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Myanmar Government's Response to the Emergency Condition of Humanity and Health Crisis in the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Article Information	Abstract
<p>Submitted: October 19, 2020 Revised: December 20, 2020 Accepted: December 30, 2020</p> <p>Keywords: Myanmar; Rohingya; Covid-19; Humanity; Crisis</p>	<p><i>The humanitarian crisis in Myanmar is still ongoing today, especially humanitarian and health problems suffered by ethnic Rohingya. Myanmar government's lack of response in resolving this humanitarian crisis is already a concern to the whole world. The lack of existing health facilities for ethnic Rohingya especially during the COVID-19 Pandemic, which has the potential to cause new health problems, is a complex issue that must be responded to with appropriate policies by the Government of Myanmar. Resolving inter-ethnic conflicts together with overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic is a major task of the Government of Myanmar. Equitable the disbursement of aid funds from the Myanmar government and public awareness to maintain health protocols are key to dealing with the conflict in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. This study aims to see how the Myanmar government responds to the humanitarian and health crisis emergency in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic. This research uses qualitative method of case study with analytical descriptive. This research uses a conflict resolution management approach that must be completed by the Government of Myanmar.</i></p>

I. INTRODUCTION

Burma/Myanmar is a country directly bordering Thailand, Laos, and Bangladesh. On July 23, 1997, Burma became a member of ASEAN, so indirectly it was involved in ASEAN's vision to maintain a peaceful, safe, stable, and prosperous Southeast Asia region [1]. However, the social conditions of Burma are still turbulent ethnic minorities. In Burma-Myanmar itself there are 135 ethnic minorities, but the United Nations assigns the most persecuted ethnic to the Rohingya Muslim ethnicity. This ethnicity has been discriminated against since Britain's separation of Buddhist and Muslim ethnicities in the Rakhine region. Under the leadership of the Myanmar military, the Rohingya were

denied citizenship, education rights, decent work and land rights due to the emergence of a new policy in 1982 called the Burma Citizenship Law (BCL) which eliminated these rights [2]. At that time, the Rohingya ethnicity did not have citizenship but were designated as temporary residents so that they did not have full citizenship rights by the ruling regime. The BCL law has recognized eight races and 130 ethnic groups but rejects 800 thousand Rohingya Muslims. The absence of recognition of citizenship makes Rohingya ethnic groups increasingly subject to discrimination. Since receiving repressive action, Rohingya Muslims have sought refuge in a number of countries which directly border Burma-Myanmar, especially Bangladesh with stateless people status

[3]. In 2019 a lawsuit for genocide committed by Myanmar against ethnic Rohingya was filed by Gambia to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) as a result of the brutal attacks carried out by the Myanmar military on ethnic Rohingya in 2017 which caused more than 730,000 Rohingya residents to flee [4]. Member of the UN fact-finding mission, Radhika Coomaraswamy, conveyed that the condition of Rohingya refugees who are in Bangladesh is in inappropriate camps and is even threatened with forced repatriation due to overcrowded conditions. He also added that the root of this problem lies in the unclear citizenship status of the ethnicity. It should be, before being returned to Myanmar, the Rohingya ethnicity must first get clarity regarding their citizenship status [5].

In the midst of a situation of inter-ethnic conflict, Burma still has to face ill health problems. According to data published from the Global Health Security Index Myanmar gets an index score on a scale of 20.0 out of 100.0 on the indicator of health capacity in the field of health facilities [6]. Another health threat emerged, when the first case of coronavirus Disease 2019 was found in Wuhan, China. With a total population of around 54 million, Burma reported its first case of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) on March 24, 2020 [7]. Although the level of spread is lower than that of other ASEAN member countries, public panic is still increasing due to the low number of mass tests to detect sufferers who are also slow in the country. Burma's health system is still classified as poor and is considered incapable of dealing with the turmoil of the pandemic that has occurred. The United Nations (UN) plans to provide as many as 50,000 test kits to Burma. In this case, low-income people are the most vulnerable group due to the health

and economic crisis that occurred as a result of the pandemic [8].

From the explanation above, the writer wants to explain the situation that occurs due to ethnic problems and the global health crisis. In the midst of unresolved conflict, how will the Burmese-Myanmar government respond to the emergency situation due to the emergence of the global COVID-19 pandemic? This paper tries to describe the current government's response to the COVID-19 problem which has an impact on various sectors of life. First we will explain the current condition of Burma-Myanmar. Including a state of conflict that has not subsided. Next, we try to explain the situation of Burma-Myanmar during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the response provided by the local government.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The first journal related to this research is a journal article written by Claudia Auer entitled Conceptualizing Political Crisis and the Role of Public Diplomacy in Crisis Communication Research in 2016 which was published in the journal *The Handbook of International Crisis Communication Research* [9]. In this article the author tries to provide the concept of crisis management by providing an explanation of political crises based on literacy reviews and definitions of actors, as well as examining literacy about crisis communication that focuses on the communication strategies of political actors, underlining the findings of *International Crisis Behavior (ICB)*, namely projects on crisis management from a country. Until finding the neglected relationship, namely about crisis communication with public diplomacy.

The author provides an explanation of the definition of a political

crisis as a situation in which political entities perceive a higher than usual threat of one or more prioritized “core values” and a limited time in response to changes in behavior by other entities. This can be in the form of economic status, territoriality, political regime, recognition of existence, including ideology or interests that can also trigger military battles. Furthermore, the authors also provide a statement from the ICB regarding a country's crisis management techniques, namely using negotiation, adjudication, arbitration, mediation, non-military sanctions, military threats, threat verbal without violence to acts of violence. According to the author, some of these things carry a communicative message in terms of perspective communication. But primarily, negotiation and mediation can be classified as a crisis communication strategy. Auer illustrates the conceptual similarity of crisis communication to public diplomacy. Both have the same goal to improve or enhance the image and/or resolve conflicts and crises in order to achieve peace and stability. This can be characterized as a strategic communication effort.

Meanwhile, public diplomacy is a technique of crisis management that can help prevent crisis escalation through activities that provide understanding values to the public to avoid disunity. Public diplomacy functions as a sustainable crisis management technique from all phases of a crisis, this supports cooperation in development which aims to produce understanding as well as an effort to build a good image, and reach the public at large, therefore public diplomacy supports crisis communication strategies and traditional diplomacy. This article provides an explanation of the crisis management of a country using public diplomacy. Later,

The second journal related to this research is a journal article written by Syarifatul Ula title The Role of Non-State Actors in International Relations: A Human Rights Watch Case Study in the Humanitarian Crisis in Myanmar in 2017 which is contained in Journal of International Relations, Volume 3, Number 3, Year 2017. In this article, the author describes the involvement of non-state actors in handling the humanitarian crisis that occurred in Myanmar. This article provides an explanation of the humanitarian crisis and provides an overview of the roles of actors involved in efforts to resolve conflicts.

In the case explanation, the author provides an overview of the role played by Human Rights Watch (HRW) as a non-state actor in its efforts to resolve conflicts. The efforts made by HRW in case involvement as an international institution have a position to attract the attention of the international community to the problems that occur. Furthermore, Ula also explained how the failure of HRW to involve the Myanmar government in solving cases so that non-government actors only have the scope to move on to advocate the community for human rights violations that have occurred. This article explains that conflict resolution efforts also involve non-state actors but have not yet been able to resolve cases. The elements involved lack bargaining power in making conflict resolution policies.

The third journal related to this research is a journal article written by A. Aco Agus, Muhammad Haidir, Sudirman title The Role of NGOs in Strengthening Global Citizen Engagement in Responding to the Global Human Rights Crisis in 2020 which is loaded in Journal of Thought and Research on Social Sciences, Law, and Teaching [10]. This article describes the involvement of the global community in conflict

conditions that occur in the international world. Through campaigns from non-governmental organization (NGO) actors, the global community is able to be actively involved in solving problems.

This article provides an overview to the author about the social conditions that occur globally when in a state of conflict. The linkages of the international community in humanitarian aid are adhered to by NGOs that function as mediators and facilitators of the humanitarian disaster that occurs. The role of NGOs in conflict involvement fosters civic engagement through program initiatives so as to generate social capital that can manifest humanitarian empathy for the international community towards the ongoing conflict. Although they cannot directly resolve conflicts, social capital can be used to help fulfill the human rights of civilians who have been directly affected by armed war. This applies when an armed conflict occurs in Rohingya, civilians are still entitled to guarantee their human rights. For this reason, international solidarity can be built between elements of the global community to help affected people get their human rights. This article is referred to as additional literature on the social response of the global community to conflicts that occur in the international world.

III. ANALYSIS

It is estimated that there are 1.4 million Rohingya Muslims who have spread throughout the world, but the majority are in Myanmar, followed by Bangladesh and Pakistan. In the past, the Rohingya Muslims were known as Arakan Muslims. Rohingya Muslims have inhabited Myanmar in Rakhine State for more than 500 years. From the beginning of the British colonial era to

the Japanese, Rohingya Muslims lived separately. Until Myanmar's independence in 1948, the Rohingya continued to accept discrimination and were not recognized as ethnic groups of the Myanmar state. Yet according to history, they have lived since the 7th century before the Myanmar state was founded. The Rohingya have received discriminatory treatment for decades, especially since the 1940s. They are oppressed, killed, raped, and alienated by the state, government, and even fellow residents of different ethnicities and religions with the Rohingya Muslim ethnicity. Many of them are not recognized as citizenship status and they do not get the rights they deserve [11].

The Rohingya ethnic conflict has attracted the world's attention despite the fact that this is an internal conflict, its impact can be felt by neighboring countries such as Bangladesh, Indonesia, and so on. The Myanmar government does not recognize citizenship status for people of the Rohingya ethnicity. This is evident from the issuance of the Burma Citizenship Law 1982 where it is a list of main ethnicities and minor ethnicities in Myanmar which does not include Rohingya as one of the ethnic lists. This gradually led to various conflicts that occurred so that many of the Rohingya ethnic people who fled to flee Myanmar. The issue of citizenship status is considered the main factor triggering the conflict. Because of this, the Rohingya Muslims are often the object of discrimination. Violence against ethnic minorities, in this case the Rohingya Muslim ethnicity, who is of a different religion from the Buddhist majority ethnicity, is the result of the discriminatory policies carried out by the government of the State of Myanmar. The government implements a policy of forced assimilation and does not recognize the status of Rohingya

Muslims as part of the Myanmar nation and clearly states that these ethnicities are not citizens of Myanmar [12].

Amnesty International has noted that various forms of atrocities committed against ethnic Rohingya Muslims which includes refusal to recognize citizenship status, restrictions on space to move places, restrictions on economic activities, restrictions in education, murder, detention, torture, abuse towards women and limiting marriage, also the anti-Muslim Rohingya riots. One of Amnesty International's researchers, Benyamin Zawacki stated that "For too long the human rights record in Myanmar has been tarnished, this is due to the deprivation of citizenship to the Rohingya and the discrimination they continue to receive". The Myanmar military government in 1988 through the State Peace and Development Council implemented its policy of Burmanization. SPDC considers that Burmanization is different from communalization because Burmese ethnic are the majority, while cultures and religions that do not originate from Burma are foreign cultures and religions.

Muslims in Myanmar are seen as foreigners because they practice a way of life that is different from Myanmar people in general. Muslims practice foreign ways that are anti to the indigenous culture of Burma. Until 2014, refugees from the Rohingya Muslim ethnicity still did not get their right to full recognition as citizens of Myanmar. So that many of them become boat people who sail the seas looking for asylum all the way to Christmas Island, Australia. Apart from not recognizing citizenship, the Myanmar government discriminates against the Rohingya Muslim ethnic minority, eliminating economic rights, changing the names of existing Islamic historical buildings and declaring that the Rohingya Muslims are

ethnic Bengalis. The main motivation of the Myanmar government in carrying out the persecution of ethnic Rohingya Muslims is to prevent the Rohingya Muslim ethnic who are currently displaced from returning to their country of Myanmar [13].

Armed conflict is still ongoing in Myanmar. It was exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak which was announced for the first time entering Myanmar since March 24, 2020. Various international organizations are calling for a ceasefire to armed groups both from ethnic groups and from the Myanmar military who are still involved in dangerous conflicts even in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Complying with health protocols in the midst of conflict such as social distancing is not a top priority in ethnic conflict areas in Myanmar. Inadequate medical care, restrictions on movement due to conflicts and pandemics, and difficult access to meet logistical needs must be faced by residents in conflict areas. Although the Myanmar government has stated that it will try to deal with the Covid-19 outbreak in all parts of the country, the Myanmar military continues to intensify attacks in seven states in Myanmar, which are inhabited by Rohingya Muslims, especially in the Rakhine, Chin, and Karen areas.

In various states that are currently in conflict, the government and the military will directly increase the chances of transmitting the virus due to the massive military invasion of society and neglecting to hold a ceasefire as called for by various international organizations including the United Nations. In approximately 15 villages in the state of Karen, residents are threatened with having to evacuate and flee because the conflict that is heating up in these areas. Citizens are more afraid and worried about attacks from the Myanmar military than the Covid-19

pandemic which also threatens their lives. In northern Rakhine state, the Arakan army is currently involved in an armed conflict with the Myanmar military. It was reported by the Rakhine Ethnic Congress that approximately 164,000 people were displaced by the end of April 2020.

On April 29, 2020, the United Nations envoy assigned to Myanmar, Yanghee Lee called for an investigation into the allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Myanmar that occurred in Rakhine and Chin states. While the world is battling the Covid-19 pandemic, the Myanmar military has continued to intensify attacks in Rakhine state targeting civilians. 18 ambassadors from foreign countries to Myanmar also called for an end to armed conflict and focus on protecting vulnerable groups of people from being affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Myanmar government through the Covid-19 Committee announced that it is working together to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic amid the ongoing armed conflict. However, the Covid-19 pandemic is deemed unable to change the state of the ongoing conflict in various regions.

It is feared that the millions of dollars sourced from the assistance of various international organizations aimed at assisting the Government of Myanmar in handling Covid-19 in Myanmar are not sufficient for the needs needed. The World Bank has also agreed to provide a credit of 50 million US dollars to help handle Covid-19 in Myanmar. However, much of the funds are used and focused on intensive care in Yangon, which is the epicenter of the Covid-19 outbreak in Myanmar and care for areas outside Yangon has not received enough attention. Refugee camps which are also prone to Covid-19 transmission have not received much

attention. They are even trying to implement Covid-19 prevention measures by keeping a distance and also checking body temperature for passing residents. They also created an isolation center for residents who are indicated to have been infected with the Covid-19 virus.

Many reports from various international organizations working in the field of human rights prove that there have been serious human rights violations in Myanmar which made many Rohingya people flee their country because they feel insecure. Myanmar is under pressure from various parties to admit the crimes it has committed. With this pressure, Myanmar will be hampered in international relations, and force it to take action on the problems that occur against the Rohingya ethnicity.

Myanmar made a transition to a democracy as one of the way to resolve this conflict. A rapid transition has been made in Myanmar's government system and reconstructing the world view of violence perpetrated against the Rohingya. Negative Peace, which was created by the Myanmar government to ease the humanitarian conflict that has caught the world's attention, seems to assuage various issues that have developed regarding the mistakes committed by the Myanmar government. However, the Rohingya have not fully felt the true peace because there are still many human rights violations that have not been fully resolved by the Myanmar government.

The religious and ethnic conflicts that have occurred against the Rohingya Muslim ethnicity, which have gradually occurred over the past few decades, have dragged ethnic and religious identities as the basis of resistance. This conflict involved masses from a minority group, namely the Rohingya Muslim ethnic group, with the Burmese Buddhist

majority group. The involvement of religious issues in this conflict has proven to increase the potential for violence through identity building so that it is easy to mobilize the masses. It is felt that there is a need for the role of the leader of the majority, in this case moderate monks, to invite to a peaceful path through interfaith negotiations and dialogue. There is also a need for a neutral third party whose role is to bring together the conflicting parties. So far, it has often been argued that by granting citizenship status to Rohingya Muslims, this conflict will reduce, but not only with that. The government must revoke policies that discriminate against Muslims, especially the Rohingya Muslim ethnicity, strengthen the economy and development in order to create political and economic stability, and the need to rebuild relations between religious groups through reconciliation measures so that the people of Myanmar are reunited.

The pandemic that has been going on since the beginning of this year has spread widely throughout the world, with approximately 155 countries suffering from the Covid-19 virus. All countries have the opportunity or possibility to catch the virus, especially with the international aviation factor that continued before this pandemic began. However, while other countries either those who have reported their first cases or have not detected the virus have moved to take precautionary measures for their communities, on the contrary the Myanmar government has stated that there are no Covid-19 cases. This claim was stated in a speech on March 16, 2020 and stated that there were no cases detected because of the healthy lifestyle of the Myanmar people so there was no infection (Robertson, 2020). However, this claim can be attributed to the fact that the virus can spread regardless of borders and Myanmar itself

is in a vulnerable position with its close proximity to China and other countries on the Myanmar border such as Bangladesh, India, and Thailand which have reported cases of Covid. -19 in their respective countries.

