
THAILAND TO CHAIR THE FIRST 2019 ASEAN SUMMIT IN BANGKOK

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Thailand will chair the first 2019 summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on June 22 and 23, the Nikkei Asian Review has learned.

The June dates give the junta time to hold widely expected general elections before the summit. Over the last 10 years, ASEAN countries held summits twice a year, and typically, the first meetings were conducted late April and early May.

Thailands King approved a bill in September that means the junta has to hold an election sometime between February and May. If it holds the election in February, there will be plenty of time for the formation of a new government.

But if the election is held as late as May, the new prime minister will need to be ready to chair the ASEAN summit within a very short time.

The 10-member association has been criticized for allowing Thailands military government to become chair. A commentary published in Indonesias Jakarta Post said in July that ASEAN should not be led in 2019 by a military figure.

This could be added motivation for the junta to push ahead with the election before the first summit, so as to avoid further criticism.

The ASEAN chair is rotated among members annually. Thailand will take the position over from Singapore on Nov. 15 at the end of this years second summit.

<https://www.chiangraitimes.com/thailand-to-chair-the-first-2019-asean-summit-in-bangkok.html>

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