

Tuesday, Mar. 17th, 2020

GENERAL NEWS AND HEADLINES

National emergency status extended over COVID-19

Katadata (<https://tinyurl.com/vxyo3u5>)

The National Disaster Mitigation Agency (BNPB) has decided to extend Indonesia's emergency period to address the coronavirus crisis until May 29. The extension was mandated through BNPB Decree No. 13.A/2020 signed on Feb. 29 by agency head Doni Monardo.

With the extension of the emergency status, all expenses incurred in handling the spread of the coronavirus disease COVID-19 are to be funded from the BNPB's prepared budget amounting to Rp 4 trillion (US\$263.7 million) yearly.

Previously, President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo formed a rapid response team led by Doni to plan and handle mitigation efforts of the disease.

MUI issues fatwa, implementing 'social distancing' for Islamic worship

The Jakarta Post (<https://tinyurl.com/tosrx2g>)

The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) has issued a fatwa on compulsory Muslim prayers specifically during the COVID-19 pandemic.

MUI Fatwa Council chair Hasanuddin said that Muslims in areas where COVID-19 had spread "uncontrollably" were "not permitted to perform Friday prayers in those areas until the situation returns to normal".

Muslims in areas "less affected" by COVID-19 could perform Friday prayers at mosques, but they were encouraged to minimize physical contact, bring their own prayer mats and wash their hands diligently. The MUI also prohibited Muslims who tested positive for COVID-19 from attending Friday prayers at mosques and instructed them to replace the obligatory Friday prayers with zuhr at home.

Bathing the bodies of the dead should be carried out by medical authorities in compliance with established protocols and with regard to Islamic law, while funeral prayers and burials should be conducted with precautions in order to avoid exposure to COVID-19.

NasDem encourages police involvement in regulating maritime security

Media Indonesia (<https://tinyurl.com/v2jmerb>)

House of Representatives Commission III deputy head Ahmad Sahroni of the NasDem Party questioned the National Police's lack of involvement in the process of drafting a government regulation (PP) on maritime security.

Ahmad recommended that Coordinating Political, Legal and Security Affairs Minister Mahfud MD, as well as Coordinating Maritime Affairs and Investment Minister Luhut Pandjaitan, who were given the authority by President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo to draft the regulation, involve the police force, given that the security of Indonesia's maritime sector would require constant cooperation between several relevant institutions in authorizing future investigations.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS NEWS AND HEADLINES

Rupiah depreciates to over Rp 15,000 per dollar as COVID-19 fears escalate

CNBC Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/w67h4l7>); *The Jakarta Post*, (<https://tinyurl.com/s7zohck>); *Detik*, (<https://tinyurl.com/ubffkdm>)

The rupiah fell to below the psychological level of Rp 15,000 per US dollar on Tuesday as the greenback strengthened amid investors' fears over the spread of COVID-19. Institute for Development of Economics and Finance (Indef) economist Bhima Yudhistira said that the US Federal Reserve's move to cut its interest rates to near zero and its quantitative easing policy affected the rupiah as market players panicked over the prospect of global economic growth.

Govt to reallocate ministerial budget for public health

CNN Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/rdxed3o>); *Tribun*, (<https://tinyurl.com/tlcgdob>)

Coordinating Political, Legal and Security Affairs Minister Mahfud MD has said that the government decided to reallocate the ministerial budget to provide relief to the public health sector as it deals with the COVID-19 outbreak. The decision was made during a Cabinet meeting yesterday. Last week, President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo said that Rp 40 trillion (US\$2.65 billion) was available to cushion the impact of COVID-19 on domestic consumption.

SKKMigas investigates fire at Camar Resource Canada oil well

Bisnis Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/v8xuhbt>)

The Upstream Oil and Gas Regulatory Special Task Force (SKKMigas) is investigating a fire at Camar Resource Canada's oil well at the Bawean Block. SKKMigas deputy of operation Julius Wiratno said that the fire had caused a loss of 500 barrels per day of production, and that the task force was currently looking for options to replace the lost production. The fire occurred on Feb. 29 and was successfully controlled at 2:30 p.m. on March 1.

AGO seizes 458 plots of land over Jiwasraya case

Bisnis Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/u4u9zap>); *Republika*, (<https://tinyurl.com/rvcgega>)

The Attorney General's Office (AGO) has stated that it seized 458 plots of land in Lebak, Banten, from Benny Tjokrosaputro over the Jiwasraya case. Besides the land in Lebak, the AGO also confiscated houses located in the Forrest Hill City and Millennium City residential complexes in Parung Panjang, Banten. The seized assets will be used to replace state losses of Rp 16.81 trillion (US\$1.11 billion) from the PT Jiwasraya corruption case.

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