



**ASEAN NEW ZEALAND
BUSINESS COUNCIL INC**



ABOUT ASEAN

News and Views from ASEAN Markets - November 2016

SE Asia perspectives on US election outcome

Vriens and partners have provided a characteristically precise [analysis](#) for each member state, whilst the Straits Times features the concerned [views](#) of two academics from the Lee Kuan Yew School about the march of deglobalisation

And CIMB ASEAN Research Institute Chairman Tan Sri Mohd Munir adds his [view](#) that other partners (e.g. China, Japan, India) can replace USA if it does start to look inwards to make it great again.

ASEAN not in hurry to see trade deal with post Brexit UK

EU and Asian diplomats have poured cold water on the idea that developing economies of the ASEAN bloc are queuing up to do trade deals with a post-EU UK – a major policy plank of the British Brexit ministers says this [article](#) in Euractiv

ASEAN Economic Updates – mixed reports

The Economic Research Institute of ASEAN East Asia [updates](#) cover trends for each ASEAN economy and also, as a member of the East Asia Group, New Zealand. It says the latter's "growth rate is one of the most astounding rates amongst developed countries mainly driven by improvements in retail sales fuelled by the booming tourism sector. The growth in the construction sector signals another positive sentiment to the country's outlook".

This AEC News [article](#) also gives a good summary of economic growth this year with Viet Nam "stumbling" and Philippines the most "stable" ASEAN economy.

RCEP in the spotlight again

With TPP undergoing its last rites, the under the radar RCEP negotiations attain a new significance.

The [India Times](#) reports other partners have agreed to Indian demands on services and investment negotiations and apparently on differential tariff concessions to different members.

And the NZ International Business Forum provides a recent local [perspective](#)

What was behind the Jakarta protest?

Another [analysis](#) from Vriens, on the recent protest in Jakarta against Governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama in response to a comment he made about Muslims voting for a non-Muslim candidate, puts what on the face of it seems a rather concerning development in a political context.

Managing urbanisation in ASEAN

ASEAN cities are still grappling with basic problems and without “skillful management,” cities could face a multitude of problems such as congestion, crime, urban poverty and pollution among others says a new EIU report highlighted in [Brink Asia](#)

A major contributor to the challenge is the rapidly emerging urban middle class in ASEAN so this should lead to opportunities to offer some of the skilled assistance required.

Sittwe to Singapore - ASEAN 50 years on

Nicholas Farely in this [Nikkei](#) article questions how much unity ASEAN has attained in 50 years and compares life in Singapore with that in Sittwe (Myanmar)

Mari Pangestu on ASEAN unity at 50 years of age

But former Indonesia Trade Minister and good friend of New Zealand, Mari Pangestu defends the progress made by ASEAN as it approaches 50 years and pleads for a continuation of the momentum in this Jakarta Post [article](#)

[Behind Indonesia's trade stances ... Gita's view](#)

And another former Trade Minister, Gita Wirjawan, gives a masterly assessment of Indonesia's positioning and stance vis-a-vis Singapore and Malaysia.

Without notes, Gita spoke at the 2015 ASEAN Business Investment Summit in Kuala Lumpur and the Editor apologises for not running this “youtube” item earlier. He witnessed the presentation but needed someone a bit more techno than he to unearth it (if that’s the right word for the www).

New Zealand Tops World Bank Survey as Easiest Place to Do Business

The [Jakarta Globe reports](#) that New Zealand has regained top spot from Singapore in the World league for ease of doing business. Brunei was the biggest improver moving from 84th to 72nd. Because it was a Reuters report, this item failed to mention Indonesia’s improvement by 15 spots to 91st which the Globe remedies [here](#).

To the Editor’s untutored maths that seems a bigger improvement than Brunei?

Greater Mekong Subregion presents new opportunities

Courtesy of strategic partner ANZ’s Blue Notes we reprint two articles on the GMS. In the [first](#) ANZ’s Lao CEO, Anna Green, outlines the opportunity with some tips and tricks.

And ANZ Economists [analyse](#) the impact of Special Economic Zones in the Mekong and the benefits to investors and the economies.

Philippines joining the “pro-China” group? (Voice of America)

“Philippines’ move toward Beijing marks the third Asean member, along with Cambodia and Laos, to hitch their foreign policies and their fortunes to the promises of an emerging China, particularly Chinese investment, condition-free aid and lots of low-interest loans” says [VOA Khymer with interesting analysis of the pros and cons.](#)

OIO investment approvals – Asian investors behind Americas and Australia

USA and Canada were New Zealand’s biggest foreign investors over the last three years, followed by Australia, China and Singapore [reports](#) the NZ Herald on a KPMG analysis of Overseas Investment Office (OIO) approvals.

Whereas ANZ’s [Blue Notes](#) remarks on the substantial property investment activity of Singapore in Australia.

Whilst the two reports don’t compare apples with apples, it may point to a need to work harder to attract ASEAN investment to New Zealand.

Halal cautionary tale not a shaggy dog story

Here's a cautionary story for F&B exporters from the [Straits Times](#) on how comprehensively you have to be aware of cultural sensitivities in halal markets.

Confusing soap opera with reality – a Thai perspective

Pravit Rojanaphruk of Thailand's [Khao Sod](#) reflects at a time when soap operas were off air during the immediate period of mourning for the late King Bhumipol that “a good number of people are so immersed in these dramas they see life and politics through the same lens as things to be oversimplified and followed passively ... But seeing things in black-and-white terms doesn't prepare people to handle a complex and pluralistic society.”



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