

INTRODUCTION
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The contributions to the latest issue of JATI cover a diverse range of topics and themes. They range from lessons that might be drawn from effective political leadership to the political economy of tourism, prostitution, ethnic attachment, the role of gender in coffee growing and the importance of integration through education. All the contributors address issues of development of crucial importance to Southeast Asian studies.

Thus, Khairul Azman Mohamad Suhaimy, Nurul Aimi Razali and their colleagues consider the leadership model adopted by Abdul Razak Hussein and Mahathir Mohamad in Malaysia's development as a modernising nation state. They note how important strong and effective leadership was for political stability and growth. Emmanuel Osnay, by contrast, examines the contrasting problem of deteriorating profitability and economic failure in the Philippines and demonstrates how prior to the recent economic trauma of COVID-19 there was little evidence of any link between solvency ratios and the subsequent financial failure of Philippine businesses.

Essays by Maliphone Douangphachanh, Rusaslina Idrus and their colleagues on female decision making in coffee farming households in the Bolaven Plateau in Southern Lao and Mingchang Wu, Suryaneta Binti Masrul and their colleagues study of the understandings of Southeast Asian prostitutes working in Taiwan both draw attention, in different ways, to the autonomy and distinctive rationalisations of women in the region's market oriented political economy.

Elsewhere essays by Lua Wei Yin, Nazli Aziz and their colleagues on the ecosystem of the Setiu Wetlands on the East coast of peninsular Malaysia, Sudarat Auttarat, Korawan Sangkakorn and Sansanee Krajangchom work on enhancing cultural tourism in the Lanna region of Northern Thailand and Ratchapan Karapan and Panot Susuwan's study of the Phuan ethnic group in Thailand all address problems of development from the perspective of preservation and ensuring the integrity and continuation of distinct cultural and geographic

ecosystems. Finally, Abdul Haiy A. Sali examines the important problem of how madrassah education in the Philippines might be developed in a way that enhances the productive development of the Muslim community.

This collection of essays thus addresses a broad range of issues from perspectives that seek to maintain the integrity and balance in the region's ecosystems at a time of considerable uncertainty and stress.