

## **Editorial: Contemporary issues in Southeast Asia**

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To emphasize the critical nature of the world's ongoing crises, we have developed this regular issue around the themes of COVID-19's impact on education and national integrity in Southeast Asian countries. The way the world treated vulnerable groups during this challenging period has heavily influenced the content of this issue. This issue contains articles on a variety of topics on Southeast Asia, including history, environment, governance, and political systems.

While each of the seven articles is self-contained, we have attempted to impose a loose subject structure and logical flow on their arrangement in order to demonstrate some of the methodological parallels and differences. The focus of this issue is on three major pillars: COVID-19, urban growth, modern transport and history. Here, we demonstrate how the seven articles hang together in relation to the main focus of this issue.

SEAMJ runs both regular and special issues to aggregate papers on specific topics. For the growth of knowledge in areas (such as Linguistics and English Language and Literature, Environmental Studies, Geography and Development; Sociology and Anthropology, Bahasa Melayu & Linguistik, History and International Studies; Professional Communication), the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) of the Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) publishes SEAMJ twice a year.

SEAMJ ran a special issue on in 2021 the COVID-19 pandemic. Authors and readers convene to debate the most recent discoveries and generate ideas for future research initiatives. The COVID-19 outbreak has placed the region at a critical juncture. It has resulted in a prolonged, severe recession, exacerbated by restricted borders and characterized by growing social tensions, increased vulnerability, and a return to environmentally appropriate economic development. At the same time, establishing internationally and geographically coordinated policies that recognize the need for an inclusive, resilient, and sustainable development approach has happened.

Our top objective is to publish high-quality material that is representative of the entire epistemic community and comes from that community itself.

In order to ensure that everyone has an equal voice in the world, it is our duty to do so. We are interested in broadening our horizons, both geographically and academically. The current issue has included two articles on COVID-19, two articles on Malaysia's E-waste recycling and urban growth, one article on digitalization of land services delivery and one article on the development of modern transport systems in the Bengal delta and British Borneo.

Numerous social and cultural aspects of the epidemic in the region have been largely concealed. Governments have enacted policies from on high. There is much to be learnt from the response of nations in the subregion, whose governments have acted swiftly to contain the pandemic and minimize its worst effects despite having little fiscal space. In spite of this, as in numerous other places of the world, the epidemic has caused tremendous suffering, with a disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable. It has shown pervasive inequities, governance challenges, and the unsustainable nature of the current development route. After two years, Southeast Asia is recovering from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) epidemic.

The current issue (Vol 22, Issue 1) includes seven original articles. The first one, 'Knowledge of E-Waste Recycling Among Communities in Selangor, Malaysia' by Amirah Sariyati Binti Mohd Yahya, Tengku Adeline Adura Binti Tengku Hamzah and Aziz Bin Shafie argue how that the environment and human health can be jeopardized if e-waste is not properly managed. Global E-waste production continued to rise as a result of rapid technological advancement and increased purchasing power among the global population. Recycling E-waste is one of the possible sustainable methods for managing E-waste. The purpose of this research is to determine which demographic factor has the greatest influence on local residents' understanding of e-waste recycling in Selangor. Selangor is one of Peninsular Malaysia's wealthiest states, with a diverse population of ethnic and racial backgrounds. In 2019, 779 people participated in a survey to learn more about local residents' understanding of e-waste recycling, as well as the social and demographic factors that influence that understanding. Three aspects of a person's background stand out: their educational attainment, the nature of their job, and their income. This study intends to determine which demographic aspect influences Selangor people's knowledge of e-waste recycling the greatest.

The next article, 'Organic Solidarity in the National Response to COVID-19 in Brunei Darussalam' by Hannah Ming Yit Ho explores the national unity in Brunei Darussalam during the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the younger generations. Using Emile Durkheim's notions of solidarity, researchers investigate how young people's social media use contributes to the pandemic's official discourse. Social cohesion based on varied roles is an indicator of a shift towards an organic society. Citizens play a crucial role in the momentum toward Industrial Revolution (IR) 4.0, demonstrating that unity cannot be generated via a direction from above. The local social media during the crisis has shown the government a new way to promote solidarity by fostering economic and creative divisions of labour.

The third piece, 'Factors Influencing Community Participation of Youth Affairs Committee Members in Mon State' by Atar Thaung Htet examines the elements that influence the community involvement of Mon state youth affairs committee members. This article aims to determine which factors had the most impact on youth affairs committee members' participation in their respective communities. This article bears out that social and, political & legal issues favourably influence the community involvement of young leaders. Policymakers in the state of Mon should provide youth with opportunities to participate in community development projects.

The fourth article, 'Development of Modern Transport System in the Bengal Delta and British Borneo: A Comparative Environmental Perspective, 1850-1963' by Md Mamunur Rashid compares contemporary transportation networks in the Bengal Delta and British Borneo. To satisfy the demands of the new resource extraction methods, British colonial rulers developed a new transportation system in both regions and constructed roads, trains, and maritime routes linking key commercial and political centers. When current transportation was established, little environmental considerations were made. As a result, considerable ecological alterations and decreases were created accidentally. The changes in the environment brought about by these transport systems in these two distinct regions were not identical. This article takes a comparative approach as there has been little investigation into the historical connections between modern infrastructure and environmental changes in colonial South Asia and Malaysia.

In the fifth article ‘Digitalization in the Land Service Delivery: Comparison between Bangladesh and Indonesia’ Marufa Akter focuses on the fact that the governments of Bangladesh and Indonesia have established a digital land management framework within the land system to ensure optimal land development in particular the effective delivery of land services. Both countries' land offices have numerous hurdles when it comes to providing digital services. In order to make informed decisions about their future, it is crucial to assess the existing use of digitalization and identify the aspects driving digitalization in land service delivery by land offices. The correct application of digitization in land administration in both nations is being hampered by a lack of institutional and operational capabilities and service delivery employee misconduct.

The sixth piece, ‘Readiness and Problems Encountered by Teachers in Quezon Province Due to Covid-19: Basis for an intervention scheme’ by Ramil A. Borreo and Gilbert C. Alva indicates that, in times of crisis such as COVID-19, the readiness of teachers for the start of the school year and their responses to difficulties they experience are crucial. This article focuses on the readiness and issues of teachers in Quezon Province for the forthcoming school year 2020-2021 in order to gain a better understanding of this issue and develop an intervention plan. The perspective on the teaching profession was optimistic, and instructors reported that they were prepared to carry out their obligations and responsibilities under the new standard imposed by the COVID-19 epidemic. Teachers were concerned about the impact and compromise that the reproduction of modules would have on their time management. Even more concerning was the fact that teachers appeared to have difficulty accessing online seminars and training due to unstable or inadequate internet connections. Teachers may benefit from the intervention approach described in this paper in order to solve their current issues.

We believe that researchers, academics, policymakers and stakeholders will find this issue informative and useful.