Since March 24, 2020, when the first cases were reported, even though Myanmar is one of the poorest countries in Southeast Asia, they are still trying to take precautions for the virus infection. As of June 26, 2020, in the Covid-19 Myanmar monitoring data, it was stated that there were 71,692 laboratory tests, 5,878 people under monitoring (ODP), 216 patients recovered, and 6 patients died [14]. Various policies have been established by the government following recommendations from organizations such as WHO and UN. The policy begins by limiting the number of people gathering to a maximum of five people with the aim of implementing social distancing, examinations such as rapid tests have also begun to be carried out in hospitals, temporarily stopping the issuance of visas and domestic and international flights, and quarantine [15].

The quarantine that has been recommended by the government has been going on for a long time in Myanmar, and according to the government, the people of Myanmar are encouraged to implement a community quarantine rather than lockdown as has been done by several countries in European parts such as Italy and France. Why doesn't Myanmar have the choice to implement lockdown like Europe? Although as we know the satisfactory results can be seen from the implementation of the lockdown, both from the initial aim to reduce the number of cases and the spread of the virus, and to improve the surrounding environment, using lockdowns is not an easy thing to do for Myanmar.

According to the 2017 Living Conditions Survey, it is stated that 24.8% of Myanmar's population is classified as poor and 32.9% will be vulnerable to falling into poverty from unexpected things, and only around 37% or around 1.45 million people are in Social Security Board social health protection from the government [16]. It can be concluded that by implementing lockdowns, the community will feel hardship with the possibility of their job being lost and income that cannot be obtained, while around 62% of Myanmar's population does not have savings to deal with disasters or cases like Covid. Meanwhile, for people in remote areas, apart from the main problems that have been discussed, what is more worrying is the specific logistics for lockdown such as clean water and food for their daily lives. Although the lockdown is considered to be more effective, the central government of Myanmar prefers self-quarantine to ensure that the country's economic conditions do not immediately fall down and ensure that people can still interact with their communities, thus forming chat groups on several social media to help those who are either working at the forefront or those who still have to work to meet their needs, or communities who are expected to implement quarantine to reduce the spread of the virus.

Knowing that there are limitations in various matters, from logistics to quarantine, the number of doctors and nurses, and such as facilities in hospitals, the government has made existing policies more stringent. The government establishes a curfew where people are not allowed to carry out activities outside of 22.00 at night to 04.00 am. For those who violate, a sanction has been put in place and the majority of the violators of the rule end up in prison temporarily. The responsible apparatus also did not

hesitate to impose these sanctions, from adults to small children, which resulted in the number of citizens who had to carry out the imprisonment sanctions which were considered to exceed their capacity and could have a fatal impact. According to Human Rights Watch director, Phil Robertson, "Limiting public health risks through social distancing is crucial, but jailing people for being outside at night only adds to the risk for everyone.", "Putting hundreds of people in crowded and unhygienic prisons beats the initial goal of fighting Covid-19 itself" [17]. Seeing nearly 500 people who have to spend from one month to a year behind bars, the Myanmar government has received a lot of criticism for their good intentions in tackling the pandemic.

Although strict government actions and policies can be considered active in overcoming this pandemic, what is very unfortunate is that these attitudes and policies are only applied to the big cities that are the center of the country. Minorities or ethnic minorities as discussed have received less attention from the central government regarding the response to Covid-19. Apart from the lack of attention from the government, the injustice can be seen from the different responses of the government for some regions. The grants received by the government which were initially intended for residents in remote areas such as Rakhine and Chin were not fully or not channeled from the central government. Where they really need these funds based on facts such as in an open air camp in Rakhine, one toilet there is shared for 40 people at once and access to clean water is very limited [18].

A significant comparison can be seen in conditions during the pandemic in central and remote areas or cities that are filled with refugees and minorities. Big cities restrict activity and interaction outside the home while remote areas

continue to face attacks from the Arakan army and Myanmar military. The government's desire to flatten the curve can be realized in areas such as Mandalay and Yangon, but for areas or villages such as Rakhine and Chin it is more likely for residents to live in their own homes [19]. The ongoing pandemic does not constitute an opportunity or possibility for the attack from the army to stop even temporarily, especially with a history where the agreement regarding the attack has never reached a decision. Apart from the lack of funds and facilities, what is very worrying for these regions and villages is their knowledge of Covid-19 itself. This may have been driven by online blackout that occurred in areas dominated by Rohingya [20]. With blackout itself, minorities cannot know about the condition of Covid-19 itself and thus they do not have awareness and fear about the virus and cannot prevent it. From several examples of central government responses, it can be seen that government policies and actions are more concerned with central regions and they are still not worried about minorities and raising the internet blackouts which can have a very fatal impact on these citizens. The central government has been working to control this pandemic but several policies still have a negative and unfair impact on some residents so that many residents take preventive actions on their own initiative.

IV. CONCLUSION

Burma-Myanmar has become a country vulnerable to a pandemic due to the country's weak health system. This is exacerbated by the situation of local ethnic conflicts which are still ongoing. The Rohingya case is in the public spotlight internationally and the matter remains unsolved. In fact, the issue of ethnic warfare has received special

attention at the international court over the genocide lawsuit filed by the Government of Myanmar by one of the small countries in Africa, Gambia. This case continues as a matter of law and human rights. Rohingya ethnicity as citizens without citizenship also received special attention. This status makes the Rohingya ethnic homeless and even discriminated against and fled to various countries in the world, especially Bangladesh. The next problem arises due to the overcrowding of the refugee camps that make it less livable. This situation adds to the vulnerability of the local population. Fear of repressive to discriminatory measures has led the Rohingya ethnic group to continue to occupy the increasingly full camp.

The humanitarian crisis that occurred as a result of armed war was exacerbated by the arrival of a pandemic situation. The condition of the refugee camp cannot fulfill the health protocol for the implementation of physical distancing or other health procedures. However, the Myanmar government system as a whole has taken the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic seriously. The capital city of Yangon, which is considered the epicenter of the spread of COVID-19, has received special attention from the local government. There are also strict sanctions in place to prevent the spread of the virus from becoming more widespread. This policy sanction can be in the form of imprisonment. Sanctions that have been emphasized by the government are an effort made to balance the insufficient resources. The government's focus in dealing with the pandemic is still centered on the capital city of Yangon, as a result of which the potential for patient deaths in the regions continues to increase. The disbursement of aid funds has not been leveled and is still concentrated in the epicenter area only. The social response of the community in the regions helps

control with the initiatives of local residents.

In the midst of this situation the Myanmar Army continues to carry out armed operations so that the pandemic problem is no longer the main fear for residents in conflict areas. Inequality in policies, resource management and conflict and crisis management are still a big task for local governments. In such a situation, Myanmar is one of the countries that is quite vulnerable in the ASEAN region, because it not only experiences a health crisis that is also experienced by countries in the world but, it also has vulnerability due to ongoing armed conflicts. The government's response to tightening regulations regarding health protocols during the pandemic is proof of Myanmar's seriousness in protecting the health of its citizens. However, the authors see that there is a need for further steps towards Myanmar's problems regarding the armed conflict that has occurred.

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Article Information	Abstract
<p>Submitted: October 28, 2020 Revised: December 30, 2020 Accepted: January 5, 2021</p> <p>Keywords: Response; COVID-19; Philippines; New Normal; Human Security</p>	<p><i>All countries in Southeast Asia have faced the threat of widespread outbreaks of Coronavirus (COVID-19). One of the countries in Southeast Asia that experienced the greatest impact from COVID-19 is the Philippines. This paper discusses the COVID-19 threat as a form of non-traditional human security threat and the Philippines Government's need to carry out securitization and response measures to prevent the spread of the threat. In addition, this paper also explains the impact of COVID-19 in the Philippines and the new normal conditions after the lockdown was put in place by the government. This descriptive analysis shows that the COVID-19 outbreak, as a non-traditional security threat, impacted various sectors in the Philippines. This result also shows the Philippine government's response in dealing with the impact arising from the COVID-19 outbreak and the implementation of new normal to drive the economy. Therefore, we divides the discussion into four parts: First, an overview describes the Philippines' COVID-19 cases. Second, explain the impact of a pandemic in various fields. Third, explain the response of the Philippine Government in dealing with COVID-19. Fourth, describing the challenges in dealing with COVID-19 in the Philippines and the new normal situation in force in the Philippines.</i></p>

I. INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus 2, known as COVID-19, was discovered in Wuhan in December 2019. This virus was only officially recognized by the Chinese government in January 2020 and was immediately declared a "global health emergency" or Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) by WHO at the end of the month [1]. The outbreak of the COVID-19 virus has a significant impact on the health sector and affects the economic, social, and political well-being of billions of people around the world. In the early development of its dissemination, the Director-General of WHO warned the

world community to be aware of the spread of "infodemic," namely waves of misleading and misleading information spread from various media channels that might cause panic the community [2]. This was triggered by the drastic increase in COVID-19 cases outside China, which is only a few months from the first case. Then because of transmission around the world, WHO declared COVID-19 a pandemic in March 2020. The Philippines is one of the countries facing COVID-19 cases, based on a survey in February, it found that 69% of Filipinos felt the Philippine Government's response was appropriate in responding to COVID-19 [3]. However,

the actions of the Philippine Government also received criticism and feedback from its citizens. Since the virus broke out in Wuhan, the Philippines has been anticipating Chinese travelers' arrival and the return of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) trying to escape the early epicenter of the disease in Hubei province. Positive cases of COVID-19 in the Philippines confirmed on March 7 and on March 16, after which President Rodrigo R. Duterte imposed the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) in Luzon following an increase in COVID-19 cases in the Philippines [4].

In this paper, the authors explain the impact of the COVID-19 case in the Philippines and the response to handling it. The author divides the discussion into four parts: *First*, an overview describes the Philippines' COVID-19 cases. *Second*, explain the impact of a pandemic in various fields. *Third*, explain the response of the Philippine Government in dealing with COVID-19. *Fourth*, describing the challenges in dealing with COVID-19 in the Philippines and the new normal situation in force in the Philippines.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Based on a search for previous research with the same relationship with the research topic, previous research can be used to explore more deeply about the research topic.

The journal entitled "The Economics of COVID-19 in the Philippines" is the work of Leandro S. Estadilla published in the Eubios Journal of Asian and International Bioethics in 2020. This journal explains the decline in the Philippine economy that has occurred due to the spread of COVID-19. This journal focuses on the weak level of consumption of the Filipino people and the tourism factor where no foreign tourists are traveling amid the

spread of COVID-19. Initially, this journal explained the link between COVID-19 and decreased consumption. The relationship between the two is related to a cause-and-effect relationship, COVID-19, which has become a global pandemic, has forced the world community to undergo quarantine until lockdown. This condition then causes them to be unable to work because they have to be at home. For people working in a job that requires them to leave the house, this policy will not have a big impact, but also the person has a job that can only be done directly. It becomes a problem. Moreover, the Philippine government has forced companies to close temporarily. This policy then led to mass layoffs because the company required some costs to keep the company running even without income. This journal then compares several economic conditions from various countries affected by COVID-19, such as China and Singapore, which have previously declared themselves successful in maintaining the stability of their countries' economic conditions by avoiding the possibility of a significant decline in the country's economic level. The remainder of this journal describes the Philippine government's policies and measures in response to the decline in the economic rate.

Journal entitled "Covid-19: Navigating Inclusive Recovery towards the New Normal" by R.U. Mendoza in 2020 explained the framework for understanding the phase of the crisis response caused by Covid-19. These phases include assistance, recovery, the possibility of a "new normal" and a balancing act between economic and health policies. Based on this journal, there are two forms of transmission caused by COVID-19, namely transmission related to the virus and transmission triggered by an economic

slowdown. This journal emphasizes the Philippine health sector's vital role as a buffer for a more inclusive and stable economic recovery. Good health care and response can effectively deal with the virus, which indirectly minimizes economic costs. The journal believes that countries with adequate and inclusive health care and social protection do not need to use drastic crisis prevention measures to minimize costs.

III. ANALYSIS

A. Overview of COVID-19 Cases in the Philippines

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a disease that attacks the respiratory tract where the mode of transmission is through droplets of throat fluids or direct contact with sufferers. In other words, the spread occurs person-to-person. This virus can survive long enough on surfaces so that transmission can occur quickly and may not even be realized. The symptoms experienced by sufferers may differ, ranging from minor symptoms such as coughing or fever to large symptoms that cause an acute shortness of breath syndrome [5].

COVID-19, which was declared a global pandemic, this statement was given after seeing the spread that had spread to various countries. The spread of COVID-19 also reached the Philippines. The spread was initiated by a pair of Chinese nationals who vacationed in the Philippines in January 2020. The Philippines began investigating Covid-19 on January 22-March 1, 633 suspected Covid-19 cases were reported. The Philippines' first confirmed case of Covid-19 is a 39-year-old woman, while her partner, a 44-year-old man, has been declared the second case of Covid-19 in the Philippines and the first case of death due to Covid-19 outside China due to her death on the February 1. Both were the initial cases of

COVID-19 in the Philippines, and both were treated at San Lazaro Hospital in Manila on January 25. The symptoms suffered by the first case were only cough and sore throat, while in the second case, they had fever, cough, and chills. Furthermore, the third case emerged on February 3, by a Chinese nationality woman who was found to have recently traveled to Wuhan. Knowing the existence of these three cases, the Philippine government searched for COVID-19 sufferers by tracking down people who had contact with the three [6].

B. Impact of COVID-19 in the Philippines

The rapid and widespread spread of COVID-19 has caused an uproar globally, and Filipinos are no exception. The Philippines is not only dealing with physical health problems but also problems related to mental health. This problem arose after the COVID-19 outbreak was declared a global pandemic, making the Philippine government quarantine its citizens. This panic can be triggered by various things, such as receiving inappropriate information or other things such as lifestyle changes. With the uncertain, complex, and rapid development of the COVID-19 pandemic, strategic health emergency communication is needed to provide timely and adequate information. This panic created a social stigma that attacked paramedics.

The panic experienced by some Filipinos has developed into anger, as seen in several attacks aimed at paramedics. As happened on March 27, 2020, a nurse in Sultan Kudarat province became a victim of sprinkling bleach on the face with five adult men. The attack took place on the same day that Governor Suharto Mangudadatu stated that he would lock down the entire Sultan Kudarat area as one of the

efforts of the local government to contain the spread of COVID-19, so this incident can be said to be an example of the response to people's fear of the implementation of the lockdown policy. Another attack took place in the city of Cebu in which a nurse was nearly injured by being pelted with chlorine. Meanwhile, there are still several cases of assault against medical personnel. Some shops and restaurants drive away because they thought if medical personnel are the source of disease. COVID-19 and do not want them to transmit the disease to the broader community. Responding to the attack, medical personnel were prohibited from returning to their homes. As a result, they are forced to spend their rest in the hospital, where they are on guard [7].

However, on the other hand, based on a survey from Rakuten Insight in the Philippines in April 2020, 66% of their respondents did not panic buying during the quarantine period. The survey also shows that 64% of their families have lost their jobs since the quarantine period. (Sanchez, 2020) This shows that after some time after the quarantine, people are getting used to controlling their emotions of panic, even though on the other hand, they will face economic problems in the future as a result of job loss and a decline in economic levels.

Furthermore, the implementation of the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) policy imposed a total lockdown, which in turn disrupted the normal daily activities of Filipinos. The education sector has also been affected by the spread of COVID-19. Even though the education system in the Philippines is still not ready for distance learning or what is known as a virtual learning system. This condition occurs because teachers and other educators have not received training for online learning systems. Besides, not all students have access to online learning. For this

reason, learning is stopped, but educators continue to communicate with families or acquaintances of students who can be contacted. Only a few educational institutions are ready to implement a virtual learning system [8].

COVID-19 also has an economic impact, a vital area in social life in society. Similar to what is happening in the world today, the Philippines is also facing the same problem, namely a decline in economic figures, this situation occurs because of a decrease in consumption and production figures. This policy forces residents to stay at home, which means that indirectly this policy has hampered production factors. So, to be sufficient for the continuity of a company or factory, employers are forced to reduce or lay off several their employees. Also, this policy has a major effect on the lack of tourism [9].

Various social events were not canceled to avoid the widespread spread of COVID-19 in the Philippines. Palarong Pambansa, one of the sporting events in the Philippines organized by the Ministry of Education. The Palarong Pambansa Championship is a competition that is eagerly awaited by Filipino students. Also, there are annual festivals such as the 25th Panagbenga Flower Festival which is a series of large festivals that were initially held to eliminate people's fears after the great earthquake that hit Luzon in 1990. The festival will certainly invite many tourists, but its implementation must be postponed until the end of the spread of COVID-19 in the Philippines. Furthermore, various international music festivals and concerts had to be canceled [10]. The failure to carry out these various events certainly caused material losses for the organizers. Besides, the cancellation certainly disappointed Filipinos and missed the opportunity for the surge in the number of tourists who were attracted to the event.

