

Media Release

The Increasingly Evident Progress of ASEAN QR Code Financial Integration, Arsjad Rasjid: QR Codes of Thailand and Cambodia Have Been Connected

Jakarta, 20 June 2023 - Arsjad Rasjid, Chair of ASEAN-Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC), stated that cross-border payments within the region, promoted by ASEAN-BAC through the ASEAN QR Code legacy project, have shown significant progress. "The QR code of Thailand has recently been connected with Cambodia through the Central Bank of Thailand and the Central Bank of Cambodia. This is a tangible example of ASEAN's commitment to creating a connected, inclusive, and competitive business ecosystem in the region," said **Arsjad**.

QR Payment Method Highly Popular in ASEAN

Thai residents and tourists in Cambodia can use mobile banking applications to scan QR codes at tourist sites or Cambodian MSMEs. Similarly, Cambodian residents and tourists in Thailand can use banking applications to scan QR codes at tourist sites or Thai MSMEs.

QR payment methods are indeed highly sought after as they simplify transactions and have the potential to reduce cross-border transaction costs. This payment method offers convenience, speed, and security for countries in the ASEAN region. By adopting a uniform QR code system, ASEAN countries aim to promote interoperability and facilitate cross-border transactions. This initiative eliminates the need for diverse payment platforms and enhances the efficiency of all financial transactions, benefiting businesses, consumers, and the entire ecosystem.

Various central banks from four ASEAN countries such as Bank Indonesia (BI), Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM), Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS), and Bank of Thailand (BOT) have agreed to collaborate in realizing and supporting faster, cheaper, transparent, and inclusive payments.

QR code payments in the ASEAN region affirm the commitment among ASEAN countries to strengthen financial integration and enhance economic cooperation. "This collaborative step opens up a new chapter in smoother cross-border transactions with minimal transaction costs," said **Pandu Sjahrir, Legacy Lead of ASEAN QR Code**.

Advantages of Using Cross-border QR Payments in ASEAN

One of the primary advantages of this regional payment system is its ability to protect ASEAN member states from exchange rate fluctuations. As transactions are conducted in local currencies, settlements are not affected by fluctuations in the US dollar exchange rate. Moreover, this initiative has transformative potential for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) by enabling them to access markets beyond their home countries.

Together, we can drive the ASEAN region towards a future of seamless and fast transactions, inclusive economic growth, and enhanced financial integration through the digitization of the financial ecosystem," said **Arsjad**.

The ASEAN cross-border payment system, with its emphasis on secure, efficient, and inclusive transactions, is poised to reshape the financial landscape in Southeast Asia. By enabling borderless payments in local currencies, this initiative promotes greater economic integration for ASEAN and strengthens the region's position in the global market.

Through the QR code transaction system, ASEAN tourists can easily make purchases in other member countries without worrying about currency conversion or exchange rate fluctuations. This initiative will also boost the growth of the tourism and trade sectors in ASEAN as a whole.

Digital transactions using QR codes, which are part of the ASEAN-BAC's legacy project, have also been presented at the 42nd ASEAN Summit in Labuan Bajo. Through this summit, ASEAN leaders are ready to support this breakthrough and even agree to promote the creation of local currencies in the ASEAN region.

In addition to Thailand and Cambodia, QR codes between ASEAN countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia, and Singapore and Thailand have also been connected. In the future, several other QR code systems between ASEAN countries will be finalized soon. "We hope that all QR code systems between countries in the region can be finalized at the 43rd ASEAN Summit in Jakarta and presented to the leaders of ASEAN countries in September 2023," said **Arsjad**.

The use of QR code systems for payments has also been adopted by various companies such as PT Astra International Tbk, Sinar Mas, Bakrie Group, and Mayora Group.

Sinar Mas, through Bank Sinar Mas, introduced QR code payment services. "Through SimobiPlus, we strive to support QR code payments. QR-based payments are more efficient and user-friendly for the public," said **Frenky Tirtowijoyo, CEO of Bank Sinar Mas**. **Frenky** himself has experienced and tested these payment services during his time abroad.

Arsjad also urged all businesses and private sectors in the ASEAN region to welcome this ASEAN QR Code initiative. Additionally, he invited businesses and private sectors to attend the ASEAN Business Investment Summit (ABIS) 2023 and ASEAN Business Awards (ABA) 2023, which will be held on September 3-4 in Jakarta.

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