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China's Vaccine Diplomacy in Southeast Asia - A Mixed Record

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Southeast Asia has been a key target for Chinese vaccine diplomacy, accounting for 29 per cent of China's total vaccine donations and 25.6 per cent of its vaccine sales. In this picture, people receive the Sinopharm vaccine from China at a health centre in Phnom Penh on 30 April 2021 as part of Cambodia's campaign to halt the spiralling Covid-19 coronavirus cases. Photo: Tang Chhin Sothy, AFP

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Southeast Asia is a key target for Chinese vaccine diplomacy, accounting for 29 per cent of China’s total vaccine donations and 25.6 per cent of its vaccine sales worldwide.
- China’s vaccine outreach is helped by its first-mover advantage and regular supplies to the region, but this advantage is diminishing as Western countries start releasing their spare vaccine inventory.
- While looking towards China as a major source of vaccine supplies, most Southeast Asian countries also seek to diversify their vaccine portfolios.
- China’s exercise of soft power through vaccine diplomacy has yet to generate strategic trust in Southeast Asia, mainly due to Beijing’s assertion of hard power in other domains, especially in the South China Sea.
- To live up to its promise of providing vaccines as a “global public good” and counteract criticism that the country is engaging in self-serving “politics of generosity”, China should cooperate with the West in accelerating the production and distribution of vaccines to the developing world.

INTRODUCTION

The stockpiling of COVID-19 vaccines by Western countries has precipitated a supply crunch for the rest of the world in the first half of 2021 and heightened global demand for Chinese vaccines. A spokesperson from China's foreign affairs ministry shared that Beijing had, as of 2 June, provided "vaccine assistance to over 80 countries and vaccine exports to 40 plus countries".¹ Commercial purchases form the bulk of the demand for Chinese-made vaccines. According to Bridge Consulting's *China COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker* database, China has donated 25 million doses to other countries (and a further 10 million to COVAX), while having contractually agreed to sell 792 million doses.²

Southeast Asia is a key target for China's vaccine diplomacy. All the countries in the region have either purchased or received donations of Chinese-made shots. This paper examines Chinese vaccine supplies to Southeast Asia to assess whether China's vaccine diplomacy has been translated into strategic dividends in the region. In terms of its strengths, Chinese vaccine outreach is helped by its first-mover advantage through the steady deliveries of its vaccine supplies. However, China does not have a monopoly on vaccines in Southeast Asia. Furthermore, Beijing's propaganda about its generosity and its assertive actions in other domains – such as the South China Sea (SCS) – have significantly constrained the soft power effect of its vaccine outreach, thus limiting the strategic trust it is able to foster in the region.

SUPPLYING SOUTHEAST ASIA

Collectively, Southeast Asian countries have ordered around 203 million Chinese-made vaccines (Table 1), which is 25.6 per cent of China's commercial vaccine commitments.³ Indonesia is the biggest customer of these vaccines in Southeast Asia with its purchase of 125 million Sinovac doses.⁴ The Philippines is a distant second, having ordered 25 million Sinovac shots. Other notable buyers in the region include Thailand (18.6 million Sinovac doses), Cambodia (14.5 million Sinovac and 4 million Sinopharm doses) and Malaysia (12 million Sinovac and 3.5 million CanSino doses).

In terms of donations, Southeast Asia has received 7.3 million (29 per cent) of the 25 million doses that China distributed for free worldwide. Africa has received roughly a similar amount, but the 6.6 million doses donated to the continent have been divided between a considerable number of countries, leaving each recipient with only between 100,000 to 600,000 shots.⁵ Cambodia and Laos are the largest recipients of the complimentary Chinese shots both in the region and the world, having obtained 2.2 million and 1.9 million doses respectively – a testament to their strategic importance to China. China's generosity towards Cambodia is particularly striking. Media reports in February 2021 indicated that Cambodia was expecting China to donate one million doses,⁶ yet the current tally is more than double what was promised. The Philippines and Thailand each received one million shots gratis, but this seems to be a supplementary bonus to their much larger commercial purchases.