C. The Philippine's Government Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

On January 30, 2020, or a few weeks before the Philippines reported the first case of COVID-19 in its country, the Philippine government had planned to ban flights from China and on February 2, the Philippine government closed flights from China. The ban was followed by banning flights from Hong Kong and Macau. Even so, the Philippine government still opens international flights from other countries [11].

Apart from taking various precautions, President Duterte has also tried to calm the public by convincing his citizens that COVID-19 is not something to be overly afraid of. In a press conference on February 3, 2020, President Duterte told his citizens that the Philippines is in a safe condition and there is no need to be overly afraid even though the virus has infected several countries. Besides, President Duterte also said that the two cases in the Philippines were Chinese citizens and not Philippine citizens so there is nothing to be afraid of [11].

On March 8 2020, through a recommendation from the Secretary of Health, President Duterte signed a proclamation of 992 that put the Philippines under a public health emergency because of the threat of COVID-19. Based on this proclamation, there are several things that the government will do, namely, controlling the prices of commodities and staples, providing interest-free loans, and providing allowances for frontline medical personnel. Through this proclamation, all institutions in the Philippines are asked to provide full assistance in efforts to deal with COVID-19. The proclamation was signed after more than a month the WHO declared COVID-19 as a world public health emergency and the Philippines

announced there were 10 cases of COVID-19 in the country [11].

Besides, in March 2020, the Philippines closed schools to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus and will reopen at the end of August. However, on 25 May, President Duterte through his speech indicated that schools would be closed for a long time. The Ministry of Education itself has taken several steps in dealing with this, namely increasing online classrooms.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council established the Inter-agency Task Force for Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) based on regulation No. 1685 headed by the Ministry of Health with the health secretary as its head. IATF-EID has a function as the president's main advisor regarding management and implementation related to policies dealing with COVID-19. The Philippine health secretary as the head of the Inter-agency Task Force for Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) has the authority to ask law enforcement agencies to help implement quarantine and various efforts to deal with the spread of the COVID-19. Subsequently, through Resolution No.16, the IATF-EID established a Technical Group Working (TWG) whose members consist of representatives from departments and armed forces in the Philippines.

Under the IATF-EID, the Ministry of Health is working with government agencies to develop inter-agency cooperation plans to deal with Covid-19. The plan contains a four-door strategy framework that integrates the handling of COVID-19 based on color codes, namely white, blue, red. This color determination is based on the health situation in the area. In other words, the areas with the worst conditions will receive treatment first [12].

The Philippine Department of Health found a positive case of COVID-

19 whose transmission was proven through community transmission on March 12 2020. Responding to this, President Duterte through the IATF-EAD recommendation raised the alert level to the red zone level 2. This was accompanied by tightening quarantine and banning travel together. This zone applies to city and provincial levels throughout the Philippines. Then, President Duterte announced that he would quarantine the city of Manila from March 15-April 14. However, the quarantine was extended because President Duterte on March 16, declared an increase in community quarantine or Enhance Community Quarantine (ECQ) which covers the Luzon region is valid from March 17-April 14. The extension of the quarantine period has also been accompanied by a ban on land, sea, transportation, and air. Due to ECQ, Filipinos are advised to work from home and use online communication to conduct business transactions. When the ECQ was declared, COVID-19 cases in the Philippines had reached 187 cases.

On March 19 2020, the Philippines had tested less than 1200 people for COVID-19. The Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) is the only one that accommodates the COVID-19 test with a few test kits, totaling 4,500 kits from WHO at that time [13].

Due to a lack of resources in the effort to deal with COVID-19, President Duterte signed Republic Act 11469 known as the “Bayanihan to Heal as One Act” or Bayanihan Act on March 24, 2020. This law will become effective on April 1. The law allows the executive department to provide public and private hospitals with additional equipment, staff, and doctors. This hospital can be used as a COVID-19 hospital or a patient quarantine place. Also, these hospitals can provide rapid COVID-19

tests and provide insurance for workers in the health sector.

The Bayanihan Act will form the basis of actions by the Philippine government in dealing with the pandemic situation. The following are some of the provisions in the Bayanihan law [14]:

- Liberalize the provision of incentives for the manufacture or import of equipment or supplies of goods required for implementing policies. This includes medical equipment and supplies provided that imports of the aforementioned goods are free of import duties, taxes, and other fees.
- Provision of a Social Amelioration Package (SAP) as an emergency subsidy in the amount of P 5,000 to P 8,000 for 18 million households whose livelihoods are affected by the quarantine. This program targets workers who do not receive compensation from their place of work [12].
- Postponed the deadline for submission of any documents that are required by the government, including tax payments.
- Applying a minimum of 30 days interest-free payment grace period for all loans including personal loans, salaries, housing, motorized vehicles, and credit card payments due on ECQ. This regulation is mandatory for all banks, be it quasi-banks, financial companies, lending companies, government service insurance systems, social security systems, and other financial institutions. Besides, people with more than one loan coverage will also be given a minimum grace period of 30 days for each loan.

- Especially for tax emergency measures, tax document stamps will be removed for borrowers whose loan maturities are due within the ECQ period. This policy was issued by the Philippine Ministry of Finance (DOF) under the Bayanihan Act.

After the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act was passed, the Philippine government made a countercyclical package that focused on four things, namely [11]:

- The first focus, the Philippine government provides a budget of PhP 305.2 billion to support vulnerable groups and individuals, including displaced workers, small businesses, and local governments. Of the budget, as much as PhP 205 billion was used as cash subsidies for 18 million low-income households, and as much as PhP 35 billion was used as subsidies for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) workers.
- The second focus, the Philippine government provides a budget of PhP 35.7 billion to support the health sector. This budget includes payments for COVID-19 health insurance, special risk allowances, medical equipment, and personal protective equipment, and includes costs for increasing the capacity of the COVID-19 test.
- The third focus, the Philippine government provides a budget of PhP 830.5 billion to support fiscal and monetary policy in the country. This figure includes loans from multilateral and bilateral partners of PhP 310 billion or \$ 6.1 billion.
- The fourth focus, the Philippine government focuses its attention

on the economic recovery plan by creating new jobs.

On 2 July 2020, the IATF-EID approved the National Action Plan (NAP) phase 2 by the National Task Force (NTF). Carlito Galvez Jr, as the chairman of NTF against COVID-19, stated that this stage 2 NAP seeks to restore the Philippine economy while still protecting the health of the people of the Philippines. This phase 2 NAP is led by a local government unit (LGU). In this case, the local and national governments cooperate in testing and contact tracing efforts, while the central government and the private sector cooperate in providing testing laboratories. At NAP stage 2, IATF designed 4 anti-covid-19 czars, namely testing, tracing, isolation, and treatment [15].

In NAP phase 2 the testing target was expanded from previously only focusing on symptomatic and front liner to asymptomatic from other sectors and industries such as government employees. This strategy requires 10 million tests by the department of budget (DBM) and the Department of Health (DOH). The LGU is also increasing its testing capacity by building a large swabbing facility and drive-thru testing center. Metro Manila's "Ospital ng Sampaloc" became the first venue for a free walk-in COVID-19 test center. The Philippine Government also established the "One Hospital Command" with 3 main objectives, namely: synergizing the responses of public and private health institutions in dealing with Covid-19 patients. Create bed allocation guidelines and expand hospital capacity. Establish a "public and private referral system" to deal with hospital overload [15].

On September 11, 2020, the government issued Bayanihan Act 2 which is an improvement of Bayanihan Act 1. This law prioritizes funding for government programs in dealing with

pandemics, such as 1. Increasing the infrastructure of health facilities, 2. Providing benefits to workers in the health sector, 3. Funding cash funding program to overcome unemployment, 4. Agricultural and industrial sector assistance funding affected by Covid, 5. Funding for vaccines [15].

Furthermore, the Philippine Foreign Minister, Teodoro Locsin Jr., said that the Philippines would get 30 million doses of the Novavax vaccine – made in India. Locsin said that the vaccine will be available in July 2021. The vaccine is produced by a large Indian company, Serum Institute of India (SII). Serum Institute of India (SII) produces Covavax, Novavax, AstraZeneca AZ 1222, and anti-cancer drugs that can also be used for COVID-19. The government has also signed a tripartite agreement with the private sector to get 2.6 million doses of the Coronavirus vaccine developed by pharmaceutical companies and British-Swedish biopharmaceutical, AstraZeneca. The Philippines also plans to buy 25 million doses of China's Sinovac Biotech vaccine which will be delivered in March 2021 [16].

Due to the emergence of a new variant of SARS-COV-2 that appeared in the UK, the Philippines temporarily banned flights from the UK from 24-31 December as a precautionary measure. President Duterte has also approved IATF-EID resolution 90 to prevent the new virus from entering. Under this resolution passengers who have been to the UK within 14 days of arrival in the Philippines including those who are transiting only are not allowed to enter the Philippines [17].

D. Challenges in Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic

COVID-19 is rapidly spreading to all corners of the world today. Lower middle-income countries encounter

problems such as overburdened health systems and income-reducing lockdown policies. In response to the turmoil, the Philippine Government responded with a series of social protection programs. Although the government's response has been given to address the problems that emerged when the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, there are still many challenges facing the Philippine Government, such as [18]: *First*, logistical and communication barriers that make it difficult to provide services, including important matters related to pandemics such as health and others. *Second*, rural areas in the Philippines, which are relatively poor, rely heavily on government services. *Third*, rural and remote areas are less connected to the central government, and COVID-19 is likely to weaken connections further, potentially weakening policymakers' response to the needs of the Philippine community. *Fourth*, many migrants who return to their home areas have the potential to spread disease. Finally, the food system itself is highly dependent on rural areas, where most of the food originates; farmers need access to markets not only for their output but also for vital inputs and services. However, some of the current COVID-19 policies focus on maintaining agricultural production.

E. New Normal in the Philippines

President Rodrigo Duterte placed the country in a public health emergency on March 8, 2020 but placed Metro Manila under public quarantine from March 15 to April 14, which was later extended to May 15 [19]. The lockdown entails restrictions on the movement of people (strict home quarantine and social distancing) and travel, as well as the closure of large business establishments.

Later, President Rodrigo Duterte announced that he was lifting one of the

most stringent and longest-running lockdowns in Southeast Asia, as the Philippines turned to rebuild an economy devastated by the coronavirus pandemic with a new normal. Starting June 1, 2020, those living in Metro Manila can leave their homes without "quarantine" to purchase essential goods and services [20]. More companies will be allowed to reopen. The mall will be allowed to reopen more shops. However, restaurants are still limited to takeaways and deliveries, while salons, spas, cinemas, bars, and clubs will remain closed. Riders can return to take buses, trains, taxis, and motorized rickshaws, and travel to places outside of Metro Manila. However, checkpoints will still be there to ensure only those working or on running supply and buying essential goods will be out on the road. Necessary travel to places outside of Metro Manila will be permitted, although the airport will remain closed for domestic and international flights [21].

This transition aims to revive an economy that has stalled due to the lockdown. A mayor in Metro Manila said the pandemic had a "devastating impact," especially on workers. About five million Filipinos are likely to lose their jobs by the end of the year, and a crippling recession may persist into the next year, labor officials and economists have warned [22].

What is certain is that once the lockdowns are lifted in different parts of the world, life will take on a different kind of "normal." In this "new normal," there are two aspects that can impact Philippine foreign policy [23]. First, the pandemic highlights the importance of non-traditional security issues. The COVID-19 pandemic has definitively exposed the line's arbitrariness separating "high politics" from "low politics." Indeed, the Philippines' way of securing the virus is proof that the

pandemic is now seen as a clear danger and poses a danger.

For the Philippines, the "new normal" demands better health facilities and more generous subsidies for the agricultural sector, minimizing supply chain disruptions and ensuring a safety net in providing public goods and access to social services. The "new normal" also requires better cyber-infrastructure and capacity to allow technology access for various groups in society [22].

Thus, non-traditional security concerns illustrate that, at best, highly militarized responses are only useful in the short term. In the long term, this national security response is more difficult to sustain than to move incrementally but directed toward a more developed response. Besides, pandemic securitization is fraught with politics and the exercise of power, and the longer that is in effect, the harder it is to maintain.

Therefore, the problems accompanying the "new normal" require a fundamental change from the Philippines, although whether this change is feasible or not is more a matter of political will. The country ultimately needs to develop resilience by increasing governance capacity. This, in turn, could lead to the refinement of its foreign policy and the improvement of its international relations.

IV. CONCLUSION

So far, there have been many threats that have disturbed state security's stability in the world, including non-traditional threats. There has been a growing recognition among Southeast Asian countries that non-traditional security concerns do indeed threaten the region's stability and prosperity. Nonetheless, because of their liberal origins, few regional countries are willing to turn to model human security

against current or future threats. However, public health issues such as COVID-19 have forced countries to go beyond that conception to consider human security responses to incipient or potential threats, including those carried out by the Philippine government.

The initial response of the Philippine government in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic was fast. This can be seen from the initial response of the Philippine government which immediately closed flights from China even though no positive cases of COVID-19 were detected in the country. Although the government takes the COVID-19 virus seriously, the government understands that public diplomacy is also important so that people do not have excessive fear in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, President Duterte as the country's main actor continues to try to convince his people that COVID-19 no need to be overly feared.

After detecting a positive case of Covid-19 in his country, President Duterte signed a 992 proclamation that placed the Philippines under a health emergency. The government has also formed the Inter-agency Task Force for Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) as a special agency that assists the government in dealing with COVID-19. In addition, various programs have been implemented in an effort to deal with Covid-19 such as online schools, work from home, and community quarantine or Enhance Community Quarantine (ECQ).

As a guide in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, President Duterte signed the Republic Act 11469 or "Bayanihan to Heal as One Act". Seeing the economic development of the Philippines which continues to decline due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government formed the National Action Plan 2 which aims to restore the

economy without neglecting health protection. In the National Action Plan 2, the government established the One Hospital Command and upgraded the Bayanihan Act, which focuses not only on protecting public health but also restoring the country's economy.

In an effort to provide a vaccine, the Philippine government has obtained the COVID-19 vaccine from various companies such as Covavax from India, Astrazeneca from the British-Swedish biopharmaceutical, and China's Sinovac Biotech vaccine. Besides, the government has also responded quickly in dealing with a new variant of the COVID-19 virus by temporarily banning flights from Britain and agreeing to resolution 90.

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Analysis of Lao PDR's Policy The Successful Policy of Lao PDR's Policy on Responding COVID-19

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Abstract

Coronavirus is a new type of virus, which until now has infected various countries throughout the world. Laos is one of the countries that was also affected by the pandemic and became one of the countries in Southeast Asia that managed to deal without swallowing a single death. This research aims to find out how the Laos government responds to the COVID-19 pandemic and explains the impact of the policies that were put in place during the pandemic. This study uses qualitative research methods with primary data obtained through search results in journals, documents, and official websites. This study provides the result that the Government of Laos is considered successful in dealing with COVID-19 by implementing several policies that are divided into 4 fields; economy, education, health, and travel. Then the research results also show that the policy is not only tangible success but also a decline in several fields, namely economic and social.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the early 2020, the world was hit by a virus that can spread rapidly through a splash of saliva. The virus is known as SARS CoV 2 or COVID-19 which originated from China (Timeline: How the new coronavirus spread, 2020). COVID-19 was first confirmed by China on January 7, 2020 in Wuhan City, Hubei province. Likewise, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared this virus as a pandemic [1]. Having a high rate of possibility to spread and transmit, COVID-19 has eventually infected various countries around the world, including ASEAN member states, which are geographically adjacent to the origin of the virus. As June 11, 2020, the ten ASEAN member states reported that

there were 111,215 positive cases of COVID-19, with a total death toll of 3,236 people [2]. Since then, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos have reported 0 cases of death due to COVID-19 as of June 11, 2020. Lao is the last ASEAN country infected with COVID-19 and until now the country with the smallest number of cases in the entire Southeast Asia region.

The first case of COVID-19 in Lao was recorded on March 24 and confirmed by the Ministry of Health of Lao People's Democratic Republic. The first two coronavirus patients are a 28-year-old man, who has travel records to Thailand, and a 36-year-old woman, who is a tour guide who has contact with tourists - that have tested positive for COVID-19 in Cambodia [3]. After confirming the two positive cases, the government took steps

to screen people who had a history of interaction with the two positive patients and increase the preparedness of the hospital to deal with the possibility of additional cases. The government has also implemented strict policies for Laotian workers returning from Thailand. Later on, on March 30, 2020, the government set a lockdown policy by closing all international checkpoints and prohibiting mobility of people between cities and provinces. Lao officially declares a state of social emergency [4].

