

Thursday, Apr. 9th, 2020

GENERAL NEWS AND HEADLINES

Home Ministry forms COVID-19 task force to handle border areas

Kompas (<https://tinyurl.com/rmqhmby>); *Liputan6* (<https://tinyurl.com/r3f5y65>)

Home Minister Tito Karnavian, who also serves as head of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP), has formed a task force for the prevention and acceleration in the handling of the coronavirus in Indonesia's border areas supervised by the BNPP, in accordance with Decree No. PWS/81/04/830/IV/2020, which came into force on April 7, 2020.

Tito said the spread of COVID-19 had impacted the social, economic and welfare aspects of those located around Indonesian borders including seven of the national cross-border post regions (PLBN).

BNPP acting secretary Suhajar Diantoro has been appointed head of the task force with three BNPP deputies as his deputy heads.

The task force will operate for seven months and disband in October 2020.

House urges Health Ministry to meet APD, PCR test equipment needs

Kompas (<https://tinyurl.com/t76xxqq>)

House of Representatives Commission IX in charge of health affairs has urged the health, trade and industry ministries to immediately meet the demand for COVID-19 PCR test devices, rapid test kits as well as personal protective equipment for all medical and non-medical personnel across Indonesia.

Commission IX deputy chairman Melki Laka Lena said the House had also requested strengthened supervision over medicine and medical devices needed for handling COVID-19. Moreover, the Health Ministry has been urged to coordinate with relevant ministries and institutions, including the National Police and regional governments, regarding the distribution of medical equipment to hospitals treating COVID-19 patients.

The House also requested all relevant ministries, along with the National police, to impose sanctions on business actors violating restrictions on COVID-19 medical supplies exports.

Police to prioritize preventive efforts above law enforcement

Detik (<https://tinyurl.com/scpg6u9>)

The National Police emphasized that their team would prioritize preventive measures to contain the spread of COVID-19, claiming that law enforcement measures would be taken as a last resort.

Chief spokesman of the National Police, Asep Adi Saputra, claimed that the police would first warn any potential violators not to break the law. Asep stressed, however, that if the appeals were not heeded, law enforcement measures would be taken.

Asep also urged business actors producing and distributing personal protective equipment (APD) and other medical supplies to comply with the regulations in all the regions. The police warned that hoarders could be charged.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS NEWS AND HEADLINES

Launch of preemployment card program delayed

Kompas (<https://tinyurl.com/t3y6zcp>), Bisnis Indonesia (<https://tinyurl.com/w4n2vek>), CNBC Indonesia (<https://tinyurl.com/wy4w8tk>)

Secretary to the coordinating economic minister Susi wijono has said that the preemployment card program's launch, which was initially to be done online on Thursday, will be postponed due to technical issues. Preemployment card program communications director Panji Winanteya Ruky said the program would be launched on Saturday, April 11, adding that, even though the launch was delayed, the government was still on track to get the program running by the second week of April.

The program hopes to reach out to 5.6 million people by 2020, doling out Rp 3.55 million for each participant along with training aid, post-training incentives and employment survey incentives.

Sugar price soars ahead of Ramadan

Kontan (<https://tinyurl.com/sgtfvat>), Detik (<https://tinyurl.com/v8xcuyc>), CNBC Indonesia (<https://tinyurl.com/qtg9s2g>)

Agriculture Minister Syahrul Yasin Limpo has prepared 250,000 tons of sugar to stabilize the sugar price as it touches Rp18,000 (US\$1.14) to Rp 20,000 per kilogram. Based on Trade Ministerial Regulation No. 7/2020 on the sugar reference price, the ceiling price for sugar is set at Rp 12,500 per kilogram. Syahrul expressed his commitment to maintaining the stability of the sugar price by working with both the relevant ministries and the National Police as he found that various parties had attempted to stockpile sugar to manipulate prices.

State Logistics Agency (Bulog) president director Budi Waseso gave assurances that rice and staple supplies will remain sufficient during Ramadan and Idul Fitri. Bulog's rice stock is 1.4 million tons, consisting mainly of 1.39 million tons of the government's rice reserve (CBP) and 53,000 tons of unsubsidized rice. In addition, its warehouse also keeps 5,000 tons of sugar, 0.27 tons of shallots, 0.5 tons of garlic, 20 tons of eggs, 113 tons of buffalo meat, 614.7 tons of wheat flour and 781 kiloliters of cooking oil. However, Bulog's corn stock is currently empty.

IDX holds highest number of IPOs in Southeast Asia

CNBC Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/qwrcwl8>, <https://tinyurl.com/wvh8pol>)

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, which has slowed down the global economy, the Indonesia Stock Exchange (IDX) had the highest number of listed companies in Southeast Asia as of the first quarter of the year. Ernst and Young research titled *Global IPO Trends* found that 18 companies held initial public offerings (IPOs) at the IDX in the first quarter, a 157 percent increase from the same period last year. Three new issuers had their IPOs on Thursday: PT Cipta Selera Murni (CSMI), PT Aesler Group International (RONY) and PT Cahaya Bintang Medan (MBMF).

IDX assessment director I Gede Nyoman Nyetna said the appetite for IPOs remained high because businesses had funding needs and positive sentiment ahead of financial reporting.

Anies considers allowing Gojek, Grab to pick up passengers despite virus

CNBC Indonesia (<https://tinyurl.com/tuzl4f9>), Detik (<https://tinyurl.com/ug7fo5t>)

Jakarta Governor Anies Baswedan has said that he is coordinating with the central government to regulate *ojek* (motorcycle taxi) services from Gojek and Grab amid large-scale social restrictions (PSBB). Anies is expecting to make a decision on Thursday night as to whether *ojek* drivers will be allowed to transport passengers. Based on Health Ministerial Regulation No.9/2020 concerning PSBB guidelines, *ojek* drivers are only permitted to transport goods and prohibited from taking passengers.

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