Part of the regional appetite for Chinese vaccines can be attributed to its cost-effectiveness. While procurement details vary between countries (and are often kept confidential), China's Sinovac — an inactivated vaccine — is generally understood to be cheaper to buy and handle compared to mRNA-based vaccines. For instance, Indonesia was sold each dose of Sinovac at the price of US\$13.60,⁷ while Pfizer and Moderna are respectively estimated to cost around US\$15-20 and US\$15-18 per shot.⁸ Moreover, the figures for the latter two do not yet reflect

storage and transportation costs that the mRNA vaccines incur, given their requirement for cold-chain capabilities.⁹

Furthermore, unlike other vaccine suppliers, China is the only source sending regular shipments of vaccines in sufficient quantities and has met around 58 per cent of the region’s orders to date. For instance, Cambodia has been receiving regular monthly shipments of Chinese shots (both donated and purchased) since February.¹⁰ These regular deliveries have enabled Cambodia to inoculate 16.6 per cent of its population with at least one dose by early June, making it the second fastest in the region behind Singapore.¹¹

Likewise, Indonesia has been receiving steady shipments of Sinovac since December 2020. With the recent delivery of 10 million doses on 20 June, China has now fulfilled around 75 per cent (94.5 out of the 125 million doses) of Indonesia’s total Sinovac order.¹² The Indonesian government was reportedly considering in April the purchase of “an additional 90-100 million” doses from China after being told that the supply of around 100 million AstraZeneca shots — 50 million bought directly from the manufacturer and the rest through COVAX — will arrive late.¹³ AstraZeneca is only promising the delivery of 20 million doses later this year and the other 30 million in the second quarter of 2022.¹⁴ The remaining doses through COVAX will also likely be delayed, as supplies from the Facility have generally fallen short (Table 2). A similar situation is playing out in The Philippines. Of the 14 million doses that have arrived in the country by mid-June, nine million were Sinovac.¹⁵

Meanwhile, Thailand’s plans to rely on local pharmaceutical firm Siam Bioscience to manufacture around 60 million AstraZeneca doses on license have not been going well. Production at Siam Bioscience is “not going smoothly”,¹⁶ leaving Thailand mostly dependent on its stock of Sinovac to run its vaccination programme. Although the Thais have placed orders with vaccine manufacturers such as Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson, these are not expected to be delivered anytime soon. In contrast, a further 11 million Sinovac doses are expected to arrive in Thailand between June and August 2020.¹⁷ That delivery cannot come soon enough, as reports in mid-June suggest that hospitals in Bangkok are postponing vaccine appointments due to suspected inventory issues.¹⁸

Table 1. Southeast Asia’s inventory of China-made vaccines (as of 20 June 2021)

	No. of doses donated by China	No. of doses purchased from China	No. of purchased doses delivered by China
Brunei	52,000 (Sinopharm)	N.A.	N.A.
Cambodia	2.2 million (Sinopharm)	14.5 million (Sinovac) 4 million (Sinopharm)	5.5 million (Sinovac) 1 million (Sinopharm)
Indonesia	N.A.	125 million (Sinovac)	94.5 million
Laos	1.9 million (Sinopharm)	N.A.	N.A.
Malaysia	N.A.	12 million (Sinovac) 3.5 million (CanSino)	3.7 million (Sinovac)
Myanmar	500,000 (Sinopharm)	N.A.	N.A.

Singapore	N.A.	200,000 (Sinovac)	200,000
Thailand	1 million (Sinovac)	18.6 million (Sinovac)	5.5 million
The Philippines	1 million (Sinovac)	25 million (Sinovac)	8 million
Timor-Leste	100,000 (Sinovac)	N.A.	N.A.
Vietnam	500,000 (Sinopharm)	N.A.	N.A.

Sources: Media reports and the Bridge Consulting's China COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker.

N.B.: Figures only reflect the amounts procured by national governments for their country's immunisation programmes, and do not include purchases by the private sector.