This situation has an impact on several sectors of life, such as economy, education, politics and health. According to a report from the World Bank, Laos's economic growth in 2020 is projected to range from negative 1.8% - 1%, and between 96,000 - 214,000 people are projected to fall into poverty as a result of the pandemic [5]. Based on this situation, we propose two research questions: How has the Lao government responded to the COVID-19 pandemic? What is the impact of the policies issued by the Lao government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic? This research will analyze the policies taken by the Laos government more deeply and explain the impact of the policies taken at first half of 2020.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Literature Review

The first journal article was written by Lam WK, Zhong NS, and Tan WC with the title "Overview on SARS in Asia and the World". This journal article is published in the Journal of Respiratory from Wiley Public Health Emergency Collection Volume 8 Number 1, on November 14, 2003. This journal discusses how the SARS virus or Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome spread to 29 countries in various parts of the world and how it affects the economy and travel sectors. Furthermore, this journal article discusses the steps taken by WHO and

the affected countries in the world to handle the spread of this virus. It was found that the world anxiety that arose due to SARS was due to some reasons for not knowing the origin of the SARS virus and the lack of tests, treatment, and vaccine availability. The steps initiated by the WHO and CDC were to issue travel advisories not to visit areas affected by the SARS virus, carry out quarantine, control and port inspections and close down places that invite crowds of people. Where these conditions have an impact on the aviation and tourism business. What this journal article has in common with what we write is the theme. Namely related to the steps taken in dealing with the spread of the corona novel virus. However, what we will raise in our journal article is the novel coronavirus type SARS CoV 2 or what is known as COVID-19. Whereas in this article the SARS or SARS CoV virus is related. Even so, if we relate it to the facts and data we get, the steps taken in overcoming the SARS virus are the same as handling the COVID-19 virus. In this journal, the coverage of the area discussed is the affected countries in the Asian continent, while in this journal article we focus on the country of Laos.

The second journal article related to this research is the journal by Riyanti Djalante, et al. This article, entitled The ASEAN's Responses to COVID-19: A Policy Sciences Analysis published in 2020 through the Social Science Research Network (SSRN). This article discusses analyzing policies being enforced in ASEAN in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. This article aims to analyze the policy responses of the ten ASEAN member countries in dealing with COVID-19. This article explains the situation of Laos, which only has 19 positive cases of COVID-19, counted as of April 30, 2020. Riyanti, et al. Stated that Laos is the ASEAN member country, most recently infected by COVID-19. The author of this article explains the various

steps that the Lao government has implemented regarding COVID-19, one of which is to form the National Task Force Committee for COVID-19 Prevention and Control. The Lao government issued several regulations aimed at reducing the spread of COVID-19. The regulations are in the form of closing several provincial boundaries, prohibiting mass gatherings of more than 10 people, setting prices, locking down several residents, and enforcing work from home for government workers. The articles by Riyanti et al have the same objectives and objects as this research. Our articles and research both analyze policies being taken to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. The difference is in the subject and the scale of the study. The article by Riyanti, et al. Examines the response and role of ASEAN - by describing in general the policies of its member countries - on the COVID-19 pandemic, while our research examines the policies of the Lao government in dealing with COVID-19 and the impact of policies taken by the Lao government.

The third journal article related to this research is the journal by Nur Rohim Yunus and Annisa Rezki with the title "Policy of Enforcing Lockdowns to Anticipate the Spread of the Coronavirus COVID-19". This journal is published in the Syar-I FSH Social & Cultural Journal of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta Vol. 7 No.3 (2020). This journal discusses the development of the Corona case in Indonesia, lockdown as an alternative policy in Indonesia, as well as the positive and negative impacts of the lockdown policy. The research methodology used is a qualitative method with literary and empirical approaches, as well as legal studies with a normative legal approach and a case approach. This journal concludes that the central government of Indonesia has established a national policy in the form of restricting activities outside the home, school activities at

home, working from home, and worshiping activities at home only. Even though this policy has a negative impact on the Indonesian economy, this policy is the best way that needs to be done to minimize the spread of the Coronavirus. The government certainly determines policies based on the carefully considered analysis. Then the policy to deal with COVID-19 was also strengthened through Law No. 6 of 2018 concerning Health Quarantine, and the ITE Law Article 45A paragraph (1), every person who deliberately and without rights spreads false and misleading news will be sentenced to six years imprisonment and a maximum fine of Rp. 1 billion. The reference to the ITE Law is to minimize hoax news that will cause unrest in the Indonesian people about the Coronavirus which is spreading rapidly. The relevance of Nur Rohim Yunus and Annisa Rezki's journals with our research is that there are similarities in the discussion. This journal discusses the central government of Indonesia, which issues and applies national policies when the state is infected with COVID-19. Likewise, with our research, we will discuss the national policies published and applied by the Laos, central government when the country was infected with COVID-19. This journal can be used as a reference and helps us strengthen the arguments in the paper.

B. Theoretical Background

1. Public policy

Taken from Public Health Policy Research: Making the Case for a Political Science Approach, Nicole F. Bernier and Carole Clavier stated that domestic policy or public policy is the final product of a series of research, evidence, and recommendations and is treated as a document that provides a legal force against public health recommendations. Consequently, most public health

researchers seek to influence public policy through the formulation of recommendations on the actions public health authorities should follow [6].

Public policy according to William Jenkins, is a series of decisions taken by political actors or groups regarding the selection of goals and means to achieve them. William Jenkins stated that public policy is a political process consisting of several interrelated decisions (programs, legislation). Taxes, regulations, incentives, marketing, and propaganda are instruments part of public policy, which are used to implement government decisions. Meanwhile, according to James Anderson, public policy is the act of actors who are full of gas or a series of actors who are facing a problem of concern. Public policy is not tied to certain actors (such as government departments or agencies) but involves all actors and solutions to problems are compiled by public authorities (such as several departments and administrations) [6].

2. Coronavirus

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Coronavirus, or what is known as COVID-19 is a group of viruses that can infect animals and humans. This Coronavirus causes respiratory tract infections in humans. Common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, dry cough, and feeling tired. This virus can be spread by droplets secreted by someone who is exposed to it. This new type of virus was first discovered in China, Hubei province [7].

III. ANALYSIS

A. *Preparation of Laos in Facing COVID-19*

Even though Laos geographical borders directly with China, Laos is the last country in Southeast Asia to confirm

a positive patient with COVID-19. Before Laos was infected by COVID-19, the Lao government took several steps to contain and prepare for the possibility of the virus spreading and infecting Laos. In January, the Lao Government formed a task force committee, which is charged to handle the spread of the coronavirus. The task force has an obligation to collect travel data and follow up on the health status of travelers, especially tourists, students, business people and workers traveling from China. Lao's flagship airline, Lao Airlines, announced that they would temporarily cancel all flights from Vientiane to three regional destinations in China, namely Changzhou, Shanghai and Hangzhou. This included as part of precautionary measures following the virus outbreak [8]. Migrants who have a travel history from China and South Korea will go through a more stringent screening process and are required to fill out a health declaration form to enter Laos [9].

The global development of the virus has forced Laos to close various national borders, such as Vietnam and Cambodia. The Lao government also prohibits Laotians from non-essential travel, such as for reasons of tourism or commercial interests. Traveling abroad is only allowed for individuals' urgent matters that relate state and health interests [10].

The Lao minister had previously prepared several health facilities for COVID-19 patients. This preparation was carried out in line with the rapid spread of COVID-19 in various parts of the world and the large number of Lao workers returning from Thailand, due to the closure of several businesses in Thailand related to the spreading of COVID-19. Health workers are also provided with various training. Four hospitals (Mittapham Hospital, Mahosot Hospital, Setthathirath Hospital, and 103 Hospital) have been designed to be places for isolation of patients suspected of COVID-

19. Provincial hospitals have also been prepared to isolate suspected COVID-19 patients in the province [11].

In the Laos Executive Economic Zone, which directly borders China, there are strict health controls for workers with their duties, that are carrying heavy goods in connection with the infrastructure development of the Kunming-Vientiane Railway. The worsening global situation prompted the Lao government to take several steps, such as closing schools to reduce the spread of COVID-19. To overcome hoax and provide accurate and real news and information, the Minister of Health of Laos created an official Facebook page “ສູນຂ່າວສານການແພດ ສຸຂະສັກສາ Center of Information and Education for Health” [12].

B. The Lao Government's Steps to Respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic in Laos

In accordance with Prime Minister Regulation No. 06, issued March 29, 2020, residents of Lao were ordered to remain at home for 20 days (April 1-19, 2020) to reduce the spread of the virus. On April 15, 2020, government staff issued an extension of the lockdown period for 14 days [13]. Previously, on April 7, 2020, the World Bank provided US \$ 18 million for Lao, which was quite useful to handle the impacts of COVID-19. This assistance is aimed at overcoming losses in the economic and health sectors of Laos in fighting COVID-19. Various steps have been taken by the Lao government to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, these steps are divided into the fields of education, health, travel, and the economy. In addition, the Lao government also has its own way of dealing with individuals who break the law during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the education field, the Laos Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES)

announced the temporary closure of all schools from April 22 to May 3. In a sense, all learning activities will be continued in online form. Online-based schools are carried out as a government step in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic in the education sector. The Ministry of Education prepares all online materials for the main subjects Mathematics, Laotian, and English. The online learning will also be available on TV, Radio, Facebook, and YouTube [13]. After implementing an online school in 2 months, on May 15, 2020, the Lao Prime Minister's office said that educational institutions such as kindergarten, elementary, junior high school, high school, and university would reopen on June 2, 2020 with a predetermined procedure. Schools are required to fulfill all the preparations needed to prevent COVID-19. The National Task Force for the prevention and control of COVID-19 provides conditions that must be completed by each school, such as the obligation to spray disinfectant in every school facility, use masks for everyone, checking body temperature before entering the school, seating arrangements at a one-meter minimum distance, and schools are required to provide soap, hand gel, and sinks for students. Not limited to that, the entire school community is obliged to monitor the condition of the student's body. Thus, if someone has symptoms of COVID-19 they can be immediately rushed to the hospital or sent home [14].

In the health sector, the Lao Ministry of Health issued a notification containing the distribution, storage, use and reports regarding the monitoring of medical equipment for the COVID-19 prevention. The medicines and medical equipment will be distributed by the central government and stored in the warehouses of the provincial food and drug authorities. The Lao Ministry of Health also requires documentation and

report in regards of the supply, use, distribution, and receipt of drugs or medical equipment. The government also requires private health clinics not to treat patients infected with COVID-19 [15].

In the field of travel (travel), the Laotian government's measures in handling the spread of COVID-19 was issued on March 23, 2020. It stated the needs of supervision in the implementation of the prohibition of population mobility. The resolution includes regulations from the Lao government regarding the closure of all local border checkpoints, while maintaining the operation of international border checkpoints. Issuance of deferred visas, including e-visas and all forms of tourist visas which have a period of 30 days. In regards to migrants who want to enter Laos, they are required to bring a health certificate that records their travel history for the last 14 days, and they are supposed to hand it over to the officer. It also applies to Lao workers who just returned from abroad, this is regulated in Notification no. 15/NTCC dated 24 March 2020. Cancel visa exemption arrangements for all countries with visa exemption regulations, temporarily. Laos citizens are advised not to travel internationally, using public transportation. Entrants who pass the screening stage are required to isolate themselves for 14 days, be closely monitored, and report their progress. Migrants suspected of being infected with COVID-19 will be taken to the hospital right away, without delay, for further monitoring and treatment [15].

In terms of mobilizing newcomers who wish to return to their home countries, the Lao government in PM No. 06/PMO instructs the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to facilitate and coordinate with related institutions. The Embassy in Lao also arranged flights for its nationals, in connection with the suspension of commercial flights in Laos. Due to the

suspension of public transportation in Laos, the Public Works and Transport Department in Vientiane issued Notification No. 2207/DPWT.VTE on March 31, 2020. In this notification, the related parties announced the suspension of transportation services for passengers and goods, such as soil, stone, and sand, until 19 April 2020 [15].

In the economic sector, based on a World Bank report, Lao's economic growth in 2020 is expected to experience a decline. Therefore, the Lao Government issued several economic aids which were generally divided into 3 parts. The first aid relief is for taxes. Based on Decree No.31/PM, The Income Taxes of micro businesses will get a relief for 3 months (April - June 2020) [16]. The Laos government also imposed tax postponement relief on the tourism sector. Then, also make adjustments to electricity bills and water pipeline for the housing and business sectors, while the Personal Income Tax (PIT) exemption is applied to all staff and civil servants who have an income of below 5,000,000 Kip within a 3-month period (April - June 2020). Second, based on Decree No.31 / PM, the Lao Government stipulates exemption from customs duties on imports of health goods and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as masks, medical equipment, hand soap, etc., according to the list of instructions from the Ministry of Industry and Trade, and the Ministry of Health [16]. Third, the Lao Bank, issued an intensive assistance policy to commercial banks, in order to provide credit assistance to the private sector as stated in Decree No. 238/BOL dated March 26, 2020. This decree allows commercial banks and financial institutions to delay the debt repayment period including loan principal and interest; reduce interest rates and fees for borrowers [17].

The Lao government has also reduced spending in the public sector.

Where about 10% of the administrative costs of state spending are reduced. This includes expenses for some events, such as: 1) Meetings and Seminars, 2) Scientific studies, 3) Welcome foreign guests, 4). National Celebration, 5). Construction Costs, 6) Fixed assets, and others. In the investment sector, licensing for infrastructure projects in Lao has also been postponed until 2021 [18]. On March 31, 2020, the Laos Ministry of Industry and Trade, through Decree No. 348/IC.MOIC stated the obligation to close the factory on April 1 - 19, 2020 as an action to reduce the number of the spread of COVID-19. But with the exception, factories related to food products remain. And factories that are closed are obliged to allow employees to stay onsite and enforce social security protocol. As well as required to prepare data and report the impact of the closure to the National Council of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Laos.

In addition to the four areas above, the Lao government is also trying to deal with the controversy and hoax that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. In times like this, the information that spreads is often not being validated its truth and can be justified by some people. For example, three residents' deaths were allegedly caused by COVID-19 spreaded over social media, before the Lao Government declared positive confirmed cases of COVID-19 in its country. In fact, the death of the three residents from Phongsaly Province was caused by influenza. The other misinformation or Hoax is regarding the post related to the benefits of boiled egg could protect from COVID-19 also shocked Lao netizens. In this regard, the Lao Minister of Health issued an official Facebook page to provide accurate information related to public health, including information updates related to COVID-19. Students and ministry staff are prohibited from

uploading or sharing information related to COVID-19 while carrying out their duties [12].

C. Laos Current Condition and The Impact of Laos Government Policy

The last addition of one positive COVID-19 case in Laos occurred on April 12, 2020, where the positive cases increased to 19. These 19 cases were the last positive patient infected with the Corona virus to date, June 15, 2020. Then on June 9, The Lao government announced its success in fighting COVID-19, this is because all patients infected with COVID-19 in Laos were successfully discharged from the hospital [19]. The recovery of 19 patients proved that not a single death case occurred in Laos [20]. Laos has also become one of the countries in Southeast Asia that reported 0 deaths during the COVID-19 pandemic. This success is certainly obtained through various active participation, not only by the government but also the people of Laos, international organizations, and assistance from other countries. With no additional new cases, Laos's current state is back to normal. Schools have started to reopen, although it needed strict procedures, sports activities have been allowed to take place, businesses and offices have started operating normally. Domestic travel is allowed; however, foreigners are not yet allowed to enter Laos. The policy easing that occurs is still adjusted to the circumstances and awareness of the spread of COVID-19 [21].

Lao's success in handling COVID-19 cases does not always have a good impact, it can be seen from the social conditions of the society. As a result of the lockdown imposed by people who are engaged in the business sector, it has suffered many losses. Lao's dependence on its geography advantages, which are directly adjacent with China, give Lao an

advantage in the tourism sector. This is because the tourism sector has a contribution which is valued at 4% of Laos's GDP. However, the lockdown policy has paralyzed the economy of people who are dependent on tourism [22]. The travel and tourism sector which accounts for 11% of employment causes a lot of unemployment. It is estimated that 96,000-214,000 people have fallen into poverty due to the ongoing pandemic [23].

The unfavorable impact also affects the economic sector. The World Bank projects that Laos's economic growth will decline during the COVID-19 pandemic by -1.8% to 1%. Laos's vulnerability in the macroeconomic field has increased with the presence of COVID-19. Government policy measures exacerbated the fiscal deficit and increased the country's debt. Previously in 2019 Laos's fiscal deficit was at 5.1% of GDP, then this pandemic contributed to an increase in the deficit to 7.5% - 8.8% of GDP. In connection with this, the estimated increase in debt increases to 65% - 68% initially at 59% of GDP. The economic slowdown due to COVID-19 has led to an increase in Non-Performing Loans, which weakens the balance sheet and hinders credit [23].

The implementation of social distancing and lockdown policies has an impact on the construction of the Kunming-Vientiane railway line, the result of the Laos-China cooperation which is part of the One Belt One Road mega project. This temporary stoppage of project development could have an impact on the project completion target, which is in December 2021. Even though the construction has stopped, the transportation of heavy goods is still being carried out. Nearly half of the workers experienced a reduction because workers from China were unable to return. This is resulting in a double duty and having to carry on different types of roles that have to be done by the workers.

Even so, according to a report from the Chinese Engineering Company, the work on the railroad project is carried out with a target acceleration by increasing the line construction from two kilometers per three days to one kilometer every day to pursue the target of project completion [24].

