Enhancing Intercity Relation among Secondary Cities in ASEAN

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Abstract: This paper investigates the possible important roles of secondary cities in ASEAN to becoming pillars of connectivity for ASEAN Community, the roles of which so far seems to have been still understudied. Our arguments are based on three reasons. First, cities plays significant role in diplomacy since capital cities can no longer to be sole players in world stage. Although at the beginning of the twenty-first century, foreign affairs is still primarily a task of national governments and their ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs), the state is no longer the only actor on the diplomatic stage. The foundations of diplomacy as such were established long before 1648, when states did not yet exist and cities pioneered as foreign policy entities. Second, diplomacy thus existed before the existence of states, but ASEAN has so far relied heavily in states (capital city) to support inter-ASEAN relations and to forget that cities are oldest diplomatic actors. At a time when ASEAN is gearing up for stronger integration, there is a need to enhance interaction among its peoples to facilitate the vision of a solid regional community by 2020. One way to achieve it is through enhancing the role of non-capital cities. Third, deepening ASEAN integration can be garnered through strengthening the role of ASEAN's cities.

1 INTRODUCTION

In September 2016, ASEAN Leaders adopted the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 (MPAC 2025) in Vientiane, Lao PDR. The Master Plan focuses on five strategic areas: sustainable infrastructure, digital innovation, seamless logistics, regulatory excellence and people mobility. While the new Master Plan succeeds the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2010, it was also reported that the New Master Plan was developed after consultation with relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and other stakeholders (asean.org., 2016). It is important to note, moreover, that many forms of initiatives have been taken based on the MPAC 2010 (asen.org., 2016: 8). However, the adoption of the MPAC 2025 indicates that more paths can be used in order to achieve quality integration of ASEAN as a community with one vision and one identity. This paper argues for the possible important roles of secondary cities in ASEAN to becoming pillars of connectivity for ASEAN Community, the roles of which so far seems to have been still understudied.

2 METHOD AND APPROACH

This article was based on a library exploration. Data were mainly gathered from books, journal, government reports, official reports from relevant international organizations, and other related information from mainstream media. In addition, previous studies concerning the role of cities under contemporary globalization were also consulted. The data gathered then further qualitatively analyzed using a framework that sees city as the new economic geography (Roberts and Hohmann 2014) where ASEAN connetivity project as a contect.

Report of the World Economic Forum in 2014 states that most productive of policy innovation is not generated by the government at the national level, particularly in international forums such as the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU) and the Group of 20 (G20), but it happens in cities and subnational regions. Policy-making is done at the municipal level, and thus the policies are generally more flexible, practical and closer to the people, so that is more conducive to practice. Cities manage to learn from each other and adopt best practice that are often better than that the one done by the state (World Economic Forum Report 2014).

Many cities in the world has substantially grown to be more economical, it has international connectivity, and plays diplomatic role on the world. The emergence of the city as a transnational actor thus not only driven by urbanization and globalization, but also devolution. The end of the Cold War was resulted many new countries (derived from the collapse of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of Yugoslavia), but also gave rise of non-state actors in new form of sub-state, both the city and the province that brought transparency, identity, and connectivity, which translate a greater autonomy. Issues such as climate change, economic growth, counter-terrorism, are also problems not specifically responsibility of the country's leaders, but also by the leaders of the city. Their ability to respond to these issue indicate the current cities are also grow into a diplomatic autonomous unit.

Along with the emergence of the city as an important actor in the international relations, modern cities are part of the new economic geography. These cities are highly dependent on rapid communication, trade, financial and investment systems to support their development. However, most of the global system and national city does not benefit significantly from the 'new era' and the economic geography of the city, instead benefited from the secondary cities. Secondary cities were able to play an important role as a catalyst and a secondary hub in facilitating local production, transportation, transformation, or transfer of goods, people, trade, information, and services between the system of sub-national, metropolitan, national, regional, and global cities (Roberts and Hohmann 2014).

The highly important position of the city in the geography of the new economy, the city is able to form the ideology of civicism in post-national era, placing people's loyalty to the city beyond loyalty to their nation-state. These has createsd a new kind of an identity in a new level and establish new institutions that exceed the limits of loyalty beyond citizenship (Bell and Avner de -Shalit, 2011). Globalization thus has given a greater role to the city to become an important actor in international relations due to the reduced role of the state. The world's major cities became an important center of various activities such as industry, trade, education, and maritime, making the big cities, especially the capital, became the center of urbanization. The rapid urbanization in urban areas at a certain point resulted in density and increased variety of social pathology such as crime and poverty. The increasing trends of negative symptoms lead to the reduced allure of the capital, as the core city. Meanwhile, cities other than the capital has played more critical role politically, economically and culturally, to replace some part of the capital city that has been saturated.