SOUTHEAST ASIA'S VACCINE DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGY

While China is a major source of vaccines for many countries in the region and has first-mover advantage in terms of its regular deliveries, it does not have a monopoly over vaccine supplies to the region. Southeast Asian countries have sought to hedge their choice of vaccines with as many providers as possible. A closer look at their vaccine portfolios (Table 2) suggests that the region's procurement decisions are motivated more by the urgency to secure as many vaccine doses as they can rather than by a prevailing preference for Chinese vaccines. All the countries in the region are not singularly reliant on China, having supplemented their stock of Chinese vaccines with supplies from at least one other source.

The procurement decisions of Indonesia and Malaysia stand in the middle of the region's vaccine diversification spectrum. Besides significant purchases of Chinese-made vaccines, the vaccine portfolios of Indonesia and Malaysia consist of a substantial portion of non-Chinese vaccines. For instance, Malaysia has ordered AstraZeneca, Pfizer and Sputnik V vaccines, while Indonesia has sought provisions from AstraZeneca, Pfizer and Novavax to complement their Chinese vaccine holdings.¹⁹ Both countries have also sought supplies through COVAX. On aggregate, Malaysia has ordered a total of 64 million doses from non-Chinese suppliers; vaccine purchases from China thus constitute slightly less than a fifth of the country's portfolio. In a similar vein, Chinese vaccines occupy only a third of Indonesia's inventory; its hefty order of 125 million doses from Sinovac is balanced by the purchase of around 250 million shots from other vaccine manufacturers.

Cambodia and Laos are on the one end of the spectrum. These two countries predominantly rely on Chinese vaccines to carry out their national immunisation programmes, with COVAX serving as their only major alternative supply source.²⁰ (Laos has reportedly requested two million doses of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine, but little news has emerged since the delivery of 1,000 shots in January.)²¹ Cambodia's wager on Chinese vaccines is notable and represents a volte face from the country's apparent reticence to adopt Sinovac in December 2020. At that time, questions swirling around Sinovac prompted the Cambodian government to opt for supplies through COVAX, with Prime Minister Hun Sen insisting that "Cambodia is not a dustbin ... and not a place for a vaccine trial".²² In May, Hun Sen was singing a different tune,

stating that “without assistance from China, maybe we will not have vaccines for [the Cambodian] people”.²³

At the other end of the spectrum, Vietnam has — until very recently — consciously eschewed the use of Chinese vaccines, preferring instead to depend on other vaccine manufacturers and COVAX while developing its own homegrown vaccines. Two promising candidate vaccines – Nanocovax and Covivax – are currently undergoing Phase 2 trials,²⁴ with Vietnam hoping for Nanocovax to be ready for general use in 2022.²⁵ Vietnam’s strategy has partly been made possible by its effective containment of the pandemic over the past year, but the latest resurgence of COVID-19 cases in the country have tested its resolve about avoiding Chinese vaccines. Vietnam has accepted China’s donation of 500,000 doses of Sinopharm on 20 June,²⁶ after providing regulatory approval for the vaccine on 4 June.²⁷ However, these 500,000 Sinopharm shots are reserved for Chinese nationals living in Vietnam, those living around the China-Vietnam border and Vietnamese citizens heading to China for work or studies.

In general, Southeast Asian countries have sought to diversify their vaccine sources, even though the depth of their respective efforts may vary. The region does not want to place all its bets on Chinese vaccines. Furthermore, even though China has a slight advantage through the regularity of its deliveries, it is not the provision of vaccines alone that matters, but also the Chinese narrative surrounding such provision. China’s vaccine outreach suffers from its lack of soft power mastery and the discrepancy between its exercise of soft and hard power.