IV. CONCLUSION

From the description above, it can be concluded that in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Lao government has taken several steps which are divided into four parts, such as Education, Health, Travel and Economy. These steps are considered successful because 19 positive cases confirmed by the Lao government have been declared cured without any deaths. Until now, Laos has no new cases added. This success is not only based on the efforts of the government, but also the contribution of the Laotian people who are orderly and comply with existing policies during the COVID-19 pandemic. When the Coronavirus was spreading in China, the Lao government immediately began preparing ammunition for its country, such as closing conventional borders, preparing special hospitals to accommodate patients with the Coronavirus, limiting commercial flights from China and South Korea. The Lao government also provides an official Facebook page to update the development of COVID-19 and ward off the spread of hoaxes.

Even though the Lao Government has anticipated various steps, COVID-19 pandemic continues to have quite a shaking impact on both the social and economic sectors. Starting from slumping economic growth to changes in people's lifestyles that have to obey health protocols. Not only that, the impact of the pandemic was also felt by several parties working in the business and education sectors, which had to be temporarily

closed to reduce the spread of COVID-19. After going through a dark period of 2 months, now the state of Laos is getting better, people's lives have started to run normally in line with the implementation of the New Normal policy by the Lao Government. It can be seen from schools that have started to reopen, domestic travel has begun to be permitted, and companies that have started operating. In this way, it can be said that Laos has gradually returned to normal life.

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Thailand Government Strategy and Policy in Handling The COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic destroyed various countries from various aspects. One of the countries affected is Thailand. For Thailand itself, they are more disadvantaged in the economic sector. Given that one of the main economic suppliers in Thailand is from the tourism sector. The sector has also been devastated due to the absence of foreign tourists visiting Thailand due to the pandemic. With this, the local government has taken various ways to restore the situation to normal. There are four things that are under the government's spotlight, including the health insurance system, the application of social distancing, the imposition of a national emergency status, and economic stimulus. With these several things, it can be said that this journal will discuss how the Thai government policy in fighting Covid-19 from the health sector, the economy, and others. In his efforts, many polemics occurred due to quite controversial policies. One example is when the government asked rich people in Thailand to help solve the problem. It brought a lot of negative response on social media, for example, is much scattered hashtag #BeggarGovernment.

I. INTRODUCTION

The COVID 19 pandemic cases are still ongoing in various countries in the world. The disease is believed to have started in the city of Wuhan in Hubei Province, China, around the beginning of January 2020 and began spreading to other countries in the middle of the same month. One of the countries infected by this disease is Thailand, which is one of the closest countries to China. It was noted that the first positive cases of COVID 19 outside China were in Thailand. This case was found on January 13, 2020, suffered by tourists from Wuhan itself [1]. Since long time ago, Thailand has very often received

tourists from China, one of which is the city of Wuhan.

Throughout 2019, tourists from China who came to Thailand counted around 10-11 million people. It was also noted that there were more than 540 Thai flights, both to and from Wuhan [1]. The Thai and Wuhan flight traffic remained active until entering 2020, until finally they closed the flight paths of these two regions since the discovery of Wuhan tourists in Thailand who were exposed to COVID 19, as well as flight routes with other overseas regions. Gradually, local Thai residents also became infected, requiring the central government there to take immediate action in order to deal with this pandemic, before conditions worsened.

The central government of Thailand enforces several rules and policies, for example stipulating that COVID 19 is included in the list of diseases that receive health insurance for the Thai people, implementing social distancing , stopping all teaching and learning activities and face-to-face lectures accompanied by the implementation of online classes , establishing a National Emergency Status which includes restrictions on the sale of alcoholic drinks and the cancellation of the Songkran festival to prevent mass gatherings, and the provision of economic stimulus packages [1].

The Thai government also issued policies to undergo a new normal there which were implemented after the decline in the number of positive cases of COVID 19 in Thailand since April 8, 2020, and on May 13, 2020, no new cases were found [2]. This policy includes loosening permits to open public places such as markets, parks, sports venues, and shopping centers, then opening domestic flight routes at Suwarnabhumi and Don Mueang airports, and launching an application called Thai Chana by the government, which monitors the movement of people who being infected with corona and providing QR Code facilities for non-cash transactions [2].

The latest news from the Reuters news portal regarding the COVID 19 case in Thailand reported that until mid-June 2020, the total number of new COVID 19 cases was still increasing, but in small numbers and there were no new cases of death due to this disease. For example, on June 5, Reuters reported 1 new case and no new deaths. As of June 11, there were no new cases or deaths. Then, on June 16, the conditions were still the same, namely there were no new cases and deaths. On June 18, Reuters reported that there were 6 new cases of freelance citizens traveling from India and Saudi Arabia, and no new deaths [3]. In

fact, since May 2020, the number of new cases and deaths found has almost never exceeded 2-digit numbers, so this is proof that the handling of COVID 19 cases in Thailand can be considered good. However, sustainable handling must be carried out so that the risk of transmission of COVID 19 in Thailand can be continuously reduced.

The explanation regarding Thailand government solutions outlined above are only the general outlines. Therefore, this paper aims to further analyze the strategy of the Thai central government in dealing with COVID 19 and the results obtained from this strategy. Prior to that, the author will also explain how Thailand has felt the impact of the spread of this virus to their country.

II. FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

After the authors provide the background of this paper, the authors formulate two questions that will be discussed here, including:

1. How has Thailand had the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in their country?
2. What are the strategies and policies adopted by the Thai government in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and how are the results of these strategies and policies?

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Data Gathering Method

In order to gather data and information used for this paper, authors are using **literacy method**. This method relies on written sources like journal articles, books, official news, and official website data. For this paper, authors tend to gather information and data from official websites and news updates. This is because there have not many journal articles which are the research cannot be

synchronized with the topic authors discuss this time. However, it can be understood because the topic is relatively new.

IV. ANALYSIS

A. COVID-19 Impact toward Thailand

With the pandemic that has plagued Thailand, one sector that has had an impact is the economy. This is based on two main factors, namely tourism and domestic activities that have stopped completely. According to the Prime Minister of Thailand, Prayut Chan-Ocha, who was quoted on the Reuters news site, said that it is likely that the economic impact of the pandemic will last for the next nine months [4]. The Thai government also predicts that the economic situation in the country could decline to 40 billion US dollars [5].

To reduce this quite bad impact, the Thai government asked for help from people with high economic status there to take part in overcoming the economic downturn [6]. This has been done a few months ago when Covid-19 broke out in Thailand, where the government has asked for help from the 20 richest people in Thailand, one of which is the King of Thailand, Maha Vajiralongkorn, who donated medical equipment to support treatment and care both for COVID 19 patients and the public. As a result of this unusual thing, a few moments after that the hashtag #BeggarsGovernment was also widely discussed on social media, especially Twitter. Despite receiving many cons from the community, the central government of Thailand continues to do this for the sake of the sustainability of all sectors of national life [7].

The Central Bank of Thailand also predicts that the country's economy will fall by around 5.3 percent in 2020 [8]. This can be categorized as the worst economic recession since the crisis year in 1998. The main cause of the economic downturn in Thailand is the decline in

income from the tourism sector and domestic activities. For the tourism sector, it usually manages to contribute 20 percent of the country's GDP. The decline was based on the dominance of Chinese tourists who frequently visited Thailand. Because the hotspot of the pandemic is China, the Thai government has stopped and blocked the arrival of foreign tourists to cover the spread of the virus that has occurred. Last year, there were 39 million tourists who managed to contribute US \$ 60 billion in income [9]. Of the nearly forty million tourists, it is noted that 10 million of them are Chinese.

As a result of the blockade of foreign tourist arrivals, the souvenir center and various tourist attractions were deserted. This was also supported in January where pollution by smog caused tourist visits to decrease. This was mentioned by the Association of Thai Agents, which was reported on the tatnews.org website, which stated that smog and the rising bath currency were the main causes (TAT issues travel advisory on Bangkok's air pollution, 2020). TAT also stated that as many as 25 thousand tour guides have become unemployed due to the reduced number of tourists visiting. With this, the Vice President of the Phuket Tourism Association said that the role of the government was a big part in restoring all the conditions caused by the pandemic. Moreover, the tourism sector has previously stated that it contributes one-fifth of the country's income in terms of the economy. However, this can be said to be quite a dilemma because all parties must feel disadvantaged due to this. So, the government prioritizes assistance as a whole and is not differentiated.

An example of tourism that requires government attention is the elephant sanctuary. When there are not many tourists visiting, the government also has a stake in maintaining tourist attractions and ensuring that various kinds of

animals in the area can eat. One of the leading tours in Thailand is an elephant sanctuary which has succeeded in attracting local and international tourists. With this, the government created an agency that aims to take care of all the elephants in the area so that they are well. The agency is called Elephant Asia Rescue and Survival [10]. It was expected by the government that all aspects its impact on the Thai economy is not crushed when the pandemic has ended.

The polemic that has emerged between the government and several tourism sectors is the policy that states that the state has banned foreign tourists visiting Thailand. Whereas usually in July-August each year, at that time the peak of foreign tourists visiting Thailand for vacation. Both the government and local tourism workers are also at a disadvantage. In addition, tourism businesses such as online gambling games have also decreased in visitors due to the rampant cases of online crime due to Covid-19. Reporting from Thailand-business-news.com Asian GClub Casino as a businessman stated that previously many players visited the site, but now it is decreasing due to rampant fraud caused by the pandemic [11]. Paying taxes to the government is hampered, which is one of the reasons for the economic decline.

B. Efforts by Thailand Government

The first case of COVID 19 outside China occurred in Thailand on January 13, 2020. At that time, a tourist from Wuhan visited Thailand. Thailand itself often receives foreign tourists including Chinese tourists, especially in 2019 there are 10-11 million Chinese tourists who come. On the same day, the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) Thailand, Nonthaburi province, which is headed by Anutin Charnvirakul, carried out various protocols to stop the spread of the virus.

Anutin Charnvirakul said that Thailand had implemented a fever screening protocol for all visitors from Wuhan since January 3, 2020, at 4 international airports located in Suvarnabhumi, Don Mueang, Phuket, and Chiang May [12]. By combining surveys in public and private hospitals, Thailand identified 12 patients under surveillance (PDP) or what is called patient under investigation (PUI). Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha who was aware of this situation then emphasized to MOPH the importance of providing accurate and reliable information to the public.

On January 21, 2020, Thailand intensively increased surveillance and monitored the situation both from within and outside the country [12]. Many tourists are anticipated not to travel to Thailand during the Chinese New Year Festival. Moph implement measures of supervision and control that includes four aspects:

1. Increasing surveillance, screening every tourist who has made poor flights from Wuhan and placing tourists who are suspected of being infected in 5 separate international airports
2. Maintain standardization of clinical management and diagnosis for patients under surveillance
3. Improve the referral system for public and private hospitals
4. Increase surveillance in areas popular with tourists across the country.

Furthermore, the central government of Thailand advises everyone visiting areas that have contracted COVID 19 to self-isolate by avoiding crowds, avoiding places selling animals, and avoiding people who have respiratory symptoms. For people who have respiratory symptoms are encouraged to contact medical service at the hospital regarding travel history to China. Every passenger and flight crew who flew from Wuhan from January 3-21, 2020 received

a screening with a total of 19,480 passengers. Finally, the government provides a hotline number for people who need more information.

On February 1, 2020, there were 12 confirmed cases that have received treatment, and 7 patients who have been discharged, so a total of 19 cases. However, on January 3 to 31 alone, 334 people have been given PDP status. At this time there were around 9,819 people in the world who contracted the COVID 19 virus, with 9.692 people being Chinese citizens and the number of deaths reaching 213 people. The important thing to note is that there is an appeal from the Thai government to the public not to spread fake news or hoaxes, especially those from unknown sources. The Thai government insists that anyone who causes panic by spreading fake news will be punished by the Thailand Computer Crime Act of 2017 [12]. The government also continues to advise people to be diligent in maintaining cleanliness and paying attention to the food they consume.

As of April 13, 2020, reported by Worldometers, Thailand had 2,579 positive cases but with a death toll of 40 people with a death percentage of 3% and the number of patients who had recovered reached 1,288 people. This figure is relatively small when compared to countries such as Italy, England, France, the Netherlands, Spain, and Indonesia, which have a mortality rate of over 10%. Reporting from the Center of Area Studies, the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (P2W-LIPI) revealed several important points in Thailand during the COVID-19 pandemic, including:

1. Health Insurance System

Actually, the small number of cases of the COVID 19 virus could have been caused by the small number of people who also tested it. According to Worldometers, as of April 2020 1,440 per 1 million people have tested in Thailand.

This is far below the population of Malaysia and Singapore with 2,525 and 12,423 people testing per 1 million population. While the conditions in Indonesia are much more severe, where only 99 out of 1 million people take tests [1]. This shows that community participation or activeness is actually also an important thing in this matter. Perhaps Indonesia is experiencing coordination difficulties because it has an archipelagic form and there are many cultural differences.

When compared to Singapore, which has a small area and population, Indonesia will certainly lose in coordinating its population. However, the level of community activity is different, in Indonesia the level of awareness of the population is still minimal. Thailand has included the COVID-19 pandemic into its health insurance system [1]. So that every patient will get treatment for free, including for every foreign student who is studying at universities in Thailand. Mulyasari also said that even though surgical masks or N95 masks are rare items, the availability of hand sanitizers is sufficient. Thailand itself is known as a country with the best health insurance system in Southeast Asia. The Thai government apart from conducting a large-scale screening at the airport, also provides a self-screening website for people who feel they have symptoms of COVID-19.

2. Digital Application Specialized of Social Distancing Program

Thailand, like other countries applies social distancing to its people. As we know, social distancing means everyone is expected to reduce contact with other people. This is done by staying away from the crowd, and not leaving the house if it is not necessary. Thailand admits that its people are obedient in carrying out this social distancing. A survey conducted by the Bangkok Post to

26,000 residents found that 70 percent of respondents ran the social distancing protocol [1]. Starting March 2020, schools and campuses in Thailand will be closed and replaced with online or online learning. Every student who returns is required to carry out self-quarantine for 14 days without exception. Every office and work place has implemented work from home which is no different from Indonesia. Furthermore, tourism places are closed. The closure of the tourism sector actually has a big impact on the economy, for example, in the tourist areas of Phuket or Bangkok.

3. Enforcement of a National Emergency Status

Since March, 26th 2020, the Thai government has imposed a National Emergency Status. This period will last until April 30. The National Emergency Status is actually the same as what is called a lockdown in Indonesia and several other countries such as Italy. This means that every access in and out of Thailand will be closed, there will be a ban on activities involving crowds, restrictions on domestic travel, and closure of shops except for shops selling basic necessities [1]. Restaurants, including hawker street (street food), shopping malls, stores, and traditional markets are closed with the exception of service home delivery of food, the grocery store or supermarket, drug store or pharmacy, grocery store items - a staple item, and stores or mini-market. Important places such as ATMs, banks, gas stations, hospitals, postal services and factories remain open. During this National Emergency Status, the

Thai government actually did not set a curfew, but starting April 3, 2020, a curfew was set. People are required to stay at home from 22.00 to 04.00, and will be fined or jailed if they violate [1]. This National Emergency Status also led to the cancellation of the Songkran

Festival which is a major celebration in Thailand. This festival used to be used to celebrate the end of the dry season with a visit to a shrine, but nowadays the festival is celebrated with a new culture, namely the famous water feast. In the run-up to the Songkran Festival celebrations, the government limits the sales of alcoholic beverage to prevent people from gathering for drinking party.

4. Enacting economic stimulus

In the period from March to April the Thai government provided economic stimulus for its people. Economic stimulus means financial assistance to help an economy that is threatened by COVID-19. The Government provides funding of ฿5,000 or equivalent to Rp 2.4 million to 9 million people for 3 months [1]. The second aid package was launched on April 7, 2020. And the third is in the form of an extension of cash assistance until September, investment in infrastructure and creating jobs, and soft loans for small and medium enterprises. Afterwards, the 6 largest banks in Thailand also provided loan interest discounts.

Reporting from the Bangkok Post, on July 1, 2020 Thailand announced that all forms of lockdown or National Emergency Situations would be lifted, including international flights and travel between provinces. Even so, Secretary General Gen Somsak Roongsita said that "Everyone's cooperation is important. This concerns the use of masks, social distancing, and limiting activities. During this outbreak (COVID-19) is still spreading in the world, we have to fight for a while". In the future, the curfew will be relaxed and flight restrictions removed.

A series of steps taken by the Thai government succeeded in stopping the spread of the COVID-19 virus. In fact, the latest Department of Disease Control (DDC) report on June 25 stated that there

was one new patient who was a Thai citizen who had just returned from Egypt. This patient has now been treated, especially when the DDC wrote that this is a lesson that other countries need to take to continue monitoring when people return to their normal lives. Despite the increasing number of patients, the DDC report said that the total number of cases reached 3,158 with 3,038 successfully cured or the equivalent of 96.2% of the total cases. There were no new reports of deaths, so the death rate remains at 58 cases.

