

Wednesday, Sept. 23th, 2020

GENERAL NEWS AND HEADLINES

Food estate project to also be developed in South Sumatra, NTT, Papua

Kompas (<https://tinyurl.com/y48eqyb8>)

President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo said the government planned to develop food estate projects in a number of additional areas.

"There is a plan that we will [develop more food estate projects] after this. Work has already begun in the field for other provinces, namely Papua, East Nusa Tenggara and South Sumatra," said Jokowi.

The government, however, will prioritize the food estate project in Kapuas and Pulau Pisau regencies, Central Kalimantan and Humbang Hasundutan regency in North Sumatra.

The food estate project is considered important as a national food reserve, especially in anticipation of climate change and to reduce Indonesia's dependence on food imports.

Candidate ballot number draws to be postponed if health protocols violated

CNN Indonesia (<https://tinyurl.com/y6zfu6zb>)

Elections Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) member Fritz Edward Siregar said the candidate ballot draws for the regional elections would be postponed if there were any health protocol violations. The draw will determine the order of candidate pair names on the ballot paper on voting day.

"The ballot draw, through plenary meetings, will still take place with limited capacity. If [health protocols] are violated, then the draw will be postponed," Fritz said on Wednesday.

The ballot draw is scheduled to take place on Thursday, Sept. 24. The final candidate list will be announced by the Regional Elections Commission (KPUD) through its website and official letters to respective candidates.

No plans to redefine COVID-19 death: Task force

The Jakarta Post (<https://tinyurl.com/y3h5ka89>)

The national COVID-19 task force has dismissed a proposal to redefine what constitutes a COVID-19 fatality, after it was suggested that deaths among people with comorbidities should be categorized separately in the official tally.

Previously, East Java Governor Khofifah Indar Parawansa had suggested to Health Minister Terawan Agus Putranto that COVID-19 deaths among patients with comorbidities – the simultaneous presence of two chronic diseases or conditions in a patient – should be categorized differently to deaths among patients without comorbidities in the death toll.

“As of now, the government has no plans to make the change proposed by the East Java governor,” task force spokesperson Wiku Adisasmito said in a statement issued on Tuesday.

He added that the government followed the World Health Organization’s guidelines in tallying COVID-19 deaths, which is to count all deaths of people with confirmed or probable cases of coronavirus infection, with exceptions made for unrelated causes of deaths, such as traffic accidents.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS NEWS AND HEADLINES

AISI predicts 45 percent drop in motorcycle sales this year

Kontan (<https://tinyurl.com/y6orvrlw>); *Kompas* (<https://tinyurl.com/yxhkaark>)

The Indonesian Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (AISI) predicts a 45 percent drop in motorcycle sales this year. AISI trade head Sigit Kumala explained that motorcycle sales would only reach 3.6 million to 3.7 million units this year, far below last year’s 6.4 million. Motorcycle sales started to drop in April by 78 percent month-to-month (mtm) to 123,782 units. Motorcycle sales dropped further in May by 82 percent mtm to 21,851 units, before recovered in June to 167,992 units. “The increase continued to July at 73 percent mtm to 292,000 units,” Sigit said.

Cumulative motorcycle sales from January to July amounted to only 2.1 million units, he added.

Erick supports Antam's bid to acquire Wabu Block

CNBC Indonesia (<https://tinyurl.com/y5t69so3>); Kontan (<https://tinyurl.com/y6fpu7mv>)

State-Owned Enterprises Minister Erick Thohir has sent a letter to Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Arifin Tasrif, urging him to allow state-owned metal miner PT Aneka Tambang (Antam) to acquire the Wabu Block in Papua. Previously, the Wabu Block was under the management of gold and copper mining firm PT Freeport Indonesia. Freeport returned the block to the government in 2015 as parts of its obligation to reduce its mining area. State-owned mining holding company MIND ID spokesperson Rendi Witular said the company and Antam were ready to exploit the block. Wabu Block has a potential of 4.3 million ton of copper with gold content of 2.47 gram per ton. The block's mineral reserves are valued at US\$14 billion.

Sri Mulyani signals rejection of zero-percent car tax proposal

CNN Indonesia (<https://tinyurl.com/y35jlewa>)

Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati appears to have signaled a rejection of a proposal supported by the Industry Ministry to slash the car tax to zero. "We will look into it, but we already have a lot of programs to accelerate the national economic recovery," Sri Mulyani said. Previously, Industry Minister Agus Gumiwang Kartasasmita proposed an exemption from car tax for new cars in an effort to stimulate growth in the automotive sector amid the pandemic. He claimed the proposal would strengthen purchasing power.

French investors' appetite for Indonesia's energy remains high amid pandemic

The Jakarta Post (<https://tinyurl.com/y26m5f4z>)

Bilateral cooperation between Indonesia and France remains strong amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The two countries will finalize several bilateral cooperation projects in the energy sector, Indonesian Ambassador to France Arrmanatha Nasir says. Arrmanatha said in a statement that the embassy with the French Business Confederation (MEDEF) had held an investor gathering for the energy sector in Indonesia on Tuesday. Sixty French companies participated in the virtual forum, at which Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Arifin Tasrif was the guest

speaker. "In the question and answer session, prospective French investors asked the minister many things, especially about Indonesia's future plans in renewable energy," he said.

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