

Dynamics of Post-Pandemic Regionalism in Southeast

Asia

D. Jayasuriya¹

Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic has made the entire world rethink the future of regional cooperation. The closure of national borders, competition to secure vaccines as well as competition for post-pandemic economic recovery have become major hurdles in promoting greater regional cooperation. Today, globalization has been challenged, and nationalism and populism are gaining a greater say in international relations. In the case of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) it is now at crossroads. Being the most successful regional organization in the developing world, it is now regaining its momentum and striving its way back to becoming a major economic powerhouse. Against this backdrop, the main objective of this study is to analyze the role of regional cooperation in the post-pandemic recovery in Southeast Asia. It looks at regionalism in Southeast Asia from a constructivist perspective and attempts to understand the role of perspectives, experience, and mutual understanding in promoting regional cooperation. As far as the methodology of the study is concerned, this is qualitative research based on secondary data. The main sources of data collection include journal articles, annual reports, and websites. Looking the theoretical background of the study, it is based on constructivism, a more contemporary theory used to explain regional cooperation. Research findings suggest that post-pandemic recovery in Southeast Asia should be based on a more constructivist approach i.e. one based on shared experience and mutual cooperation. The study also calls for the importance of individuals in promoting regional cooperation.

Keywords: *ASEAN, Constructivism, Covid-19, Regionalism*

¹ BA Honours in International Studies, University of Kelaniya
dulanjalijayasuriya12@gmail.com