V. CONCLUSION

Thailand is the first area outside China to be directly affected by the COVID-19 virus, because a tourist from Wuhan was detected with the disease at the time they visited Thailand. This news was announced on January 13, 2020. Thailand became the first country to be infected, apart from being close to China, because it was known that Thai and Chinese flight flows were very dense. In 2019, Thailand received around 10-11 million tourists from China. Air traffic connecting Thailand and Wuhan also reached 540 airlines, which is a fairly dense number, until they finally closed the flight paths of these two regions since the discovery of Wuhan tourists in Thailand who were exposed to COVID 19, as well as flight routes with other overseas regions.

With the outbreak of COVID 19 in Thailand, we can see that the pandemic has a considerable impact on the Thai economy, especially in the tourism sector. As one of the countries in the world that is rich in culture, Thailand feels many bad effects because all tourism activities have died. This is because usually a lot of tourists visiting Thailand come from abroad, and this pandemic has forced Thailand to close overseas flight routes. With the blocking of entry to tourists from abroad, Thailand's Gross Domestic Product has also experienced a

significant decline. In addition, many residents engaged in tourism also lost their jobs. This followed because there were no visitors so the owners could not pay them.

To overcome this community, the Thai government also made a quite unique breakthrough, namely by asking for help from people with high economic status there to participate in domestic economic recovery, where finally there were 20 of the richest people in Thailand who also donated for handling. COVID 19. This is done so that all aspects that are affected can be controlled thoroughly. Even though some of the government's steps have drawn pros and cons, they are still running it for the benefit of all sectors of national life there.

The government's move to impose a National Emergency Situation was a decisive step, which, despite opposition from some people, was still implemented. Not only that, as compensation the Thai government is trying to help the middle- and lower-class society by providing what is called an economic stimulus. The next step was followed by a cut in loan interest by the 6 largest banks in Thailand.

Another thing that needs to be underlined is that the Thai government is moving fast, since the first case appeared which is also the first COVID-19 case outside China, the Thai government immediately imposes a screening at every international airport. Good medical personnel and health insurance can bring Thailand to an average cure rate of 96.2% which is arguably very high. It should be noted that apart from the government, the Thai people themselves also reflect supportive measures, which based on the survey their participation rate is quite high. The central government also banned one of its biggest festivals, the Songkran festival, and banned the sale of liquor to prevent crowds from gathering. The decision not to impose access and

exit closure may be a separate consideration for the Thai government.

Although there is still an increase in positive patient cases and deaths due to COVID-19, but not large numbers. As reported by the news portal Reuters, the number of positive patients and deaths due to COVID-19 in Thailand during the month of June 2020 did not show a sharp increase. As quoted by previous authors, Reuters reported on June 5 that Thailand had only 1 new case and no new deaths. Furthermore, on June 11 there were no new cases or deaths. On June 16, the conditions were still the same, namely there were no new cases and deaths. Finally, on June 18, Reuters reported 6 new cases of citizens who had escaped from India and Saudi Arabia, as well as no new deaths. Thus, we can conclude that a series of policies and actions by the Thai central government, coupled with the supportive attitudes and behavior of its people, have been effective in reducing the number of COVID-19 transmission in the country.

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Analysis of the Response and Efforts of The Government of Vietnam in Tackling COVID-19

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<i>Article Information</i>	<i>Abstract</i>
<p>Submitted: November 24, 2020 Revised: December 28, 2020 Accepted: January 2, 2021</p> <p>Keywords: Response; Vietnam; Political-system Government; COVID-19</p>	<p><i>COVID-19 pandemic is considered a big challenge for every country in the world. This pandemic has had a major impact on both the public health sector and the economic sector. As a country directly contiguous to China, Vietnam is one of the countries affected by the spread of the virus. Even so, Vietnam can be categorized as a country that has been recognized as being successful in stemming the spread of this pandemic. It can be seen from the absence of cases of death caused by COVID-19. Therefore, this paper is written to analyze the steps taken by the Government of Vietnam to successfully handle this pandemic and how government conditions can affect the success rate. The results obtained are, the success to tackle the COVID-19 is highly influenced by the background of political system and governance in Vietnam and the existence of good coordination between government institutions. Moreover, the success is also influenced by the efforts taken throughout time to improve the quality of public services.</i></p>

I. INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) was first reported in Wuhan District, Hubei Province, China in late December 2019. The first case was found on 18th December 2019, when five people reported with Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS) that was considered as pneumonia disease. Those people have the same symptoms such as fever, cough, respiratory infections, and exhaustion. From the epidemiology research, the patient has a relation with fish and wild animal market in Wuhan [1]. Through clinical research, it is believed that COVID-19 virus mutates from bats and continues to snake that consumed by humans in Wuhan market [2]. The condition gets worse when the

doctor analyzes that COVID-19 virus can be transmitted from human to other human. Until 3rd of January 2020 China has reported 44 positive COVID-19 cases. The virus widely spread until 25th January 2020 with 1.975 cases and was spread at 25 provinces in China with 56 people reported dead. In late January, the case spread outside China with 90 people positively affected by the virus in many countries, such as Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia, Nepal, Vietnam, etc. The situation that gets worse makes the World Health Organization (WHO) announce COVID-19 as a global pandemic on 12th March 2020.

Among many countries outside China that have reported COVID-19

infection, The Government of Vietnam is the first one of those countries that announce their first cases due to COVID-19. The first case that was found in Vietnam was discovered through a 65 years old Chinese man who had a traveling record to Wuchang, Wuhan, China. He got medical treatment at Cho Ray Hospital at Ho Chi Minh City after experiencing some symptoms such as fever, exhaustion, followed by diabetes, cancer, and coronary heart disease. Even though he had not visited Wuhan market, he was confirmed as the first COVID-19 patient in Vietnam on 22nd January 2020. Because of that case, the Vietnam Government starts to respond and move quickly to prevent the further spreading of the virus.

Through this article we intend to analyze how The Government of Vietnam responded and what is their effort in dealing with COVID-19 cases in their country. We would also like to describe the regulation that was issued by The Government of Vietnam in order to handle COVID-19 cases in Vietnam. This article divided into three point, (I) Introduction, which contain the background of the condition in Vietnam due to COVID-19 virus; (II) Discussion and Analysis, which describe how the Vietnam Government response to COVID-19 in each field and how the government condition and political system in Vietnam can be one of the supporting factor of Government's successful regulation in dealing with COVID-19 pandemics; (III) Conclusion, which conclude all of the effort taken and regulation issued by the Government of Vietnam in dealing with COVID-19 pandemics.

II. METHODOLOGY

This research is a type of case study research, Surachman explained

that case study research is an approach that focuses on an intensive and detailed case [3]. Meanwhile, according to Fathoni, case study research is a research used as an explanation of an incident or event [4]. Based on the two definitions above, it can be concluded that as a case study research, this paper aims to describe and analyze the detail of an event. While the research method used in this paper is a qualitative method that focuses on the behavior or actions of subjects and is described through empirical word descriptions. Qualitative method according to Moleong is defined as a study that intends to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects such as behavior, perception, motivation, action and others holistically and by means of descriptions in the form of words and language, in a special context, natural and by making use of various scientific methods [5].

The data used in this research are the effort and regulations issued by The Vietnamese government in dealing with the global COVID-19 pandemic conditions from January to July 2020 and data regarding the governance system in Vietnam. In this study the data collection method was obtained through indirect observation. Indirect observation is made by the authors by observing and understanding electronic media sources such as research journals, videos and news articles.

III. ANALYSIS

Vietnam is one of the countries in Southeast Asia with a population of 96 million people. With an almost 100 million population and considering its proximity to China, The Vietnamese Government has received a lot of praise for its effectiveness in fighting COVID-19 infection with a record of 324 cases

without any deaths. At the beginning of the virus spread, Vietnam Government response in fighting COVID-19 infection was considered 'excessive', but turns out the Vietnam government was able to reverse the world perception by their success to combat COVID-19 virus by cooperating with local government, private sector, the people, and the media as soon as the first COVID-19 cases reported in Vietnam.

Unlike other countries that use a large scale to look out the death cases due to COVID-19, the Vietnamese Government uses smaller scale to analyze the case that happens in to be able to act quickly. This was done by the government because of the awareness that Vietnam's healthcare could be overwhelmed even by the slightest spread of the virus, therefore the government has to take quick action with massive prevention as soon as possible. During The Lunar New Year holidays, Vietnam government start to close all school and 'contact tracing' mechanisms put into effect for the workers. The government is also tracking all of the people that are returning from abroad and requiring them to undergo mass quarantine and series of tests under the supervision of the Vietnam Government. The government also applies requirements for Vietnam people to have an exit permission in high-risk areas. Beside that, The Government of Vietnam also continues to spread a message regarding the 'war' against COVID-19 through both local and national media [6].

The following are the forms of policies issued by the government of Vietnam specifically in an effort to deal with COVID-19 pandemic, which are grouped by sector:

- **Policies Related to the Healthcare System**

Vietnam's Ministry of Health (MoH) has issued a directive to tighten mass quarantine at the Vietnam border area close to China on January 3rd, 2020. The Ministry of Health also issued two ministerial decree regarding guidelines and plans to prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus, namely Decree Number 125/Q/BYT and Decree Number 156/Q-BYT. The development of COVID-19 issues in Vietnam make the government take quick actions due to the possibility of people who will pile up the health commodity or daily needs, therefore since February 1st the government cooperates with relevant stakeholders to inspect some pharmaceutical companies in Vietnam. The government also withdrew their business licence if they were caught increase the prices of masks, hand sanitizers, and gloves. The inspection resulted in a penalty for 1200 pharmacies and around 313.000 masks were confiscated [7].

Since February, the Vietnamese government has built a temporary hospital specially designed to treat COVID-19 patients. However, there was some trouble due to health workers that handle COVID-19 patients who do not have adequate equipment. Because of that, the Healthcare department continues to strive to carry out short-effective training for medical workers and monitor the process of handling a COVID-19 patient to prevent an outbreak in the hospital. The Vietnamese government policy regarding the health system focuses more on hospital management regarding patient handling and quarantine procedures for suspected exposed people. Those regulations were obeyed by all hospitals in Vietnam. The health worker who served on the front lines also received an award from Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan

Phuc. The Government also released an application platform named NCOVI and official website to provide an update of COVID-19 the latest information related to the pandemic including test data, and suggestions for preventive measures. The application and website also provide a live chat to people who want to get further information.

Beside doing prevention action for COVID-19, Vietnam Government also doing a real action by increasing health laboratory facilities to examine COVID-19 cases. In early January, there were only three laboratory that capable to examine COVID-19 but then the government manage to increased it to 112 laboratories in April 2020. COVID-19 laboratory test in Vietnam is ranked first in the world with 213.743 tests carried out by the end of April. The case finding ratio of COVID-19 cases also shows only 1:791 of all samples [8].

- **Travel Restrictions and Regulations to Entering and Leave Vietnam**

After the Vietnamese Government officially announced COVID-19 as a pandemic on February 1st, 2020, the government enacted several travel restrictions for tourists and citizens who wanted to enter and exit Vietnam since March 2020. Some restrictions and policies regarding travel are divided into [9]:

- Foreigners who entered Vietnam before March 1st, 2020 or foreigners who have resided or temporary residence permits are entitled to an extension until June 30, 2020, provided that they can show official documentary evidence from the embassy and a health statement. or they can contact Vietnam immigration at 0243.9387320.

- Starting from March 7th, 2020, all travelers who come to Vietnam must submit medical documents.
- Starting from March 9th, 2020, Vietnam has suspended visas for 8 countries, such as Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the UK.
- Starting from March 15th, 2020 (12pm) Vietnam will suspend visas and refuse tourists from the UK and 26 Schengen countries including tourists who have visited these countries in the last 14 days. This policy will occur 30 days after the decree is approved. This also applies to tourists who arrived or had travel records from mainland China in 14 days before in their visas. All people subjected to the regulation will be denied to entry or suspended for entering Vietnam.
- Since March 22nd, 2020, the government has banned and suspended the arrival of foreign tourists due to the coronavirus outbreak. This provision will continue to be enforced until an undetermined time or until Vietnam is considered safe from the threat of the corona virus. This regulation does not apply to diplomats, state officials, foreign investors, experts and skilled workers.
- According to Resolution No.79/NQ-CP Vietnam will provide e-visas to citizens of 80 countries from July 1st 2020. This e-visa can be used to enter Vietnam through 8 international airports, 16 regional borders and 13 ports. Even so, Vietnam still remains closed to foreign visitors because there has been no official statement regarding the

halt of social restrictions for travel to enter and leave Vietnam.

- **Partial lockdown policy (Comune Lockdown)**

Rather than implementing a "national lockdown", the government of Vietnam prefers to impose a partial lockdown of "communes" or groups with a high number of infection cases. These partial lockdown are enforced with strict restriction on communes resident behavior. Vietnam has carried out a lockdown on the Ha Loi Commune and Son Loi Commune which have recorded high cases of COVID-19 infection. In the Son Loi Commune, Binh Xuyen District, Vinh Phuc Province, the lockdown was carried out for 20 days from 16 February 2020 to 4 March 2020. This lockdown has restricted the movement of more than 10,000 commune residents by placing several checkpoints and blocking road access. The lockdown at the Son Loi Commune was carried out after it was discovered that several residents of the commune had a history of direct contact with an infected woman after returning from Wuhan, China [10].

- **Policies Related to the Economy Sector**

The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is very significant for Vietnam. It is estimated that more than 10 million workers lost some or even all of their income. Vietnamese government helps to stimulate their income by giving subsidies for poor families and contract workers. The government also giving assistance to small businesses with interest-free loans to keep their business going.

To make it happen, the Vietnamese Government issues Vietnam Prime Minister Regulation Number 11 about the government's step or effort to help businesses affected by the pandemic.

The Vietnamese Government helps local companies and businesses that are experiencing difficulties due to COVID-19 outbreak by providing tax breaks, expanding tax payment deadlines, and reducing the cost of land-rent. The total amount of allocated assistance to help affected businesses is US\$ 1.16 billion or equal to 27 trillion VND. The Central Bank of Vietnam (SVB) has cut interest rates since February 2020 and also asked commercial banks in Vietnam to help reduce their interest rates as well [10].

- **Regulation Related to Social Welfare**

Vietnam Government issued Resolution No. 42/NQ-CP on April 9th, 2020 regarding financial package assistance for local businesses and employee that affected by the pandemic which is divided into 6 categories: (a) affected employee, (b) affected entrepreneur, (c) home industry or businesses that have income below 100 million VND in a year, (d) people who have contributions for the country, (e) poor people, (f) people who protected by social assurance [12].

To help the welfare of employers and employees, the Vietnamese Government provides incentives by giving financial assistance of US\$ 77 or equal to 1.8 million VND per month. Employees whose work contracts are temporarily suspended or unpaid after a month will be qualified by the regulation. This regulation applies for a maximum three months periode started from April 1st, 2020. Financial assistance of US\$ 43 per month also issued for employees that lose their job but are not entitled to unemployment benefits or who are working without a contract and lost their job[12]. All employee that eligible to receive the financial assistance should apply their qualification to the relevant

local authority from April 1st and further. If the employee meet the requirements of both incentives categories, they will only be entitled to the one with the highest amount of incentive. And for entrepreneurs who are experiencing financial difficulties and have paid at least 50% of the salaries of employees who are experiencing work suspension from April to June 2020 will be given interest-free and collateral-free loans by Vietnam Banks. The loan is equivalent to 50% of each employee's regional minimum wage, but will be given no more than three month. The maximum time of the loan granted is twelve month.

If due to COVID-19 pandemic the entrepreneur or businesses actor are forced to cut off the worker by 50% or more, both employers or employees will get permission to postpone the pension funds and employee welfare funds for employees whose jobs are suspended, the contract is postponed, or get cut off from their work without pension fund [13].

To make Resolution No. 42/NQ-CP goes into effect, the Government of Vietnam issued decree No.15/2020/QD-TTg on April 24th, 2020. This regulation consists of forms, documents, and necessity that both employers or employees need to propose to be able to get the financial assistance.

• Comprehensive Communication and Information dissemination To The Public

One of the things that Vietnam has learned from the way China handled COVID-19 is by improving the communication system to the public. If China had provided information on the spread of the COVID-19 virus slowly, Vietnam had chosen to deliver a firm and swift statement to the public from the beginning. The Vietnamese government has stated that "COVID-19

is not just the flu, but something that must be taken seriously, and by that people are asked not to put themselves or others in danger" [10].

Vietnam's first steps in public communication have been carried out since early January 2020, when news about the "strange pneumonia" in China started to spread in Vietnam. Through the official website of Vietnam's Ministry of Health or Bao Chinh Phu, the Vietnamese government has issued an appeal for the possible spread of the COVID-19 virus after the Lunar New Year holidays. On the website page, the Public Health Emergency department (*Suc Khoe Va*) also provides an explanation of preventive measures that will be taken, such as: (1) Monitoring all information provided by WHO, (2) Increasing disease surveillance at borders (3) Paying attention to the readiness of the Emergency department Public Health and four other institutions related to hygiene and epidemiology, and (4) Planning prevention and control measures. The official statement given by the government was also disseminated by various news media in Vietnam such as *Tuoi Tre*, *Thanh Nien* and others. In fact, the number of online news releases regarding COVID-19 from January to April 2020 in Vietnam has reached 15,000 articles [14].

