

EDITORIAL CHAPTER

In the last few years, Asia has witnessed tremendous social, political, and economic changes. In order to provide a glimpse of the on-going phenomena in Asia, this volume (Volume 6 Number 4) of *Social Science Asia* is devoted to the theme of Political and Economic Development in this region, comprising of five research articles and one book review.

The first research article, *Clientelistic Networks in the 2019 Thai General Election: Evidence from Roi-Et Province* written by Suthikarn Meechan, explores the linkages between national political parties and local networks in the 2019 general election in Thailand. Suthikarn Meechan found that the local networks in Roi Et Province, in order to gain political power and survive in the political environment controlled by the military government, had changed their tactics and had become more and more involved in national politics. Meanwhile, national political parties, to win support from local people, allowed themselves to become more and more dependent on those powerful families in the provinces. National and local networks thus became so intertwined that both had to coordinate well with one another. Grounded on the findings, the author concluded that Thailand is heading toward political decentralization.

Minority Rights vs. Minority Rights: The Case of Indigenous Peoples' Rights in the New Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao by Dennis Quilala is the second research article in this issue. While many scholars were focusing on the conflicts between states and minority groups, Dennis Quilala suggested that we look into the diversity among minority groups and the conflicts between each of them. At the end of the article, Dennis Quilala pointed out the significance of the Philippines government's role as a

mediator to reconcile the differences among the minority groups while providing protection to all of them.

Jannatul Ferdous contributed the third research article entitled *Towards Good Governance Issues from a South Asian Perspective: An Exploratory Assessment*. Employing the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), Human Development index, Corruption Perception index and global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), he evaluated the level of good governance in South Asia. To the disappointment of many, his research revealed poor performances in the field of good governance among countries in the region. To remedy the situations, Jannatul Ferdous recommended that all governments under study use the above-mentioned indicators to monitor and improve their operations.

The fourth research article was written by Prateep Chaylee, *Development Policy beyond China Rising: East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC) and Lower-northern Thailand*. Prateep studied the East-West Economic Corridor, an economic development scheme initiated by China and its progress in Phitsanulok, a province in the north of Thailand. In his research, Prateep pinpointed the narrow-mindedness, influenced by western philosophy, of Thai technocrats as the main culprit causing the delay of the East-West Economic Corridor project in Phitsanulok. Without a change in the Thai technocrats' mindset, it would hardly be possible for the East-West Economic Corridor project to succeed.

Pechladda Pechpakdee wrote the last research article included in this volume, *Secondary Cities and Smart Cities: A Case Study of Khon Kaen, Thailand*. In her research article, Pechladda Pechpakdee posited that the significance of people and

good governance constitute the principal mechanisms that would help transform a mere secondary city into a smart city.

Yumnum, Amar's book, Northeast India: Selected Regional Issues reviewed by Sida Sonsri, is the last article in the volume.

Finally, we hope all the academic works presented in this issue would stimulate further thinking and discussions in the political and economic development fields, and thereby providing greater practical benefits to all parties concerned.