Table 2. Southeast Asia’s vaccine portfolio (as of 20 June 2021)

	No. of doses of Chinese vaccines	No. of doses from other suppliers	COVAX First Round of Allocation²⁸ (P: promised; D: delivered)
Brunei*	52,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderna: 200,000 • Novavax: unspecified • Pfizer: 300,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P: 108,000 AstraZeneca • D: 62,400
Cambodia	20.7 million	N.A.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P: 1.1 million SII-AstraZeneca • D: 324,000
Indonesia	125 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AstraZeneca: 50 million (with an additional 54 million expected through COVAX) • Novavax: 100 million • Pfizer: 100 million 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P: 11.7 million AstraZeneca doses • D: 8.2 million doses
Laos	1.9 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sputnik V: 2 million 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P: 480,000 SII-AstraZeneca • D: 132,00 AstraZeneca and 100,620 Pfizer
Malaysia*	15.5 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AstraZeneca: 12.8 million (including through COVAX) • Pfizer: 44.8 million • Sputnik V: 6.4 million 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P: 1.4 million SK Bioscience- AstraZeneca doses • D: 828,200 doses

Myanmar	500,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SII-AstraZeneca: 30 million • SII-AstraZeneca donated by India: 1.5 million 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P: 3.6 million SII-AstraZeneca doses • D: no delivery recorded thus far
Singapore*	200,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderna: unspecified • Pfizer: unspecified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P: 250,000 AstraZeneca • Did not order allocated shots
Thailand	19.6 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AstraZeneca: 150,000 • Johnson & Johnson: 5 million • Pfizer: 20 million • Siam Bioscience: 61 million 	Non-participant
The Philippines	26 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AstraZeneca: 17 million • Johnson & Johnson: up to 10 million • Moderna: 20 million • Pfizer: 40 million • SII-Novavax: 30 million • Sputnik V: 20 million 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P: 4.6 million AstraZeneca and 2.5 million Pfizer • D: 2.6 million AstraZeneca and 2.5 million Pfizer
Timor-Leste	100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AstraZeneca donated by Australia: 20,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P: 100,800 AstraZeneca • D: 124,800²⁹
Vietnam	500,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AstraZeneca: 30 million • AstraZeneca donated by Japan: 1 million • Moderna: 5 million • Pfizer: 31 million • Sputnik V: 20 million 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P: 4.2 million AstraZeneca • D: 2.5 million

Sources: Media reports, the World Health Organization, the UNICEF COVID-19 Vaccine Market Dashboard and the Bridge Consulting's China COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker.

CHINA'S ELUSIVE SOFT POWER

Vaccine diplomacy is an exercise in soft power. The point is neither to compel nor coerce, but to convince or “co-opt” – usually by example.³⁰ As Joseph Nye writes, a country’s foreign policy can function as a source of soft power, but this can be undermined if other policies “appear to be hypocritical, arrogant, indifferent to the opinion of others, or based on a narrow approach to national interests”.³¹ China is still finding its feet in terms of cultivating soft power with the necessary nuance and finesse. For one thing, Beijing’s propaganda efforts accompanying its vaccine outreach lack subtlety. Moreover, China has yet to recognise that its exercise of hard power has to be recalibrated to avoid undermining its soft power efforts.

Nye is fond of saying that “the best propaganda is not propaganda”.³² China could learn from this since its rhetorical indignation against Western vaccine nationalism (and hard selling of Chinese generosity) have gone overboard. The 25 February commentary by China’s ambassador to Timor-Leste published in the *Suara Timor Lorosae* newspaper offers an instructive look at the flavour of Chinese polemics:

Take fair distribution of vaccines in COVID-19 as an example, some rich and powerful countries pursue vaccine “nationalism”, which order and hoard vaccines in large quantities far more than what they need, but it is very difficult for many developing countries to get enough vaccines. And China is demonstrating to the world that Chinese vaccines, as global public goods, will make them affordable to developing countries and promote equitable distribution of vaccines, and prevent a country in need from being left behind, nor will anyone waiting for the vaccine be forgotten.³³

Despite the bluster about ensuring that no one will be “forgotten” or “left behind” under its watch, China donated on 5 June only a small package of 100,000 doses to Timor-Leste, a country with a population of 1.3 million.³⁴ Timor-Leste’s vaccination needs will be primarily served instead by COVAX and Australia. By ratcheting up such rhetoric, China risks inviting accusations of arrogance and hypocrisy, especially if its vaccine offerings fail to match the elevated sense of expectations. The invective against the West also suggests that China is more interested in point-scoring and using the developing world as pawns to further geopolitical goals.

