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## Jokowi and South African President Zuma to Revive Spirit of Asian-African Conference

President Joko Widodo and South African President Jacob Zuma at the Merdeka Palace on Wednesday (08/03). (Antara Photo/Krishadiyanto)

By : Novy Lumanaw & Eko Prasetyo | on 11:23 AM March 09, 2017  
Category : News, Politics, Featured, Foreign Affairs

**Jakarta.** President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo told South African President Jacob Zuma in a meeting at the Merdeka Palace in Central Jakarta on Wednesday (08/03) that strengthening relationship with South Africa will be Indonesia's number one foreign policy priority in the African continent.

"South Africa will be the focus of Indonesia's foreign policy in Africa," Jokowi said, adding that the relationship between the two countries will be based on the principles of the South-South Cooperation, or SSC, and economic partnership.

Policymakers and academics use the term SSC to describe the exchange of resources, technology and knowledge between developing countries.

The milestone for SSC was placed during the Asian-African Conference, which took place in Bandung, West Java, in 1955.

Leaders of South American and African countries at that time hoped the cooperation would bring a new world order and counter the existing Western dominance socially, economically and politically.

Reviving SSC principles, according to Jokowi, will boost Indonesia's trade partnerships with African countries.

Jokowi also congratulated Zuma on South Africa's selection as chair the Indian Ocean Rim Association, or IORA, for 2017-2019.

Several members of Jokowi's cabinet attended the meeting with the South African president, including Chief Economy Minister Darmin Nasution, Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, Maritime and Fishery Minister Susi Pudjiastuti, Energy Minister Ignasius Jonan, Trade Minister Enggartiasto Lukita, State Secretary Pratikno and Cabinet Secretary Pramono Anung.

President Zuma was accompanied by International Relations Minister Maite Nkoana Mashabane, Environmental Minister Edna Molewa, Agriculture Minister Senzeni Zokwana and South African Ambassador to Indonesia Pakamisa Augustine Sifuba.

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# Gov't Pushes Various Development Programs to Close Inequality Gap

The government has continued to try to close the country's wealth gap through various economic programs in a bid to push prosperity for the people, an APEC Business Advisory Council, or ABAC, official said on Thursday (15/02). (Photo courtesy of ABAC Indonesia)

By : Sarah Yuniarni | on 10:48 PM February 15, 2018  
Category : News, Asia-Pacific, Sustainability, Human Rights, Maritime

**Jakarta.** The government has continued to try to close the country's wealth gap through various economic programs in a bid to push prosperity for all, an APEC Business Advisory Council, or ABAC, official said on Thursday (15/02).

The issue was brought up by President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo during the ABAC dialogue with regional leaders at the 25th APEC Summit in Da Nang, Vietnam, said Anindya Bakrie, the president of ABAC Indonesia.

Leaders of the Asia-Pacific Economic Partnership (APEC) established ABAC in 1995.

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# Antigrift Investigators Arrest 14 Individuals in Central Lampung Bribery Case

Investigators with the Corruption Eradication Commission, or KPK, arrested 14 people, who included government officials, civil servants, provincial lawmakers and a businessman, in Jakarta and Lampung late Wednesday (14/02) night on bribery charges, a spokesman of the antigrift agency said.(ANTARA Photo/Aprillio Akbar)

By : Fana Suparman and Telly Nathalia | on 8:50 PM February 15, 2018  
Category : News, Corruption

**Jakarta.** Investigators with the Corruption Eradication Commission, or KPK, arrested 14 people, who included government officials, civil servants, provincial lawmakers and a businessman, in Jakarta and Lampung late Wednesday (14/02) night on bribery charges, a spokesman of the antigrift agency said.

Some of the individuals were caught red-handed with cash totaling Rp 1 billion (\$73,826) that was placed in a cartoon box, KPK spokesperson Febri Diansyah said, as reported by Suara Pembaruan.

Investigators believe the cash was provided by the Central Lampung district government as a gift to local lawmakers in an effort to obtain approval to qualify for loans from state-owned financing institutions.

