

**Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

## GENERAL NEWS AND HEADLINES

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### **Jakarta prepares three schemes for reopening schools amid COVID-19 pandemic**

*CNN Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/y73jepws>); Tempo, (<https://tinyurl.com/yall7ung>)*

The Jakarta administration has prepared three schemes in its preparation for the upcoming 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The new school year itself is scheduled to begin on July 13, as confirmed by Jakarta Education Agency head Nahdiana during a teleconference meeting attended by Jakarta Governor Anies Baswedan along with his deputy Ahmad Riza Patria on Monday.

Nahdiana explained that under the first scheme, several schools would be allowed to fully reopen and have all of their students return to classrooms. Meanwhile, the second scheme stipulates that a number of schools will be allowed to have only half of their students returning to classrooms, while the remaining half continue learning at home. Lastly, under the third scheme, all schools will be only allowed to have half of their students returning to classrooms. The Jakarta administration, according to Nahdiana, will determine which scheme to apply based on each school's level of preparedness, as well as the situation of COVID-19 transmissions in the school's location.

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### **Govt ensures better services following re-increase of BPJS Kesehatan premiums**

*Kompas, (<https://tinyurl.com/yawj462n>); TribunNews, (<https://tinyurl.com/ycjrctuv>)*

The Healthcare and Social Security Agency (BPJS Kesehatan) will continue to improve its services and standards following the recent increase in its premiums, as affirmed by Executive Office of the President undersecretary on human development Abetnego Tarigan. President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo has raised the

premiums of BPJS Kesehatan yet again roughly two months after the Supreme Court annulled his earlier decision to increase the premiums.

Abetnego guaranteed that BPJS Kesehatan participants would no longer be refused admittance or treatment by hospitals as had reportedly often occurred in the past due to a number of prevalent issues such as information system mishaps and a limited number of available hospital beds. In addition to that, Abetnego also said that hospital administrations would be improved to end long queues for patients in hospitals.

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## **MUI, Muhammadiyah advise public to hold Idul Fitri prayers at home**

*The Jakarta Post*, (<https://tinyurl.com/yajitln5l>); *CNN Indonesia*, (<https://tinyurl.com/yca8wj2d>)

The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) and Muhammadiyah have advised Muslims in the country to avoid conducting Idul Fitri prayers in large congregations at mosques because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The MUI issued a fatwa on the matter on Wednesday, allowing Idul Fitri prayers at home in areas where COVID-19 has spread “uncontrollably”. However, Muslims in areas where the virus is largely controlled can hold Idul Fitri prayers as normal. “Idul Fitri prayers should be performed at home in congregations with family members or individuals, especially in areas where COVID-19 has spread uncontrollably,” MUI Fatwa Council chair Hasanuddin said in a statement on Wednesday.

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## **BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS NEWS AND HEADLINES**

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## **Indonesia records US\$350 million trade deficit in April**

*Kompas*, (<https://tinyurl.com/yahalvbs>); *Detik Finance*, (<https://tinyurl.com/yan7koby>, <https://tinyurl.com/y7zf9ajz>)

Statistics Indonesia (BPS) recorded a US\$350 million trade deficit in April. BPS head Suhariyanto said that both exports and imports had declined as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic that had lowered global demand. Exports fell 7.02 percent year-on-year (yoy), or 13.33 percent month-to-month (mtm), to \$12.19

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billion last month. Suhariyanto said there was a 6.55 percent decrease in oil and gas exports last month, with no crude oil exports taking place, while non-oil and gas exports declined 13.66 percent. Meanwhile, imports declined 18.58 percent yoy, or 6.1 percent mtm, to \$12.54 billion. Suhariyanto warned that a decline in the country's imports, which mainly consist of raw materials and capital goods, could adversely impact the manufacturing, trade and investment sectors.

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### **Indonesia's foreign debt reaches US\$389 billion in first quarter**

CNBC Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/yb5zwngn>); Bisnis Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/ycpebmnl>); CNN Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/y737mblp>)

Bank Indonesia recorded a 0.5 percent year-on-year (yoy) increase in foreign debt to Rp 5.8 quadrillion (US\$389 billion), lower than the 7.8 percent yoy growth in the previous quarter. The foreign debt growth slowdown was mainly caused by capital outflow in the government debt papers (SBN) market and payment of maturing SBN, which contracted government foreign debt by 3.6 percent yoy to \$181 billion, a stark contrast to the 9.1 percent yoy growth in the last quarter. Meanwhile, private sector foreign debt grew 4.5 percent yoy to \$206 billion, lower than the previous quarter's 6.6 percent yoy growth. Furthermore, the country's foreign debt to gross domestic product (GDP) ratio fell to 34.5 percent in the first quarter this year from 36.2 percent in the previous quarter.

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### **KPPU to investigate alleged cartel practice in fuel pricing**

Kontan, (<https://tinyurl.com/y93fzk3s>); Bisnis Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/y72458w6>)

The Business Competition Supervisory Commission (KPPU) is investigating five players over an allegation of non-subsidized fuel price-fixing that violates Law No. 5/1999. The global oil price took a nosedive last month, but the fuel retail price in the country remains unchanged. KPPU spokesman Guntur Saragih said the commission had obtained one piece of evidence to proceed with the investigation.

Energy and Mineral Resources Ministerial Decree No. 62.K/12/MEM/2020, which came into effect on March 1, stipulates a fuel retail price formula that eliminates the minimum margin component. However, fuel retail prices has been stagnant since March, with RON98 fuel sold at Rp 9,850 (66 US cents), RON95 fuel at Rp 9,000 and RON90 fuel at Rp 7,650. Guntur said the KPPU would keep an eye on the oligopolistic structure of the fuel sector, since having a limited number of players in the sector increases the potential for violations of business competition

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regulations. The KPPU will also observe whether the stagnant prices were caused by Pertamina's price leadership.

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### **Airy to close permanently due to pandemic**

CNBC Indonesia, (<https://tinyurl.com/y7ujf5um>); Kontan, (<https://tinyurl.com/ya2bg2sr>)

Homegrown hotel aggregator start-up Airy Rooms will cease all operations by the end of May as the pandemic hits the tourism industry hard. Airy Rooms CEO Louis Alfonso Kodatie said the permanent suspension of all Airy's operational activities was a difficult decision, but one the management had no option but to take. Over the past few months, Airy has experienced a significant decline in sales and received many refund requests from customers, which has deteriorated Airy's business. Airy is currently in the process of giving refunds for all types of transactions and accommodation booked after May 31 and terminating partnerships with lodging owners.

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