

**Tuesday, Aug. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

## GENERAL NEWS AND HEADLINES

### **Constitutional amendment possible, if not in line with people's needs**

*Kompas* (<https://tinyurl.com/y2r5jqje>)

People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) Speaker Bambang Soesatyo said the Constitution was a "tool" that could ensure people's welfare. Therefore, the MPR was given the authority to evaluate and amend the 1945 Constitution if it could no longer respond to the people's needs, the Golkar Party politician added.

However, he warned that a constitutional amendment must be conducted carefully as it was the legal umbrella that covered all laws related to various sectors, namely politics, social, cultural, as well as defense and security.

Bambang said the MPR was currently gathering people's aspirations regarding the plan to revive the State Policy Guidelines (GBHN).

### **KAMI demands better COVID-19 response, prevention of Pancasila deviations**

*Tempo* (<https://tinyurl.com/y67tnlsu>); *The Jakarta Post* (<https://tinyurl.com/y4y9ce8x>)

As many as 150 national figures grouped under the Save Indonesia Coalition (KAMI) have demanded that the government, law enforcers as well as the House of Representatives utilize their strategic positions, roles and constitutional authority to save the country and its citizens, former Muhammadiyah chairman Din Syamsudin and former Indonesian Military (TNI) commander Gen. (ret.) Gatot Nurmantyo said. Din and Gatot are the cofounders of the coalition.

The former secretary of the state enterprises ministry, Said Didu, who is also a member of the coalition, said further that they were urging the government to step up its efforts in handling the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, including the allocation of sufficient budgets.

Moreover, the coalition has also urged the government and the House to prevent any deviations from Indonesia's founding principles, namely Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution.

The public figures include prominent government critics such as Rachmawati Soekarnoputri — the daughter of Indonesia's first president Sukarno — former coordinating maritime affairs minister Rizal Ramli and Islam Defenders Front (FPI) chairman Sobri Lubis.

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## **Grace Natalie appoints musician Giring Ganesha as acting PSI chairman**

*The Jakarta Post* (<https://tinyurl.com/y6e23z9s>); *Tirto* (<https://tinyurl.com/y5szfcgz>)

Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI) chairwoman Grace Natalie has appointed Giring Ganesha as the party's acting chairman while she pursues a master's degree in public policy and public affairs at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy in Singapore for one year

Grace said on Monday that Giring, who is also vocalist of pop band Nidji, represented "young and creative" people and was capable of leading the party.

The PSI has billed itself as a political party for young people and has a strong social media presence. It has declared its support for President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo's administration.

Giring reportedly intends on pursuing a presidential candidacy through the PSI for the 2024 election. Several "Giring for 2024 president" billboards were seen in Jakarta bearing his image. However, Grace declined to comment on the matter.

"Be patient. We'll explain it when the time is right."

Grace did not provide further details when asked why she did not appoint party secretary-general Raja Juli Antoni. Grace said Raja Juli had approved Giring's appointment.

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## BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS NEWS AND HEADLINES

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### **BPS: \$3.26b trade surplus in July amid deep contraction in exports, imports**

CNBC Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/y45xxwng>); Bisnis Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/y2pymzko>); Kontan, (<https://tinyurl.com/y2z2p39l>); Antara News, (<https://tinyurl.com/yyy7a6nw>)

Indonesia managed to record a US\$3.26 billion trade surplus in July, Statistics Indonesia announced. As a result, the country's accumulative trade surplus from January to July increased to \$8.75 billion. Statistics Indonesia (BPS) chairman Suhariyanto said exports in July went up 14.3 percent month-to-month (mtm) but shrank 9.9 percent year-on-year (yoy) to \$13.73 billion. Meanwhile, imports contracted 32.55 percent yoy or 2.73 mtm to \$10.47 billion.

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### **BI: Current account deficit narrowed in Q2**

CNBC Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/y4twng4q>); Bisnis Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/yyntbdx3>); CNN Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/y3qcy7jc>); Antara News, (<https://tinyurl.com/y38hlwal>)

Indonesia's current account deficit narrowed from US\$3.7 billion or 1.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in the first quarter to \$2.9 billion or 1.2 percent of GDP in the second quarter, Bank Indonesia announced. The reduction in the country's current account deficit was due to narrowing deficit in the primary income balance, specifically from \$7.9 billion to \$6.2 billion. Meanwhile, the country's financial account recorded capital inflow of \$10.5 billion, a reversal from \$3 billion capital outflow in the previous quarter.

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### **Transportation Ministry reroutes flights from Kertajati to Husein Sastranegara Airport**

Tempo, (<https://tinyurl.com/y5x4b3k5>)

The Transportation Ministry's air transportation director general Novie Riyanto revealed that the country's aircraft movements were only 48 percent of the pre-pandemic level as of August 18. To boost aircraft movements, the ministry has allowed commercial airlines to reroute their flights from Kertajati International Airport (BIJB) in Majalengka to Husein Sastranegara International Airport in

Bandung. The policy will be effective starting August 20. Two low-cost carriers, Lion Air and Citilink Indonesia, have confirmed their rerouting plan. Besides rerouting flights, the Transportation Ministry is also preparing Rp 370 billion (US\$25.1 million) in stimulus for the airline industry.

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### **Sarinah, SMESCO to bolster growth of Indonesian MSMEs**

CNN Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/y2kplsrj>); The Jakarta Post, (<https://tinyurl.com/y4c7tpel>)

The government aims to spur the growth of Indonesia's micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) by boosting the role of state-owned department store Sarinah and SMESCO, a government institution responsible for training and facilitating small and medium enterprises. State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) Minister Erick Thohir said on Monday, "SMESCO will focus on providing coaching to improve the MSMEs' products while Sarinah will focus on marketing those products." Erick also wants to eliminate the sense of competition between the two state-owned institutions by improving the synergy between them.

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