Apart from the statements given through the official website and news, the Vietnamese government also provides regular information through social media. The government takes advantage of the large number of Facebook and Zelo application users in the country. Facebook users in Vietnam reached 57.34% of the population while Zelo (a local text-sending app) is also used by more than 100 million users. Through the Facebook application the government provides information about COVID-19 on an ongoing basis, which is conveyed directly by state officials,

ranging from the Prime Minister, Minister of Communication and Information to the provincial government. [10] In addition, the government is also working with short message application developer "Zelo" to broadcast information about COVID-19 throughout the country. The message broadcasted is also complemented by a propaganda poster typical of a socialist country. Posters were distributed with visualizations on the themes of struggle, patriotism and nationalism such as :

"To stay at home is to love your country" or "Fight Corona like You Fight A War" which means to awaken the spirit of the Vietnamese people [15].

Widespread information dissemination is also supported by the transparency of the data provided. Vietnam's Ministry of Health also periodically provides official notifications about developments in COVID-19 cases without spreading the patient's identity. As reported in the news program *Bao Thanh Nien*, which delivered an Emergency Notification Report No.10 about case 237. The news given contains detailed information about the 237nd patient's travel history from March 11 to April 1 2020. [16] Valid confirmation and detailed explanation is one of the ways for the Vietnamese government to increase public awareness of the COVID-19 outbreak. This high awareness is also considered as one of key factors that drives the low cases of COVID-19 infection in Vietnam.

How does the conditions of The Governance in Vietnam affect the level of success in dealing with COVID-19?

It has been explained regarding the policies and efforts taken by The Government of Vietnam in handling the COVID-19 pandemic. Policies issued by the government that were considered extreme, including the "commune

lockdown" which received several criticisms from the international community regarding accusations of limiting rights can be obeyed by Vietnamese people. In addition, the series of steps that have been taken by the government can be considered succeeded in bringing Vietnam to victory in the 'war' against the pandemic. Meanwhile, if we take a look at the conditions of other countries, policies issued by the government regarding the prevention of COVID-19 are often being ignored. For example, thousands of citizens in various regions in the United States are demonstrating to protest against the government by calling themselves the "anti-lockdown movement" when the lockdown policy was implemented. Although some of these movements stated reasons related to economic losses if policies continued to be enforced, the other part of the movements stated that the lockdown and restriction policies imposed were only used as a tool for the government to limit citizens' freedom. Because of this, the prevalence rate of COVID-19 in the United States is very high [17].

Conditions such as in the United States are also found in the communities of several other countries, but that is not the case with Vietnamese people who diligently obey government regulations. But if we look back, the public obedience that resulted in the success of the Vietnamese government policy in dealing with COVID-19 certainly could not have been formed instantly. It should be noted that the political conditions and how the government holds their influence in a certain country can affect the condition of its people's obedience. Vietnam itself is a country that has a socialist type of government, which directly can be seen in the official name of this country, namely The Socialist Republic of Vietnam. As a socialist country, the composition of power

holders in Vietnam is dominated by the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV). Hayton in his book explains that in this one-party country, in 2016 about 11 percent of party members holding government positions came from a military background. This fact has the possibility to trigger the compliance of the Vietnamese people with any policies issued by the government [18].

The Vietnamese government has centralized government where all sectors are under the direct supervision of the Central Government. On the one hand, this is very beneficial in times of crisis that require equal distribution of policies, such as the current pandemic case. In addition, as a socialist country whose control is directly under the government, the process of disseminating information related to the pandemic is carried out with tight control. Information that does not come from the government is limited in order to prevent spread of hoax news. In exchange, the Vietnamese government circulated an official video about COVID-19 and a message for prevention. Hence, inevitably the public will continue to be provided with information in accordance with the interests of the Government. However, the Vietnamese Government which continues to develop and adapt to the real situation is also one of the reasons why the people in Vietnam comply with the policies issued. Even in an international survey conducted by 12 institutions including Harvard, Cambridge, IESE, and Warwick University, Vietnam takes second place where the people have confidence in their country governance that the Government will take good care of its citizens. [19]The confidence that Vietnamese had of course also does not happen automatically. Trang Mae Nguyen and Edmund Malesky in their writings said that the transformation in the Vietnamese government and efforts

to achieve 'good governance' had also been carried out by the Vietnamese Government over the years [20].

Vietnam Government continues to develop good coordination on all fronts. Based on data from the Provincial Competitiveness Index (PCI) and Provincial Administrative Performance Index (PAPI) Vietnam has shown stable developments in the fields of health, access to information and control in corruption cases. Access to health insurance has also grown over time, reaching 90% of the total population in Vietnam to have insurance. This is in line with the quality of the hospital which has continued to develop by the decline in bribery in the hospital environment in the past 10 years. Good access to health is also tried to be achieved through the implementation of mass quarantine by the government. Therefore, Vietnamese citizens do not have to worry about the costs that they might have to pay during a pandemic, for example to get the medical tests [20].

Effective coordination between government institutions in Vietnam which is considered one of the keys to proactive responses to pandemic management is actually an effect of a long-centralized government. This proactive response includes pandemic prevention training that has been carried out even when no new cases of infection have been found. Moreover, The Vietnamese Government also learned from the impact of previous infectious virus spread, such as SARS, which also spread mainly from China who were contagious to their border. In the end, because of the will of the Government to make improvements in terms of the governance even though it remains in the form of one party, effective handling in combating COVID-19 can be achieved. This achievement, accompanied with the success of the Government holding its influence in domestic affairs has

prepared the citizens of Vietnam to be more aware of the worst-case scenario regarding the public health crisis.

IV. CONCLUSION

COVID-19 has a big impact on International society such as Vietnam which has high risk of exposure because of its geographical location that contagious to China. Vietnam is also one of some countries that reported its first COVID-19 cases at the very beginning of the virus spread. The geographical close border with China and the history of the SARS outbreak have made the Vietnam Government take quick action in dealing with COVID-19 outbreak. The Vietnam Government has collaborated with the local government, private sector, Vietnam citizens, and media to prevent COVID-19 outbreak. The Vietnam Government also has issued various policies to combat COVID-19. It includes efforts taken in improving healthcare system management, imposing several restrictions regarding travel, and allocated US\$ 1.16 Billion to stimulate the economy and provide social welfare. The Government also openly communicates through Facebook and Zello, hence the Vietnam citizen can easily access COVID-19 spreading data and some suggestions to prevent COVID-19 outbreak.

Vietnam's success in fighting COVID-19 is results of good collaboration carried by the Government and citizens. The Vietnam citizens have trust in the Government's strategy therefore when the government has released new regulation or policies even if it is a big deal for other countries, the Vietnam citizen would still obey their Government's decision. The Vietnam citizens also feel safe when they obey Vietnam's government rules because they get health insurance, easy access to the healthcare system, payment relief to access healthcare facilities, etc. This

proves that the Vietnam Government has learned a lot in the fight against global pandemic such as SARS which previously occurred before COVID-19. The capability of the Vietnamese Government proved by this country's low COVID-19 transmission rate. Vietnam even get appreciation from WHO and international community because it has reported zero death cases with only 320 cases. The success in dealing with COVID-19 virus is also results from the centralized government system which make the coordination runs smoothly from one to other institutions. This collaboration is one of the keys to proactive response of the Vietnamese government in handling COVID-19 outbreak.

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ASEAN Response to the COVID-19 in the Economic, Health, and Tourism Sector

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Abstract

ASEAN is a regional organization consisting of several countries in the Southeast Asia region. The aim of establishing ASEAN is to cooperate with each other to create an atmosphere of peace in the Southeast Asian region. In 2020, the world will be shocked by a complicated problem, namely the COVID-19 pandemic. At this time, the author tries to see the impact caused by COVID-19 and the response from ASEAN in dealing with the problems that occur. The author uses the literature study method by using several sources from websites, news portals, reports, press release, and journals in assessing these cases. From this research, we can see that the problem in each country consist of health, economic, and tourism problems. ASEAN's response in facing this pandemic includes collaborating in determining policies, exchanging information on each country's situation, and using tourism destination websites aimed at restoring the state of tourism in ASEAN.

I. INTRODUCTION

The organization is an association of human entities with a different boundary for each form and has a common purpose of being achieved or several and different on each aim [1]. In fact, an organization has its respective purpose that is leading to give rise to varied organizations. ASEAN is one of the regional organizations consisting of 10 country members in Southeast Asia. In the introduction, we will explain the history of the ASEAN establishment.

The Cold War was one of the reasons for the formation of this organization. Uncertain circumstances and territorial struggles between groups often occur at the expense of other small countries. Two superpower countries,

the United States and The Soviet Union, have a great ability and power to control other small countries with their respective ideologies. In this period, several countries in the world are still experiencing a transition, where World War II has caused various damages and certainly takes time to rebuild their country, especially in Southeast Asia. With the existence of an uncertain condition, it could have a big impact on countries in the region; therefore, the country in Southeast Asia tried to form associations to maintain regional and state stability. Maintaining regional stability would have a good impact on each country, and development could be carried out with obstacles that passed together. ASEAN was finally formed on August 8, 1967, which resulted in the

Bangkok Declaration as one of the foundations for ASEAN formation.

The purpose of establishing ASEAN is cooperation in various fields such as economy, social, culture, tourism, and others and maintain regional stability and preserve peace between countries in Southeast Asia. Therefore, each country has the responsibility to develop corporation and support each other, moreover with these purposes, if there is a conflict that occurs, it must be resolved through peace and negotiations path. At this time, ASEAN has developed into an increasingly broad organization with various forms of cooperation. At the beginning of 2020, there have been major problems experienced by every country in the world. The Covid-19 pandemic has spread in every country, including ASEAN members affected by this pandemic.

Economic growth will certainly be greatly affected by this pandemic. Based on data from cash, which took data from DBS, the first country to ban travel from China or to China was Singapore. This flight restriction is aimed at closing the chain of the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. With these restrictions, of course, this will greatly impact several sectors such as tourism. This restriction will reduce foreign tourists coming from outside and affect the country's economy. However, in terms of policies, each country has its own policies to deal with this pandemic. Each country in ASEAN has its own strategy to solve the pandemic problem.

With these problems, researchers will conduct a study on the impact of the pandemic and ASEAN's response in dealing with the pandemic this time. The discussion will include several things regarding the cooperation carried out by ASEAN in health, tourism, and the economy in the face of a pandemic. Researchers at this time used a literature study research method that

took some data from websites, media portals, and journals in examining ASEAN's steps to face the Covid-19 pandemic.

II. METHODOLOGY

The author uses the literature study method by using several sources from websites, news portals, and journals in assessing these cases.

III. ANALYSIS

A. ASEAN Response

On 17 March 2020, WHO called on ASEAN countries to respond quickly with alacrity to the increasingly widespread Coronavirus pandemic. The call was stated by Dr. Poonam Khetrappa Singh, as the Regional Director of WHO for the Southeast Asia region. It was uploaded on the official WHO page. In that statement, Dr. Poonam Khetrappa Singh said, "The situation is evolving rapidly. We need to immediately scale up all efforts to prevent the virus from infecting more people" [2]. It can be ascertained that every country that has a COVID-19 case has the capacity or ability to detect the virus Corona using a different PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) test; this is indicated by the number of deaths in each country in ASEAN [3]. Therefore, to anticipate the spread of the virus even more widely, WHO called for quick and swift action to ASEAN countries.

Then on 14 April 2020, ASEAN held a Special ASEAN Summit on COVID-19, or what we usually know as the ASEAN Summit, which Vietnam hosted online. The conference discussed the steps that need to be taken by each ASEAN member country to overcome the impact caused by the Coronavirus pandemic and respond to a call from WHO that was made on 17 March 2020. Most of the discussion at the conference

discussed the adverse effects caused by the Coronavirus on the economic sector in Southeast Asia. However, the conference also discusses the social and health impacts, particularly in the ASEAN region.

B. The Impact in the Economic Sector

In the economic sector, the Covid-19 pandemic had a great and significant impact, especially in ASEAN member countries. The effect that occurs, in general, is a decrease in the consumer buying capability for a product or service resulting in conditions in which an economy becomes sluggish or declines, for example, a decrease in the buying capability of a community for specific goods or a service such as the tourism industry. The economic downturn that occurred in several ASEAN member countries was influenced by several supporting factors, such as the implementation of lockdown policies for some countries, and then some were affected by a country's policies that is called social distancing, so that in the end, the community would be preferring to reduce consumption outside of living quarters. The production of goods is also affected, surplus of goods that have occurred in several factories that are not comparable to sales, so that the lack of demand in the trading system has made some corporations reduce their production costs, such as laying off employees or laborers unilaterally or temporarily closing their production activities.

The impact of the pandemic that occurred, especially in the Southeast Asia region in the economic sector, will be further explained as follows:

There is a change from the economic growth of a country

This unpredictable event will have a high-speed transmission to almost the entire world, causing some countries

confused to act and make new policies that are emergency in nature so that the impact on changes in the projection of a country's economic growth is decreased.

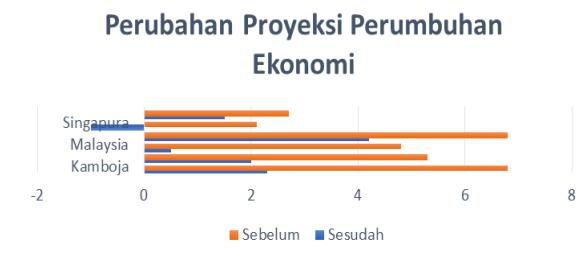


Fig. 1. Revision on The Economic Growth
(Source: The Asian Development Bank, Each Country Ministry of Finance)

From statistical data obtained by several sources such as The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and finance ministries from several countries, it shows how the Covid-19 pandemic has caused changes in projected economic growth at only a short time in 2020. Even developed countries like Singapore have experienced a decline. from 0.5% - 2.5% for the initial prediction to -0.5% - 1% and had entered an era of economic recession in the country, because Singapore is engaged in investment, import-export of goods, and a world provider of financial services [4].

International Trade Chain

Activities in international trade have also experienced a significant impact on ASEAN due to this pandemic. The ASEAN trade chain includes many partner countries who are both consumers and suppliers to various ASEAN member countries. The European Union, America, China as the largest producer and consumer countries in the world are also the main trading partners for ASEAN, accounting for half (50.3%) of the total ASEAN trade around the world so that disruptions in trade activities will cause shortages or effects for these countries. In addition to disruptions that occur directly from the economic sector, such as decreasing

demand, the policies launched by the government of a country to reduce the trading capacity of a country's external parties to prevent pandemic transmission can affect imbalances in the trade chain. As a result, several countries experience shortages in materials imported from abroad and have resulted in a dwindling supply of goods and are not sufficient for that country's people.

It is also feared that the logistics distribution chain will experience disruption due to several policies and new regulations set by the government to prevent the spread of this pandemic. In fact, logistics distribution is crucial, considering that several companies and countries producing medical equipment and primary agricultural products are now at the forefront of dealing with this pandemic. When a problem occurs in the logistical distribution process, it will affect even the smallest social community structure.

Business and Financial Disruption

This pandemic caused several disruptions in a country's finances, such as changes in the value of the currency of ASEAN member countries against the world currency unit, and a decrease in the value of several shares in ASEAN. This was triggered by the rapid flow of capital that led to a significant decline in global markets and short-term depreciation of exchange rates in several countries.

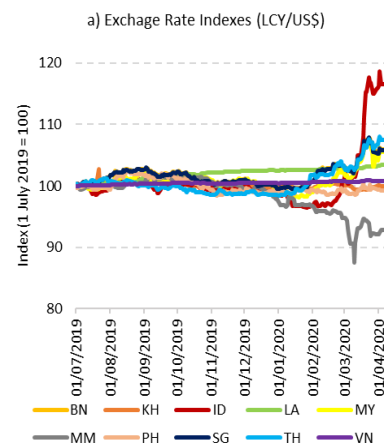


Fig. 2. Exchange Rate Indexes (Source: CEIC April 2020, ASEAN Policy Brief)

In the graph published by the official ASEAN website, several countries have depreciated their currency exchange rates against the USD, such as Thailand (Bath), Singapore (SD), and Indonesia (Rupiah). Indonesia, as the country most affected, experienced an increase in its currency in a short time. In January, it was valued at IDR 13,662 per USD, and then it rose sharply around IDR 16,367 at the end of March with an increase of 19.8% [5].

Besides that, the impact of this pandemic has also greatly affected the stock market in ASEAN. Many businesses reduce and close part of their operations to reduce production costs to consider the risk of a deficit in their company earnings. On the other hand, investors are also worried that this pandemic will create an economic crisis and a global financial crisis so that the capital stored in investment will be withdrawn quickly to secure part of the investment funds in the corporation. The result of this attitude was a very drastic decline in the value of the stock market, especially in ASEAN.