The other factor blunting China’s soft power is the fact that many countries are conscious that China’s congeniality can be capricious. China has a record of retracting its generosity and banishing countries to “the doghouse” (as the *Economist* magazine memorably puts it) for perceived slights.³⁵ And while Southeast Asia has been generally spared the worst of China’s “wolf-warrior diplomacy”, it is not blind to how China punishes those failing to toe Beijing’s line. China may offer vaccines today, but trade sanctions tomorrow: regional governments are taking careful note, for instance, of China’s economic and trade reprisals against Australia for what Beijing perceives to be anti-China policies.³⁶ Southeast Asian capitals also remember what happened when Singapore inadvertently vexed Beijing with a statement on the 2016 Arbitral Tribunal’s judgment. After being chastised by China for “interfering in South China Sea issues” as a non-claimant state,³⁷ Singapore found its military vehicles detained while in transit in Hong Kong, and its prime minister was not invited to the inaugural Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Summit. Although relations eventually stabilised, that episode – along with Australia’s current experience – is a stark reminder of the darker underbelly of Beijing’s charm offensives. More importantly, it highlights how over-reliance on China can entail over-exposure to Chinese punitive measures when the inevitable disagreement arises.

Furthermore, China’s assertions of hard power in other domains fundamentally undercut its soft power, preventing Beijing from translating its vaccine diplomacy advantage into sustained strategic dividends, especially in Southeast Asia. Regional goodwill for Beijing’s vaccine diplomacy risks being thwarted by its mischief in the SCS. In April 2020 alone, while the region was teetering from the initial wave of COVID-19 infections, a Chinese coast guard ship collided with and sank a Vietnamese fishing boat near the Paracel Islands,³⁸ while survey vessel Haiyang Dizhi 8 entered into Malaysia’s exclusive economic zone (EEZ) to disrupt the exploration activities of a Malaysian ship.³⁹ In March this year, more than 200 vessels from China’s maritime militia loitered around the Whitsun Reef, which lies within the Philippines’ EEZ.⁴⁰ More recently, on 31 May, while Malaysia was grappling with another lockdown due to spiralling COVID-19 cases, 16 Chinese military transport planes approached within 60 nautical miles of the Borneo coast, ignoring requests from Malaysia’s air traffic control to identify themselves.⁴¹

Instead of trying to affirm its reliability as a magnanimous partner during a stressful time, China sought to bulldoze its way through in the SCS. These encounters, timed especially during a pandemic that has stretched the capacity of many regional governments, have undermined the effectiveness of Beijing's charm offensives in the health domain. As demonstrated in the *State of Southeast Asia 2021* survey by ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, although China is recognised as the ASEAN Dialogue Partner that has provided the most help to the region on COVID-19, the distrust towards Beijing among Southeast Asians continues to deepen.⁴² As long as China keeps doubling down on its assertiveness in the South China Sea in the name of its own national sovereignty at the expense of those of its neighbours, no number of vaccines can overcome this strategic distrust.

CONCLUSION

China has been able to get a head start with its vaccine diplomacy because the Western countries were preoccupied with their own domestic needs. Now that the developed countries are on course to finish vaccinating their populations, vaccine supplies from the West will start flowing. If the G-7's pledge to donate one billion shots worldwide does materialise,⁴³ it will outstrip the 742 million shots that China has sold and the 22 million doses that it has donated. Furthermore, once India recovers from its current bout of infections, its vaccine-manufacturing capacity will likely help close the vaccine gap in the developing world.

The current advantage that China's vaccine diplomacy now has is therefore diminishing. If Beijing continues with its rough approach to soft power, it could see its efforts going down the drain, especially once the immediacy of the pandemic recedes when global recovery is well underway. One possible way of avoiding such an outcome is to reach out to the West (and India) to cooperate in the production and distribution of vaccines to the developing world, instead of turning vaccine outreach into another domain of the geostrategic competition between China and the West. To do this, China will also need to be more transparent with its vaccine trial data and address concerns about reported disparities in its vaccine efficacy rates.⁴⁴ At the very least, such actions would demonstrate Beijing's sincerity in ensuring that the vaccines are indeed a "global public good", as proclaimed by Chinese leaders and diplomats.

