

**Wednesday, Apr. 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

## GENERAL NEWS AND HEADLINES

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### House Commission X, Sports Ministry postpone PON XX

(Kompas, <https://tinyurl.com/ub9xulp>)

The House Commission X overseeing education, sports, tourism and the creative economy, along with the Youth and Sports Ministry have both agreed upon postponing the Papua National Games (PON), initially planned to be held from October 20 until November 2, 2020.

The decision was made at a work meeting held on Tuesday, attended by House Commission X and Youth and Sports Minister Zainudin Amali. According to reports by the ministry, all arrangements concerning the games were disrupted due to the outbreak of COVID-19.

House Commission X chairman Syaiful Huda stated that the ministry would still need to consult with President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo before announcing the exact dates for the delayed national games.

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### ICW urges Jokowi to dismiss expert staff member

(Liputan 6, <https://tinyurl.com/sd6ohlh>)

The Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW) has advised President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo to dismiss presidential expert staff member Andi Taufan Garuda Putra.

A conflict of interest had surfaced when it was found that Andi had asked subdistrict government officials to support a COVID-19 relief program led by his company PT Amarta Mikro Fintek, through mailed documents bearing the Cabinet secretary's letterhead.

Subsequently, the ICW urged Andi to immediately distribute clarification letters as a form of apology to all subdistrict heads involved.

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### 10 regions get green light to enact PSBB as COVID-19 cases continue to rise

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(*The Jakarta Post*, <https://tinyurl.com/r3dm2m5>)

The Health Ministry announced on Tuesday that it would allow 10 regions considered COVID-19 red zones to impose large-scale social restrictions (PSBB) to widely limit people's movement during the outbreak.

The regions include capital Jakarta, which recorded 2,335 COVID-19 cases as of Tuesday, and its neighboring Bogor regency, Bogor city, Depok city, Bekasi regency, Bekasi city, Tangerang regency, Tangerang city and South Tangerang city.

Pekanbaru in Riau is the only city outside Java to gain approval to enact PSBB so far.

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## BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS NEWS AND HEADLINES

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### Indonesia records \$743m trade surplus in March

CNBC Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/t4dhaky>); Investor Daily, (<https://tinyurl.com/wg99jre>); Detik, (<https://tinyurl.com/qq2vuya>); The Jakarta Post, (<https://tinyurl.com/wqjn6h3>)

Indonesia booked a US\$743 million trade surplus in March as export and import activities contracted slightly amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Statistics Indonesia (BPS) has announced. Southeast Asia's largest economy recorded \$14.09 billion in exports in March, a 0.2 percent decrease year-on-year (yoy), while total imports fell 0.75 percent yoy to \$13.35 billion driven by decreased imports of capital goods. "This figure is encouraging amid the uncertain global situation. We must, however, be aware of the decline in capital goods and raw materials, which may have a huge impact on trade and investment," BPS head Suhariyanto said Thursday.

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### OJK: 262,966 debtors undergoing debt restructuring

Kontan, (<https://tinyurl.com/s6klrl3>); CNBC Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/tqlfej2>)

According to the Financial Services Authority (OJK), 262,966 debtors were undergoing debt restructuring in the banking sector as of April 13. Meanwhile, in the multifinance industry, 65,363 debtors had received approval to restructure their debt, and applications from 150,345 debtors were still under review. "The approval, scheme and maturity length of the restructuring are based on

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evaluations and assessments made by the lenders,” OJK spokesperson Sekar Putih Djarot said.

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## **Indonesia's external debt rises to \$407.5b in February**

CNBC Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/svaj2oc>); CNN Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/t4j754q>); Tempo, (<https://tinyurl.com/s8lt9jc>)

Bank Indonesia recorded a 5.4 percent year-on-year (yoy) increase in the country's external debt in February to US\$407.5 billion, lower than January's increase at 7.6 percent yoy. The increase was driven by 5.9 percent yoy growth in private sector external debt to \$204.2 billion. Excluding external debt held by the central bank, the government's external debt has increased by 5.1 percent yoy to \$200.6 billion. Nevertheless, the ratio of Indonesia's external debt to gross domestic product (GDP) fell slightly to 35.9 percent, from 36.3 percent last month.

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## **Manpower Ministry stops issuing new work permits for foreign workers**

CNN Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/uw9juzk>)

The Manpower Ministry has stopped issuing new work permits for foreign workers through the issuance of Manpower Minister Circular No. M/4/HK.04/4/2020 in an effort to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, exemptions are being given to foreign workers who currently reside in the country or are employed in national strategic projects. Manpower Minister Ida Fauziah said the foreign workers moratorium was effective until the pandemic ends.

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