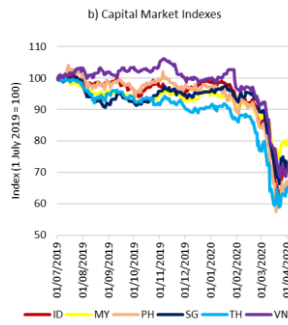


Fig. 3. Capital Market Indexes
(Source: CEIC April 2020, ASEAN Policy Brief)

From the data, it can be seen that a drastic decline occurred in February when the Covid-19 epidemic changed its status to a pandemic and began to spread in various parts of the world until April there was a sideways term where conditions on the stock market returned to flat but had not shown an increase or uptrend.

The smallest sector that is most affected

It continues to the smallest sector, such as daily workers, private employees, laborers, informal workers, and business service providers, including tourism services, which are significantly affected. As a result of several restrictions such as *social distancing and lockdowns*, some micro-economic actors experience decreased income. However, they must continue to pay the same production costs, causing several sectors to close without income and even terminate their work contracts with their employees unilaterally. This actually increases the unemployment rate to be quite sharp and indirectly reduces the social stability of a country. The high unemployment rate has resulted in some people finally looking for sources of income by carrying out activities classified as criminal groups such as mugging, robbing, bullying, piracy, etc. If this case cannot be handled professionally, it will cause an area's security to be disturbed. Even the

ASEAN industry's tourism industry is disrupted due to these restrictions, even though this industry contributes at least 12.6% of the ASEAN economy (data of 2018).

C. Response and Policy Recommendations in the Economic Sector

Therefore ASEAN, as a regional organization conducts research and holds meetings for ASEAN member countries to state the impact of this pandemic, especially on the economic sector in the ASEAN region. The organization issues several policy recommendations and solutions to problems that occur in the economic field, which can then be applied by member countries conditionally depending on the urgency of these member countries. Some of the policy recommendations given by ASEAN are as follows:

Maximizing all existing forms of macro, financial, and structural policies

The pandemic that occurred could not be predicted with accuracy by several countries, therefore there are several actions taken to maximize control of this outbreak, but besides that, the consequences for the economy it is also apparent. The closure of factories, several industries, shopping places, and social restrictions resulted in a sharp decline in economic activity demand. For this reason, the regulation and enforcement of monetary, fiscal, and structural policies are urgently needed to reduce the economic damage caused by this pandemic. Moreover, the micro sector plays an essential role in the economic system but is also very vulnerable to instability. In a broader scope, updating policies and using all forms of appropriate economic

instruments are also expected to increase stability in the economy.

Maintaining production capacity in the economy

The government and economic actors must carefully prepare for the situation to restart economic activity when several social distancing and lockdown policies begin to be stretched or enter a transition period to a New Normal condition. By making a recovery plan to improve connectivity between countries member, recovery in terms of the tourism industry as one of ASEAN's most considerable economic income. One of the most crucial and essential steps aimed at a corporation is to temporarily postpone the obligation to pay debts to companies/industrial sectors affected by this condition so that there is a smooth flow of capital in restarting the economy. In this way, economic actors' production capacity can be maintained even though previously experiencing a decrease in total income, creating a condition in which the competitive nature returns and increases to get out of a sluggish economic condition. In addition, countries member can monitor to protect workers, laborers, businesspeople, MSMEs, and all affected production sectors.

Paying attention to the distribution activities of the supply chain to be maintained:

In managing an economy so that it is maintained, ASEAN member countries are expected to keep the supply chain of essential goods such as agricultural products, food, medical equipment, etc. still running smoothly without any obstacles in trade such as bureaucratic process and taxation. For this reason, the various obstacles must be reviewed while their application is in a crisis so that the flow of trade from producers to

consumers is not disrupted. The others way is to calibrate the amount in taxation so that the flow of goods in and out, especially for goods deemed very important, can run without any burden. On the other hand, this can be advantageous for the country in the context of complementary goods needed. It is also crucial to maintain the supply flow of a product or goods, especially for some items that are of urgency during this pandemic, such as medical devices, food sources, and agricultural products. Efforts to facilitate trade activities can be carried out as the main spearhead to support the creation of a stable social community structure during this pandemic, for example, protecting workers engaged in logistics distribution, then handling and safeguarding crucial infrastructure such as ports, airports, container handling, so that creating a smooth flow of logistics despite some restrictions in place in some areas. Then it can be optimized by continuing to open the ASEAN market for international trade activities with its trading partners, especially focusing on supply chain activities in the region.

Utilization of technology and social media

Limited space to go out due to the government's policies should be overcome using technology and digital in trading activities. This step was taken to reduce sluggishness in economic activity because people who in fact were still worried about leaving the house to shop at physical stores and avoiding crowds finally chose to shop online via e-commerce and social media such as Instagram, Facebook, etc. In trading activities, the public is also advised to look at digital assets or cryptocurrencies, which during these conditions have the least impact due to the ongoing pandemic. It can be seen from the price for Bitcoin assets, which in March to

April has decreased, but in the short term, it has increased by 200%. If the community can take advantage of this facility, they will still get income even during this crisis. In addition, the government is also required to continue to support digital trade facilities by increasing cybersecurity so that digital economic activities can run optimally.

Making social protection for the community

In this condition, many people lose their jobs because of decisions from the companies they work for, especially for people in the middle to the lower level with less money savings, the ability to survive in this period without a job is challenging. For this reason, it is hoped that ASEAN member countries can rearrange policies towards pro-people such as health insurance, medical treatment, and free health services for people who are vulnerable to disease and the low-class economy. This is used to create social stability in the community to survive during the pandemic until an undetermined time.

Increase pandemic response regionally

ASEAN member countries are expected to always increase their response to problems such as macroeconomic stability and needs such as supply chain connectivity between countries to minimize the impact that occurs on a long-term basis. Joint preparation in building and restoring the economy is a step that must be immediately regulated in its realization so that the economic downturn does not drag on or even gets worse because there is no thorough preparation for economic recovery policies. On the other hand, non-essential expenditures and budgets must be allocated to deal with the health and economic sectors, which are the most crucial areas in this pandemic.

D. ASEAN Response to Health

In the health sector, several points are emphasized on the discussion of handling the Coronavirus pandemic at the conference, which is contained in the Final Declaration of the Special ASEAN Summit. In this discussion of health, the researcher's focus is on point 9 of the declaration, where the discussion is further divided into seven sub-points, including recommendations from ASEAN for its member countries. However, in the discussion regarding health management in ASEAN, there are three sub-points related to health, namely sub-points 1 to 3. The following is the discussion of the three sub-points.

The first point, ASEAN recommended its member countries to increase cooperation in health affairs to overcome the pandemic and protect the community. Cooperation on these points includes the exchange of information, transparency regarding the situation that has occurred in each country related to the pandemic, and the steps taken by each country in ASEAN. ASEAN strongly recommended cooperation in increasing the capacity of the public health system and the health of the medical workforce in member countries, given the different capacities of each member country in dealing with this pandemic. The intensification of cooperation in providing drugs and medical devices is also an essential point. ASEAN also advised member countries to increase their preparedness and rapid response to this pandemic. The second point is that ASEAN prioritized people's welfare in a pandemic situation and provided assistance and support to affected ASEAN countries. Apart from that, ASEAN also encouraged member countries to provide emergency assistance to member countries experiencing a crisis. The third point, ASEAN, encouraged improving effective

communication in various forms, including the government's policies, information related to public health and safety, justification of misinformation, and efforts to reduce lousy stigma and discrimination. This aimed to increase the strength of cooperation between member countries [2].

In implementing the recommendations put forward by ASEAN, the following is a brief discussion regarding the implementation of the recommendations in ASEAN member countries. On 2 April 2020, Indonesia implemented a temporary ban on foreign tourists visiting the country to prevent Coronavirus transmission. This regulation is contained in the Minister of Law and Human Rights Regulation number 11 of 2020 concerning the temporary prohibition of foreigners entering Indonesian territory. However, from this regulation, there are six exceptions, namely foreigners who have a limited and permanent stay permit, diplomatic and service visa holders, diplomatic and service residence permit holders, aid workers or medical support workers based on humanitarian reasons, transportation equipment crews, and foreigners who work on strategic state-owned projects. However, this still requires special requirements, such as a health certificate issued by the respective health institutions, two weeks in an area free of the Coronavirus, and a statement of willingness to be quarantined for two weeks [7]. Nevertheless, before that, the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, implemented the PSBB (Large-Scale Social Restrictions). In a press conference held on 31 March 2020, President Jokowi said, "We have decided in the cabinet meeting that the option we choose is large-scale social restrictions or PSBB," and this PSBB is contained in Law number 6 of 2018, regarding health quarantine [8]. In the implementation of

the PSBB, all learning activities in school and lectures are temporarily stopped and transferred to online learning. Several economic activities also had a temporary halt at the start of the implementation of the PSBB. Unlike Indonesia, Vietnam has implemented LockDown.

Reporting from CNBC Indonesia, Vietnam has zero deaths. This is due to the government's quick response, strict tracking, and quarantine, and the effectiveness of delivering information to the public. According to Pham Quang Thai, as Deputy Head of the Infection Control Department at the Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology, he said, "We are not just waiting for guidelines from WHO. We use the data we collect from outside and inside to decide what action to take early". On 23 January 2020, in Vietnam, only two positive Coronavirus cases were recorded from the same site. Then on 1 February 2020, Vietnam declared a national epidemic condition. At that time, six confirmed cases were recorded. Then on 12 February 2020, Vietnam carried out a lockdown on the North Hanoi area for 20 days, after cases increased to 7 people [9]. This is done by Vietnam very quickly so that it can reduce the number of Coronavirus transmissions. On the other hand, Singapore received praise from WHO for its "All-Government approach", preparedness, and speed in handling cases similar to Vietnam's. Singapore is also using technology to follow up on infected people and stop transmission. From these efforts, Singapore found 160 cases, 93 of them were repatriated to their home countries, and the rest were given intensive care. As a result, there were no deaths in the country [3].

Malaysia also carried out a LockDown after receiving a high increase in cases, from 125 to 553 cases a day. From this spike in cases, Malaysia closed its borders, restricted internal

movement, and closed several shopping centers [11]. Then the Philippines also closed the entire island of Luzon until 15 May 2020. Under the LockDown, Luzon Island residents were only allowed to access primary needs, and public transportation is also suspended. The suspension of public transportation included transportation services, such as Grab. In this effort, the Philippine government facilitates residents who have gone through quarantine and residents who will buy primary needs by providing local government transportation units, and for people who want to leave the island were given 72 hours, then after that access in and out of the Luzon Island was restricted. The other things, the Philippine government also closed all economic activities, except for those that provide primary needs [4].

E. Obstacles to the Health Sector

There are still countries that still lack adequate medical personnel, PPE (Personal Protective Equipment), and facilities to provide essential care for patients affected by the Coronavirus. As said by the chairman of the Bogor City IDI on 22 March 2020, to the journalist VIVAnews, he admitted that PPE was inadequate, but the shortage was related to the number of patients and several other factors [9]. However, over time, the amount of PPE stock has increased dramatically [14]. Then at the beginning of the Coronavirus entry in Indonesia, there was a crisis where several hospitals appointed by the Indonesian government to handle Coronavirus cases could not accommodate more patients. With this incident, the government responded quickly by changing the function of the Wisma Atlet, which was initially a temporary residence for athletes and is now an Emergency Hospital on 23 March 2020 [11]. The Philippine government is also experiencing similar difficulties with

Indonesia. The Philippine government has limited testing for Covid-19 due to the already congested health system. With these conditions, the Philippine government has a discourse to expand its power, namely by entering into the private sector, such as taking over telecommunications networks, forcing hotels and other places to accommodate medical personnel, etc. The Malaysian government opened 400 new sites that are used to treat Coronavirus patients. The place consists of the State University, Communiti college, training center, and others owned by the government. Then the Mercy Malaysia organization created the “Covid-19 Pandemic Fund” program to help medical personnel meet the crucial needs of marginalized groups in Malaysia. Unlike the governments of other member countries, Thailand has formed a command center to manage the Coronavirus situation occurring within the country. From this initiative, the Thai government succeeded in supplying 1,000,000 masks, 1,500,000 N95 masks, and 1,900,000 PPE, which were distributed throughout the region [12].

F. ASEAN Response Related to Tourism

Tourism is one of the sectors that has been heavily impacted due to restrictions imposed by each country. In Singapore, alone tourists from China contribute around one million people every month to the tourism sector. Meanwhile, in Indonesia itself, based on data from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, it was stated that the number of tourists last March dropped drastically. It was stated that tourism was the sector most affected by Covid-19 pandemic. In last March, foreign tourists fell drastically by 64.11 percent when compared to March last year. Meanwhile, compared to the previous month, foreign tourists experienced a

decrease of 45.5 percent compared to February [13]. Based on these data, the decline in foreign tourists will also impact the country's economy, GDP will decline, and it will have an impact on the other sectors.

With the decline in the tourism sector, specific steps need to be taken to revive the sector. In this case, ASEAN, of course, as a regional organization, has taken several steps in taking action in the tourism sector. One of the steps taken was to hold a virtual meeting on 29 April 2020. This meeting aimed at solving tourism problems and producing several points of cooperation in order to see the development of each country. The result of this meeting resulted in seven points [14]. The first point is about coordination regarding the health standard requirements of each country that are needed in controlling the spread of the outbreak. In this case, the ASEAN Tourism Crisis Communication team (ATCCT) is tasked with carrying out this. This is necessary in order to prepare health protocols regarding transportation between regions or countries.

The second point resulting from the meeting was to increase cooperation between national tourism organizations and fields related to the current situation, such as health, transportation, and other fields, to form clear cooperation to deal with the Covid-19 problem and overcome the spread. As a government, of course, it requires support from its citizens. Therefore, cooperation is needed between the government and national tourism organizations to implement mitigation regarding the spread of Covid-19 in tourist attractions. The third point is about increasing information on taking appropriate steps from each country. This is necessary to see the effectiveness of these measures and see the possibility of implementation in each country.

The fourth point is about the willingness of governments of all ASEAN countries to increase tourists' trust regarding health and safety protocols related to the current pandemic situation. This aimed at restoring the tourism sector and restoring related industries such as travel, buses, hotels, and others. The fifth point is regarding the goal of tourism recovery, namely "ASEAN as a single tourism destination," so every country agrees to support each other to restore each country's situation.

The sixth point is regarding each country's policies related to the economy, namely that each country agrees to immediately implement both macro and microeconomic policies in steps to provide support to the transportation and tourism industry, such as financial assistance policies and other policies that support tourism. The last point is regarding the cooperation that must be implemented immediately to restore post-crisis tourism, and this cooperation created with related fields to immediately resolve problems related to tourism recovery.

From these points, we can see that ASEAN, as a regional organization, has carried out cooperation in the form of mutual strengthening from within each country and exchanging information related to each country's pandemic situation. In addition to these efforts, in the continuation of the meeting on June 4, 2020, it was agreed that ASEAN at this time would carry out cooperation in the form of one-way promotional media, namely through the visitseasia.travel website. On the website, information is related to the state of tourism in each country. In addition, this website also contains tourist attractions from each country, which are expected through this website that foreign tourists can be interested in tourist attractions. Apart from being a promotional media, at this time, this website is also used as a step

to provide information regarding the situation of each country regarding the ongoing pandemic. The purpose of establishing this website is related to promotion, which of course still considers the situation in each country, related to the health and security protocols of each country. Apart from that, on this website, there are also some suggestions regarding travel that must follow health and safety protocols. The efforts made by each country in overcoming the pandemic problem are also explained in order to provide peace to tourists to revive the tourism sector.

As previously stated, ASEAN countries will help each other in restoring the situation. We will explain the cooperation plans undertaken by several ASEAN countries to restore tourism. One of the steps that are planned to be implemented is the travel bubble. This plan is carried out by reopening international flights that will be followed by steps to provide facilities and provisions according to current conditions. The travel bubble is implemented between two countries that have agreed to open flights. Reported from detik.com, Malaysia has planned to open cooperation with other countries in ASEAN, one of them is Indonesia [15]. Apart from Indonesia, Malaysia is also planning this with other countries, there are Brunei Darussalam and Singapore [16]. This plan certainly has challenges, as this pandemic has not yet experienced a decline in several countries. Therefore, the travel bubble will be implemented with an agreement between the two countries that consider each country's health aspects. With this agreement, it is hoped that tourism's growth and recovery can gradually restore the situation. The efforts made in this regard are one of the steps in building and restoring the situation to lead to "ASEAN as Single Tourism Destination".

IV. CONCLUSION

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, ASEAN has built integration among its member countries to withstand these crisis conditions. As we know in the discussion above, policies and collaborative policies between countries have made ASEAN and its members survive to this day. Likewise, in health, ASEAN countries are also actively exchanging related information to reduce the spread of the virus. Then in the tourism sector, to reach a single tourism destination, ASEAN has created a website that contains information related to tourist attractions and the conditions of each country to build the trust of foreign tourists.

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