

CLMV reaction essay week 1

Essay 1 ASEAN: Origin, evolution, and economy (June 20, 2019)

This is a reaction essay of the first lecture in class. The first lecture was held by Ajarn Chayanee Chawanote. In the topic of origin, evolution, and economy of ASEAN, it started with the fun quizzes and interesting facts about CLMV countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam) such as , ASEAN chairmanship 2019, the highest GDP growth rate country, the correct each CLMV currency, the famous brands or products, the capital cities, and the highest per capita income country.

The lesson began with a bit of history timeline before ASEAN and AEC establishment and their differences. The lecturer has mentioned many important issues about ASEAN. I will conclude some of the issues. One of them was phases of Economic integration in SEA. (SEA stands for Southeast Asia.) They covered Pre-AFTA, AFTA, and AEC period.

The AFTA period (1992-2002) focuses on free trade among ASEAN countries by gradually reducing tariff so they can maintain competitiveness (such as low wage) among ASEAN countries in attracting FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) which is the main reason for AFTA.

Then in 2003-2015, the phase was moving to AEC (ASEAN Economic Community) phase. This concerns the weak of attracting FDI and financial crisis (Tom Yum Kung Crisis) in 1997. And AEC is aimed for closing the development gaps to bridge with the core (ASEAN6) and CLMV. ASEAN6 is ASEAN countries with extra countries which are China, Korea, Japan, India, Australia, and New Zealand.

To sum up the current period is ASEAN Economy or Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Economy), ASEAN is developing in terms of international trade and investment, labor and population, human capital and so on. In class, I have learned a lot mostly by figures and graphs about the rank of ASEAN compared intra (within ASEAN) and to the global rank of GDP, population, export-import, FDI, and etc. with big countries or group such as China, EU, and US.

The fact that interests me is to know that around 40% of labor in Thailand which are in the agricultural sector can earn little income around 10.6% of the GDP share in 2017. So in my opinion, there is still a big gap in labor and human development in Thailand since most people of the country in this sector are still poor. Apart from that, I enjoyed learning about key industries of each member country. They seem to have high potential to develop further in the future. For example, Vietnam has the big footwear industry that produces for many well-known brands like Nike and Adidas. But those brands have the manufacturing bases in other countries as well, Vietnam need to prepare and develop its labor and minimum wage to maintain competitiveness.

So the first lecture for me in this class is like the beginning step to get to know overall about ASEAN members and CLMV countries most focusing in economy term. And I gained new and useful knowledge from this class.

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Essay 2 Cambodia economy (June 21, 2019)

This reaction essay concludes the lecture from the guest speaker who is Mrs. Lay Chanrasmey, Counsellor in charge of Political & Deputy Head of Mission at Royal Embassy of Cambodia to Thailand. She narrated in the topic of Cambodia - Thailand Bilateral Relations.

The lecturer began with overall Cambodia profile & relations with Thailand. Cambodia and Thailand have the strong relations by exchanging the official visits many times since the first election in Cambodia in 1993.

Her Royal Highness Princess Sirindhorn has royal visits for 13 times since 1992. It can be seen that Cambodian people get great educational opportunities and scholarships from Thailand, especially from Her Royal Highness Princess Sirindhorn.

Moreover, she talked about labor cooperation, checkpoints at borders, bilateral trade and investment, and a little bit of CLMV mechanisms.

She mentioned that the bilateral conflicts have disappeared. Cambodian love Thai culture, food, dramas. They love Thailand so much. The relationship between residents of Thai-Cambodian borders is also peaceful. Most Cambodian students at borders have daily cross-border to study in Thai school at the border provinces such as Sakoew, Trat, Srisaket. But I agree with her in the view of Cambodian only. I am not so sure about Thai people because I still see some negative, harmful and insulting comments about some neighbouring countries' nationalities on social media often.

She said that from Cambodian official told there are around 1 million cambodian immigrant workers in Thailand, but from Thailand officials is around 400,000 workers.

The reasons explaining the numbers of all Cambodian workers in Thailand including illegal labors because Cambodian data collecting system is not stable and up-to-date. They do not collect when workers go back to their country, only collect when they leave for Thailand.

The most interesting part of the lecture for me is to know that Cambodia tourists visiting Thailand is more than Thai tourists visiting Cambodia in each year from various reasons. The main reason is the better quality and cheaper price of products in Thailand. Moreover, a lot of Cambodian come to Thailand for medical-check up. Both in public hospitals and in luxury private hospitals for the rich.

The speaker has reminded my opinion on interesting the issue about cambodian workers and the effort of Cambodian government. Even if, the minimum wage in Thailand is higher than the minimum wage in Cambodia, Cambodian workers still want to go back to their home country. And most of them are illiterate. They cannot read or write their national language. So the Cambodian embassy helps them using Facebook live.

The government of Cambodia is trying to encourage and push Cambodia labors in Thailand and other countries move back to work and live in Cambodia. They offer good benefits to interest Cambodian workers such as opening Thai restaurant because Cambodian workers are used to Thai food. These are some of the guest's examples and my opinions from the lecture's topic.

In conclusion, this lecture gave me impression and it was like an eye-opening knowledge about our neighboring country like Cambodia to me. It made me want to get to know more in many aspects of Cambodia.

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