Using the analogy of the Immanuel Wallerstein's world system, Chase-Dunn and Hall (1997) identified city into core and semi-periphery. Core city is identified as the nation's capital, a center which forms range of activities. Semi periphery city expands its network from periphery city toward a larger form with new innovation and technology that produce social change. This makes a semi-periphery city which was originally has never been regarded as a non-state actors, turned into one of the important dynamics that engined as a center of globalization from below. According Dezzani and Chase-Dunn (2010), semi-periphery cities have the potential for the emergence of new innovations that can substantially change the scale and structure of the city. Semi-periphery city has transformed itself into a center of wealth and a hegemon as a result of increased trade and commodity production.

2.1 Inter-ASEAN City Relations

In a post-state era, cities plays significant role in diplomacy since capital cities can no longer to be sole players in world stage. As ASEAN is gearing up for stronger integration, there is a need to enhance interaction among its peoples to facilitate the vision of a solid regional community by 2020. One way to achieve it is through enhancing the role of secondary cities since these cities are increasingly takes over the role of the capital cities in the global economic. The United Nations estimates, by 2030 and beyond, medium and large cities (or 'second-tiers', with a population of less than 5 million people) will be an important part of economic growth in many countries around the world, particularly in developing countries (Chen and Kanna 2012). This means that capital city (top-tier), which is the center of the national economy for thousands years shows a saturated market and less attractive, both as a market and investment destination. Second-tier cities are rapidly growing in terms of foreign direct investment, export-oriented production and services as well as increasing domestic demand and government spending (Spire, 2010).

Inter-ASEAN city relations are not yet considered as an integral part in developing a full flag ASEAN Community, even though ASEAN has emphasized the Vientiane Declaration on the Adoption of Master Plan for ASEAN Connectivity

2025. The Master Plan underlines the need of connectivity as the foundation to achieve the agenda, which are "enhancing ASEAN Connectivity would continue to benefit all ASEAN Member States, through improved physical, institutional and people-to-people linkages, by promoting greater competitiveness, prosperity, inclusiveness and sense of Community" (asean.org., 2016: 4). Furthermore, the connectivity "encompasses the physical (e.g., transport, ICT, and energy), institutional (e.g., trade, investment, and services liberalisation), and people-to-people linkages (e.g., education, culture, and tourism) that are the foundational supportive means to achieving the economic, political-security, and socio-cultural pillars of an integrated ASEAN Community" (asean.org., 2016: 8).

This connectivity has been performed by ASEAN citizens in their everyday lives in towns and regions outside the capitals, in many ways, although this has not been in the centre of high-profile ASEAN discussion. Density and saturation in tier-1 cities prompted many companies to look for more promising opportunities in second and third tier locations. In many cases, companies find relatively unexplored opportunities in these places. In recent years, second-tier cities in Indonesia such as Bandung, Surabaya, and Makassar, have shown much faster growth rates than the capital city. Thanks to the 2001 reform of the regional autonomy law, provincial governments in second tier cities have a more conducive business environment as a result of greater autonomy in controlling local income and collecting taxes. They are actively pursuing foreign investors and businesses through aggressive economic reforms.

2.2 Strengthening the Role of ASEAN Cities

Strengthening cooperation among ASEAN cities are important for many reasons. Indeed, capital cities play an important role as they act as administrative centres, hubs of economic, social and cultural activity and symbolize the shared values of a state, such as democracy, equality or development (Hall 1993 in Gilliland 2013). Typically, the capital cities of ASEAN are the largest and busiest cities in the states. In many cases, serve as metropolitan primacy, ASEAN's capital cities are overcrowd by the problem of urbanization, and governing the capital city involving the complex task of "providing workable solutions to the employment, educational, housing, transportation and recreational needs of the millions" (Reed, 1967: 286). Mark Jefferson

introduced the concept of "primate city", in which according to him, the primate city is usually to become "the national capital, a cultural center, the focus of internal migration, a hub of nationalistic ferment and the multi-functional nucleus of a country's economy" (Reed, 1967: 287). However, the multifunctional tasks and multiplicity function of capital city is without limits. Many capital cities have failed to perform its primary function due to different types of unanticipated problems. ASEAN's capital city, Jakarta for example, has shown decline in its performance due to problems including (i) empirical issues such as pollution (surface water, ground water, air), traffic congestion, floods, and (ii) issues relating to climate change, spatial utilization management (Mungkasa, n.d). Even big cities, like London is not an exemption in showing evidence of decline. Pike, et al (2016) assert, city decline in two types, in absolute form (reduction in specific indicators – such as population or employment) and relative form (decline in a comparatively weaker performance of a city on certain indicators in relation to similar cities or to the national average). Either decline in absolute or relative form, capital cities has shown their limitations to provide sustainable life for their populace.