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¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin's Regular Press Conference", 2 June 2021,

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/t1880861.shtml.

² Bridge, "China COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker", 7 June 2021, <https://bridgebeijing.com/our-publications/our-publications-1/china-covid-19-vaccines-tracker/>.

³ The numbers and figures in the article are either calculated or compiled by the author based on various sources, including media reports, the World Health Organization, the UNICEF Covid-19 Market Dashboard and the Bridge Consulting's China COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker.

⁴ Indonesia has allowed the private sector to run its own parallel vaccination programme, allowing the latter to purchase vaccines that the government has not procured, including Sinopharm and CanSino. As the focus of this article is on government procurements for their national immunisation programmes, details and figures relating to private sectors' vaccine purchases will not be discussed.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ "China delivers 600,000 Covid-19 vaccine doses to ally Cambodia", *Straits Times*, 7 Feb 2021, <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/china-delivers-600000-vaccine-doses-to-ally-cambodia>.

⁷ "COVID-19 vaccine to be priced at Rp 200,000 per dosage: Bio Farma", Jakarta Post, 14 October 2020, <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/10/13/covid-19-vaccine-to-be-priced-at-rp-200000-per-dosage-bio-farma.html>.

⁸ Carmen Ang, "COVID-19 Vaccine Prices: Comparing the U.S. and EU", *Visual Capitalist*, 7 June 2021, <https://www.visualcapitalist.com/covid-19-vaccine-cost-eu-versus-us/>.

⁹ In comparison, the AstraZeneca vaccine generally costs \$4 per dose, making it the cheapest. However, the vaccine is plagued by considerable supply issues.

¹⁰ Cambodia received from China 600,000 donated Sinopharm doses on 7 February, 700,000 on 31 March, 400,000 on 28 April and 500,000 on 8 June. 1 million purchased Sinopharm shots also arrived on 12 June. The country also took delivery of 1.5 million Sinovac shots on 26 March, 500,000 on 17 April, 500,000 on 11 May, 500,000 on 16 May, 1 million on 23 May, 500,000 on 8 June and 1 million on 19 June.

¹¹ Our World in Data, "Share of people who received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine", accessed on 11 June 2021, <https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations>.

¹² "Indonesia Gets Another 10 Million Doses of Sinovac Bulk Vaccines", *Tempo*, 20 June 2021, <https://en.tempo.co/read/1474687/indonesia-gets-another-10-million-doses-of-sinovac-bulk-vaccines>.

¹³ "Indonesia turns to China to help plug Covid-19 vaccine shortage after AstraZeneca delays", *Straits Times*, 8 April 2021, <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/indonesia-turns-to-china-to-help-plug-vaccine-shortage-after-astrazeneca-delays>.

¹⁴ "Indonesia says about 100 million AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine doses face arrival delays", *Channel NewsAsia*, 8 April 2021, <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asia/covid-19-indonesia-100-million-astrazeneca-vaccine-delays-india-14580314>.

¹⁵ "TRACKER: The Philippines' COVID-19 vaccine distribution", *Rappler*, 1 April 2021, <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/data-documents/tracker-covid-19-vaccines-distribution-philippines>.

