iran Strikes Threaten Myanmar Junta's Jet Fuel and Drone Supplies](#) | The Irrawaddy
[Myanmar's military government pardons thousands of prisoners ahead of parliament convening](#) | AP
[Drop of Karenni Water: Surviving water scarcity in Myanmar's Kayah State](#) – CJ Platform | Mekong Eye



Philippines

[Philippine president declares energy emergency as impact of Iran war felt](#) | Al Jazeera/Reuters/AP
[Sara Duterte impeachment hearings start as political death match heats up](#) – Joel Guinto | BBC
[Philippines pushes inclusion in US-led critical minerals alliance](#) – Dexter Barro II | Manila Bulletin
[Philippines eyes fertiliser imports from China as Middle East conflict hits supply](#) | Vietnam Plus
[Philippines rejects Beijing's claim to sovereignty over entire South China Sea](#) | Reuters
[The Middle East crisis and Philippine agriculture](#) – Ernesto M. Ordoñez | Inquirer
[PH leads Asia in women's education, but falls behind in jobs](#) – Kurt Dela Peña | Inquirer
[Barricades delay mining project in northern Philippines \(video\)](#) – Chantal Eco | DW
[Deadly landfill collapse exposes risks faced by Philippines' waste pickers](#) – Michael Beltran | Fulcrum
[Marcos seeks emergency powers to cut fuel tax](#) – Charie Abarca, Dexter Cabalza | Inquirer
[MOU signed on occasion of Korean president's state visit to Manila](#) – Yi Whan-woo | The Korea Times
[Philippine lawmakers start impeachment hearings against Vice-President Duterte](#) | The Straits Times/AFP



Singapore

[S'pore farms brace themselves for rise in costs due to Mid-East war, will keep prices steady for now](#) – Letitia Chen | The Straits Times
[Singapore to commission three studies on nuclear safety and environmental impact](#) – Firdaus Hamzah | CNA
[Singapore and Japan upgrade ties to Strategic Partnership, expand cooperation in five areas](#) – Koh Wan Ting | CNA
[Iran war upheaval jolts shipping fuel suppliers in Singapore](#) | The Straits Times/Bloomberg
[Singapore ready to enter new chapter in relations with Japan, deepen ties with China and South Korea: Sim Ann](#) – Ang Hwee Min | CNA
[From Threat to Vulnerability: Rethinking Radicalisation in Singapore](#) – Raneeta Mutiara | RSIS
[From heatwaves to rising seas: Singapore lays out climate adaptation plan](#) – Koh Wan Ting | CNA
[Singapore 'seriously studying' potential deployment of advanced nuclear energy technologies: Tan See Leng](#) – Sean Ler | Asia One



Thailand

[Thai fuel prices soar by six baht a litre](#) | Bangkok Post
[Fuel shock pushes Thai fishery close to shutdown](#) | Bangkok Post/Reuters
[Thai telcos monitor submarine internet cables round the clock for disruptions caused by Mid-East war](#) | The Straits Times
[Qatar blast doubles LNG prices, pressures Thailand's power tariff](#) | The Nation
[Thailand considers Russian crude imports](#) – Mongkol Bangprapa | Bangkok Post
[Iran war shock derails Thailand's economic reboot under PM Anutin](#) – Aidan Jones | South China Morning Post
[Govt moves to curb fuel prices](#) – Wichit Chantanusornsiri and Mongkol Bangprapa | Bangkok Post
[Thai tourism faces severe volatility as Middle East conflict hits long-haul travel](#) | The Nation
[Thailand named among Asia's hardest hit as Iran shuts Strait of Hormuz](#) | The Nation
[Thailand rolls out energy crisis plan: export curb, alternative supplies](#) | The Nation
[Thailand has a two-month oil reserve, says Energy Ministry](#) | Bangkok Post

[Can Thailand's new government deliver on growth promises?](#) – David Hutt | DW
[Anutin says coalition complete, rules out Klatham, Democrats](#) – Mongkol Bangprapa and Online Reporters | Bangkok Post
[Commission opts to tighten data centre supervision](#) – Komsan Tortermvasana | Bangkok Post
[Thai data center boom sparks fears of water shortage, air pollution](#) – Gerald Flynn | Mongabay
[Thai court orders firm to pay villagers for mining damages](#) | CNA/AFP
[US launches Section 301 probe into 16 trade partners, including Thailand](#) | The Nation
[Thailand to send 284 tonnes of e-waste back to US](#) – Apinya Wipatayotin | Bangkok Post
[Economist warns Thailand could encounter stagflation](#) – Nareerat Wiriyapong | Bangkok Post
[Thailand's Upper South: The Conservative Swing State](#) – Tita Sanglee | Fulcrum
[Thailand's split-ticket election exposes party weakness](#) – Aim Sinpeng | East Asia Forum
[House secretary-general hints quick first parliament convention](#) – Aekarach Sattaburuth | Bangkok Post



Timor-Leste

[Timor-Leste: PM wants to ensure fuel, food supplies until end of the year](#) | AMAN/Lusa
[Women trainers driving change through agroforestry skills in Timor-Leste](#) | ILO
[ASEAN-Korea Centre chief meets with Timor-Leste leaders](#) – Seo Ji-Eun | Korea JoongAng Daily
[Who Shapes and Who Owns the Next Phase of Timor-Leste's Development?](#) – Khoo Ying Hooi | Tatoli
[Ramos-Horta warns Middle East tensions could impact Timor-Leste's economy](#) | Tatoli



Vietnam

[Solar could save Vietnam nearly \\$600 million on fuel imports amid Iran war: report](#) – Hannah Alcosoba Fernandez | Eco-Business
[Russia, Vietnam agree deal on nuclear power plant construction](#) | Reuters
[Vietnam holds general election, 93% candidates from ruling Communist Party](#) | Al Jazeera/AP/Reuters
[Government discusses relocation plans for Ninh Thuan nuclear power project](#) | Vietnam Net
[Vietnam seeks energy cooperation with Gulf leaders amid regional tensions](#) | Vietnam Net
[Vietnam's Gaza Board of Peace Gambit: To Lam's Confident New Foreign Policy](#) – Hoang Thi Ha | Fulcrum
[Escalating Middle East conflict threatens Vietnam's seafood supply chain](#) – Chu Khôi | VnEconomy
[Vietnam trade ministry urges firms to hedge risks as Middle East conflict escalates](#) – Quang Minh, Thai Ha | The Investor



ASEAN/ Southeast Asia Region and Germany/ EU

[EU-ASEAN Business Council urges stronger EU engagement with ASEAN](#) | The Philippine Business and News
[My Say: Strengthening EU-Asean relations: Helping build the orange economy](#) – Pravin Periasamy | The Edge Malaysia
[Vietnam eyes stronger sci-tech, innovation cooperation with Germany](#) | Vietnam Plus
[Malaysia eyes rail links to strengthen role in Europe-Asia trade](#) – Melissa Goh and Marcel Pereira | CNA
[Authorities in talks on US tariffs and finalising FTAs](#) – Somhatai Mosika | Bangkok Post
[EuroCham white paper indicates Myanmar's digital economy under growing pressure](#) | Mizzima
[Vietnam, not Thailand, preferred by European investors in ASEAN](#) | The Nation
[Leading European AI company chooses the Philippines for its entry into Asean](#) | The Manila Times
[Enhancing ASEAN-EU Cooperation on Subsea Cable Security](#) – Barbora Valockova | Fulcrum
[EU-ABC report urges stronger ASEAN action on illicit trade under Philippines' Chairship](#) | The Nation