In addition to that, as a regional organization, ASEAN needs to boost the connectivity through intercity relations. Deepening ASEAN integration can be garnered through strengthening the role of ASEAN's secondary cities since this connectivity may bring market closer that impacting to the reduction of the economic density of the capital city. Inter-ASEAN city connectivity will improve the performance of, not only ASEAN Economic Community, but also the other two ASEAN community pillars: ASEAN politics and security and socio-cultural pillar, hence improving people-to-people connectivity as a whole. ASEAN community is a breakthrough for ASEAN as a regional organization. ASEAN has learnt that deepening regionalization will only be achieved by involving greater participation from its people through 'globalization from below' and lessening the elitist approach. Looking back at the origin of the ASEAN formation that the purpose of ASEAN is "…to accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region…", evidently that ASEAN is heading on the right track.

To enhance a people-to-people connectivity, ASEAN needs to involve more intercity connection as the basis of strengthening ASEAN community as a whole. As has been stated elsewhere that cities, more specifically secondary cities, play crucial role

in shaping networks within ASEAN Connectivity 2025. ASEAN secondary cities have great potency to materialize the connectivity. Primary cities are no longer the main driver of economic prosperity. In fact, newly urban centres, which considered as 'sleeping giant' have played pivotal role in distributing wealth across Southeast Asia (Leggett, 2015: 20). A survey conducted by Nielsen NV and AlphaBeta showcase that smaller cities in ASEAN will compete with primate cities such as Jakarta, Manila, Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh City and Singapore in terms of consumption through to 2030. Moreover, in terms of population, four cities will be important centers of economic growth as a result of rural migration to the cities, in where they register growth of more than 50% up to 2025: They are: Samut Prakan (Thailand), will expand by 62.3% from 2015 levels to 2.9 million; Batam (Indonesia) is predicted to grow to 2.2 million; Vientiane (Laos) will grow by 54.5% to 1.6 million; and Denpasar (Indonesia) is likely to expand by 51.9% to 1.7 million (Boyd, 2017). Within ASEAN context, this development cannot be ignored. Even though rural migration to cities is not anew, ASEAN Economic Community has provided a platform for increasing economic performance through structural reforms.

2.3 Challenges

ASEAN people-to-people connectivity will be lived up by the fact that population in secondary cities has grown rapidly that marks a new urbanism. This fast growing urban population is the engine of global economic connections that help Southeast Asia to become a centre of global economic activity. With the increasingly strenuous task of primate cities, and emphasizing division of labours between them, secondary cities are able to take over a role as connectors among hinterlands that the primate cities have previously do. This is in parallel with the structural reforms that have been happening in almost all states in ASEAN by adopting the policy of decentralization. Strengthening the role of secondary cities at the regional level would not only bring benefits to the cities, more importantly would increased multi-level cooperation within ASEAN, which reflect the success of regionalism.

Inter-ASEAN cooperation is the key of ASEAN connectivity, but so far only a few efforts have been made to facilitate it. List of twin cities/sister cities among ASEAN cities (see list in Appendices) showcase that little have been made to set up inter-ASEAN city connection. Even though the list does not comprehensively represent the quality, depth,

and form of the cooperation, the list showcase that cooperation among ASEAN cities have lacked. Instead, ASEAN cities have built intercity relations with many cities outside ASEAN under the program of twin towns or sister city. To Beal and Pinson (2014: 303), the idea of twinning cities emerged as a form of postwar reconciliation against the background of the cold war in Europe and during the 1980s and 1990s, in the context of globalization, the world witnessed a proliferation and a diversification of cities' international activities. They further explain, twinning emerged alongside with other new international activities that result in "a shift in cities' international strategies, in terms of general orientation and content". This pattern occurred globally, and thus placed mayors around the world to play important roles. Mayors 'new role' have expanded to diplomatic tasks, such as promoting global economy and economic growth, facilitating cultural exchanges, Networking extension and international, cooperation development, and representing the city at international organizations (Zarghani, Ranjkesh, and Eskandaran, 2014).

