

Monday, Jul. 6th, 2020

GENERAL NEWS AND HEADLINES

State Palace will not invite public to Independence Day celebrations

CNN Indonesia (<https://tinyurl.com/y747vby3>)

Presidential Secretariat head Heru Budi Hartono has confirmed that the public will not be invited to attend Indonesia's 75th Independence Day ceremony held annually at the State Palace on Aug. 17. This was decided to comply with COVID-19 health protocols and to mitigate the gathering of large crowds.

"We may hold a virtual ceremony. We will continue to issue invitations to ministries and institutions, but they will only attend from their respective [homes or offices]. We will not invite the public as they'll understand that we must prioritize their health and the appropriate protocols," Heru said in a press conference held on Monday.

Only 50% of civil servants to return to offices: Minister

Tempo (<https://tinyurl.com/y9ctrvmu>)

Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform Minister Tjahjo Kumolo announced that in accordance with the "new normal" policy, 50 percent of civil servants will continue to work from home and rest will be allowed to return to their office.

"They will be divided into two shifts, depending on whether the PSBB [large-scale social restrictions] in that area has returned to normal or is still transitioning," Tjahjo said in a joint meeting with the House of Representatives Commission II on Monday.

According to Tjahjo, the decision was made during a meeting with the national COVID-19 task force and a number of local administrations. Tjahjo said President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo had encouraged civil servants remain productive but also safe.

Bali to welcome international tourists in September

The Jakarta Post (<https://tinyurl.com/yaop2smh>)

The Bali provincial administration is preparing to welcome foreign visitors in September, following months of international travel restrictions because of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis.

Bali Governor I Wayan Koster has announced a three-step plan to reopen tourist activities in compliance with “new normal” policies. The approach entails reopening the region’s popular tourist destinations to international visitors on Sept. 11.

Local tourists will be able to visit the island’s famous vacation spots starting on Jul. 9, Koster said.

Koster said on Thursday that he had closed tourist destinations in Bali until further notice through a regulation. However, the regulation did not stop several regions from reopening access to popular beaches, including Canggu Beach and Labuan Sait Beach in Badung regency, to foreign surfers.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS NEWS AND HEADLINES

Trade Ministry: IA-CEPA takes effect

The Jakarta Post, (<https://tinyurl.com/yb9erxle>); *Antara News*, (<https://tinyurl.com/yd6zvq7r>)

An Indonesia-Australia deal that eliminates most trade tariffs between the two nations and aims up to open up investment, took effect on Sunday, Indonesia’s trade ministry said. “COVID-19 has resulted in economic slowdown in nearly all countries. IA-CEPA momentum can be used to maintaining Indonesian trade and improve competitiveness,” Trade Minister Agus Suparmanto said in a statement. To allow for the implementation of the deal, the ministry has issued three regulations.

State-owned banks' stock prices rise following merger plan announcement

CNBC Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/yb2m5p8n>); Tempo, (<https://tinyurl.com/ycaetv5r>)

The stock prices of various state-owned banks increased in the morning session following an announcement from State-Owned Enterprise (SOEs) Minister Erick Thohir over his plan to merge state-owned sharia banks. The banks will have their own focus, and there will be a holding company for state-owned banks, Erick said. Bank Mandiri's stock price, for instance, increased by 1.5 percent to Rp 5,075 per share. Meanwhile, Bank Negara Indonesia (BNI)'s stock price rose from Rp 4,590 per share to Rp 4,650. PT BRISyariah, a subsidiary of Bank Rakyat Indonesia (BRI), recorded the highest increase at 20.13 percent to Rp 382 per share.

Inpex looks for new partner after Shell exits Masela

CNBC Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/y7vx8dmf>); CNN Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/y92y6leb>)

Japanese oil company Inpex Corporation, which owns 55 percent participating interest in the Masela block, are looking for a new partner to manage the project after Shell Upstream Overseas Ltd, a subsidiary of Dutch oil giant Royal Dutch Shell Plc., plans to divest its 35 percent participating interest in the block. Upstream Oil and Gas Special Regulatory Task Force (SKK Migas) deputy of operations Julius Wiratno confirmed the report, adding Shell has not officially exited yet. Julius said state-owned oil and gas holding company Pertamina has a real chance to participate in the project. It is also reported that that Shell expects to sell its participating interest for US\$1 billion.

Accommodation and hotels show sign of recovery

Bisnis Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/y724e9ee>)

Accommodation and hotel businesses have shown sign of recovery following the relaxation of large-scale social restrictions (PSBB). Their occupancy rate is rising, particularly for businesses located within driving distance from Jakarta, Indonesia Property Watch (IPW) executive director Ali Traghada said. For instance, hotel occupancy rate in popular resort areas like Bogor and Puncak, West Java has increased to 29.3 percent at the weekday and around 60 to 70 percent at the weekend. Likewise, hotel occupancy rate in Anyer-Carita, Banten has risen to 15.4 percent. In Bandung, the capital city of West Java, occupancy rate reached 22.9 percent. Moreover, hotel visitors tend to choose chain-branded hotels due to better perception of health safety.

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