¹⁶ John Reed, Michael Peel and Hannah Kuchler, "A king's vaccine: Thailand's struggle to deliver jabs to its people", *Financial Times*, 10 June 2021, <https://www.ft.com/content/aaa8b820-68c7-408d-9486-222fe2d65634>

- ¹⁷ Tanutam Thawan, “11 million Sinovac doses to arrive in Thailand over the next 3 months”, *Thaiger*, 3 June 2021, <https://thethaiger.com/coronavirus/11-million-sinovac-doses-to-arrive-in-thailand-over-the-next-3-months>.
- ¹⁸ Hannah Beech and Muktita Suhartono, “A mass inoculation campaign in Thailand stumbles amid a severe outbreak”, *New York Times*, 14 June 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/14/world/thailand-shortage.html>.
- ¹⁹ Both Malaysia and Indonesia have also sought to strengthen their vaccine supply chains by entering into fill-and-finish production agreements with the Chinese manufacturers.
- ²⁰ Australia has also bequeathed Cambodia with a US\$28 million grant in February 2021 to support the country’s vaccination efforts, but not much has been revealed about how the money has been or will be disbursed.
- ²¹ Souksakhone Vaenkeo, “Laos to get additional doses of Russia’s Sputnik V vaccine”, *Vientiane Times*, 26 May 2021, https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent_Laoto_100.php.
- ²² Shaun Turton, “Cambodia shuns China’s Sinovac vaccine in favour of COVAX shots”, *Nikkei Asia*, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Coronavirus/Cambodia-shuns-China-s-Sinovac-vaccine-in-favor-of-COVAX-shots>.
- ²³ “Cambodia’s Hun Sen: ‘If I don’t rely on China, who will I rely on?’”, *Nikkei Asia*, 20 May 2021, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/The-Future-of-Asia/The-Future-of-Asia-2021/Cambodia-s-Hun-Sen-If-I-don-t-rely-on-China-who-will-I-rely-on>
- ²⁴ COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker, “Vietnam”, accessed on 11 June 2021, <https://covid19.trackvaccines.org/country/viet-nam/>.
- ²⁵ “Vietnam says homegrown COVID-19 vaccine to be available by fourth quarter”, *Channel NewsAsia*, 17 March 2021, <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asia/vietnam-homegrown-covid-19-vaccine-nanocovax-covivac-14426964>.
- ²⁶ “Vietnam receives 500,000 Sinopharm doses from China for select groups”, *Straits Times*, 20 June 2021, <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/vietnam-receives-500000-sinopharm-doses-from-china-for-select-groups>.
- ²⁷ “Vietnam approves China’s Sinopharm vaccine for use against Covid-19”, *Straits Times*, 4 June 2021, <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/vietnam-approves-chinas-sinopharm-vaccine-for-use-against-covid-19>.
- ²⁸ Countries marked with an asterisk are Self-Financing Participants (SFP) in the COVAX Facility.
- ²⁹ Timor-Leste received shots in excess of its allocated amount due to from New Zealand’s donation of 24,000 doses through COVAX. See UNICEF, “Timor-Leste receives 100,800 doses of COVID-19 vaccines from COVAX, the largest single batch of vaccine doses delivered to the country to date”, 9 June 2021, <https://www.unicef.org/timorleste/press-releases/timor-leste-receives-100800-doses-covid-19-vaccines-covax-largest-single-batch>.
- ³⁰ Joseph Nye, *Soft Power* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), p. 6-8.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 11, 14.
- ³² Joseph Nye, “China’s Soft Power Deficit”, *Wall Street Journal*, 8 May 2012, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702304451104577389923098678842>.
- ³³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, “Signed Article by H.E. Dr. Xiao Jianguo, Chinese Ambassador to Timor-Leste”, 25 February 2021, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjb_663304/zwjg_665342/zwbd_665378/t1856548.shtml.
- ³⁴ Government of Timor-Leste, “100,000 doses of Sinovac vaccine arrived today”, 5 June 2021, <http://timor-leste.gov.tl/?p=28353&lang=en>.
- ³⁵ “Asian countries are learning to cope with Chinese bullying”, *Economist*, 27 February 2021, <https://www.economist.com/asia/2021/02/27/asian-countries-are-learning-to-cope-with-chinese-bullying>.
- ³⁶ “As China-Australia ties fray, who is shaping Canberra’s increasingly hawkish policy on Beijing?”, *South China Morning Post*, 6 June 2021, <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/people/article/3135930/china-australia-ties-fray-who-shaping-canberras-increasingly>.

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