Only if ASEAN to be more successful to achieve its goal, a more "bottom up" approach is needed. ASEAN Community would not be thriving without involving cooperation among cities within ASEAN. Indeed, ASEAN has developed programs which involving cities as key factors in certain issues, but it is still in its infancy step (see list in Appendice). Some project have been initiated to connect cities in ASEAN, such as ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN), where twenty-six cities from the 10 ASEAN countries have been named pilot cities for the project (Chia, 2018). The ASCN comprises 26 pilot cities across all the ten ASEAN member states: Bandar Seri Begawan, Bangkok, Banyuwangi, Battambang, Cebu City, Chonburi, Da Nang, Davao City, Jakarta, Ha Noi, Ho Chi Minh City, Johor Bahru, Kota Kinabalu, Kuala Lumpur, Kuching, Luang Prabang, Makassar, Mandalay, Manila, Nay Pyi Taw, Phnom Penh, Phuket, Siem Reap, Singapore, Vientiane, and Yangon (Thuzar, 2018). This is only an example that ASEAN cities, secondary cities in particular, can play a prominent role to shape regional integration. Town twinning or sister city agreements among ASEAN member-countries are a way to facilitate ASEAN Community. Interaction among its populace is a key to a stronger regional integration. Hence, those agreements is has to be further develop. ASEAN cities could create different initiatives and programs which impact the whole of ASEAN citizens by facilitating mobility, exchange, trade and

communication within the region and bring benefits for all. Deepening intra-regional exchange and facilitates cooperation at the urban level supports the final goal of ASEAN Community.

3 CONCLUSION

In modern world, cities are changing and will continue to change. Cities participate in almost every stage of global politics. Cities began forging links with other cities long before the rise of Westphalian state. Their role, however have been diminished as a result of the state-centric approach in international politics. With the multi-functional of states, sometimes it represents by capital cities giving a rise for non-capital cities to centering themselves to the socio-political, economic and cultural stage.

Secondary cities have now emerged to become important new non-state actors in the global politics thanks to considerable decentralization have taken place in many Southeast Asian countries. The wave of democratization across the region that happened two decades ago also paving a way to the role of secondary cities to materialize ASEAN as a fully-fledged regional integration. With 600 million pepole and promising gross domestic product, connectivity is crucial for the realization of ASEAN Community. Secondary cities play important role to enhance this connectivity since they assist to achieve ASEAN Community goals. In conjunction with decentralization policies adopted by the different ASEAN governments, secondary cities became a focus of policy makers to bring them into a major role in stimulating activities in the regional integration. The successful of deepening ASEAN integration is still challenged, yet to be addressed by the lack of cooperation among the region's urban areas.

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APPENDIX

List of Indonesia's cities involving in twin sister/sister city programs intercity in ASEAN and outside ASEAN

No	Name of cities	In ASEAN	Outside ASEAN
1	Banda Aceh		Samarkand (Uzbekistan
2	Medan	Georgetown, Penang (Malaysia)	Apeldoorn (Netherlands)
3	Bukittinggi	Seremban (Malaysia)	
4	Padang	Vung Tau (Vietnam)	Hildesheim (Germany)
			Beit Lahiya (Palestine)
			Perth (Australia)
			Dubai (United Arab Emirates)
5	Payakumbuh		Nantong (PRC)
6	Sawahlunto		Malacca (Malaysia)
7	Jakarta		Berlin (Germany)
			Casablanca (Morocco)
			Los Angeles (US)
			Moscow (Russia)
			Pyongyang (North Korea)
			Seoul (South Korea)
8	Bogor		Tainan, (ROC)
9	Bandung	Petaling Jaya (Malaysia)	Fort Worth, Texas (United States
		Cotabato (Filipina)	Braunschweig (Germany)
			Namur (Belgium)
			Cuenca (Equador)
			Liuzhou (PRC)
			Yingkou (PRC)
			Shenzen (PRC)
			Suwon (South Korea)
			Seoul (South Korea)
			Toyota City (Japan)
			Hamamatsu (Japan)
10	Depok		Ōsaki, Kagoshima Prefecture (Japan)
11	Semarang	Da Nang (Vietnam)	
12	Surakarta		Montana (Bulgaria)
13	Yogyakarta	Chiang Mai (Thailand)	Baalbek (Lebanon)
			Kyoto (Japan)
			Ismailia (Egypt)
			Esvanza (Iran)
			Prague (Czech Republic)
			Geongsangbuk-Do (South Korea)
			Chungcheongnam-Do (South

			Korea)
			Tyrol (Austria)
14	Surabaya		Seattle, Washington (US)
			Guangzhou (PRC)
			Kaohsiung (ROC)
			Perth (Australia)
			Izmir (Turkey)
			Kochi (Japan)
			Busan (South Korea)
			Liverpool (UK)
			Xiamen (PRC)
15	Makassar	Kuala Terengganu (Malaysia)	Moskow (Russia)
16	Denpasar		Haikou (PRC)
			Toyama (Japan)
17	Singaraja	Bacolod (Philippines)	
18	Ambon		Darwin, Northern Territory (Australia)
19	Papua		Vanimo (Papua New Guinea)

Data is taken from various sources.