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## Court Indicts Cleric Accused of Masterminding Attacks

An Indonesian court indicted radical Islamic cleric Aman Abdurrahman on Thursday (15/02) over allegations he masterminded from his jail cell a series of attacks in the Muslim-majority nation, including a deadly 2016 gun and suicide bomb assault in Jakarta. (Reuters Photo/Beawiharta)

By : Kanupriya Kapoor | on 8:13 PM February 15, 2018  
Category : News, Religion

**Jakarta.** An Indonesian court indicted radical Islamic cleric Aman Abdurrahman on Thursday (15/02) over allegations he masterminded from his jail cell a series of attacks in the Muslim-majority nation, including a deadly 2016 gun and suicide bomb assault in Jakarta.

Abdurrahman arrived in a Jakarta courtroom under police escort and at least a dozen heavily armed officers stood guard outside as prosecutors read out allegations against him.

According to the indictment document, he was on trial for "planning and/or mobilizing others to carry out terrorist acts ... to create an atmosphere of terror among the public."

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## Civil Societies Join Forces Against Amended MD3 Law

Civil societies are joining forces against a recent amendment to the 2014 Legislative Law, known locally as the MD3 Law, passed this week by the House of Representatives, which many fear may jeopardize free speech and democracy in Southeast Asia's largest economy. (Antara Foto/Wahyu Putro)

By : JG | on 5:56 PM February 15, 2018  
Category : News, Featured, Human Rights, National, Politics & Law

**Jakarta.** Civil societies are joining forces against a recent amendment to the 2014 Legislative Law, known locally as the MD3 Law, passed this week by the House of Representatives, which many fear may jeopardize free speech and democracy in Southeast Asia's largest economy.

"Through the MD3 Law, parliament has amassed more power as a legislative body ... even surpassing the power of law enforcement authorities," Setara Institute chairman Hendarli said in a statement issued on Thursday (15/02).

On Monday, the House passed an amendment to the MD3 Law, which grants the legislative body's ethics council (MKD) the power to press charges against those critical of the parliament itself as well as its members.

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## VP Kalla to Attend Kabul Process Meeting

*Vice President Jusuf Kalla is scheduled to attend a meeting of the Kabul Process in Afghanistan on Feb. 28. (Antara Photo)*

**By :** Sheany | on 3:40 PM February 15, 2018  
**Category :** News, Foreign Affairs

**Jakarta.** Indonesian Vice President Jusuf Kalla is scheduled to attend a meeting of the Kabul Process in Afghanistan on Feb. 28.

"The president of Afghanistan has invited the vice president to attend the Kabul Process as a guest of honor, and has been requested to share Indonesia's experiences [in conflict resolution] during the event," Arief Rachman, Indonesia's ambassador to Afghanistan, told reporters in Jakarta on Wednesday (14/02).

The Kabul Process, which was first held in June 2017, is an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process aimed at establishing peace, security and stability in the country after decades of violence.

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## Ex-Student Arrested After 17 Shot Dead at Florida High School

Rescue workers prepare to transport a victim on a stretcher near Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School following a shooting incident in Parkland, Florida, U.S. February 14, 2018 in this still image taken from a video. (Reuters Photo/WSVN.com)

By : **Bernie Woodall** | on 3:36 PM February 15, 2018  
 Category : International, Featured, News

**Parkland, Florida.** A 19-year-old gunman returning to a Florida high school where he had once been expelled opened fire with an assault rifle on Wednesday (14/02), killing 17 people and wounding more than a dozen others before he was arrested, authorities said.

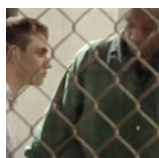
The shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, a placid, middle-class community about 45 miles (72 km) north of Miami, ranked as the second-deadliest act of gun violence ever on a US public school campus.

The attack began shortly before the school's dismissal.

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## Disused WW2 Airfield in West Papua Now Ready for Commercial Flights

Werur Airport in Tabrauw, West Papua. (Screengrab from YouTube/Raja Video Id)

By : Amal Ganesh | on 10:56 AM February 15, 2018  
 Category : News, Transportation

**Jakarta.** Werur Airport in Tabrauw, West Papua — formerly a disused World War II airfield — has opened again for business after six years of redevelopment, Indonesia's Transportation Ministry said in a statement on Wednesday (14/02).

The airport, now with a 1,400-meter runway, used to be a military airfield for both the Japanese and the Allies during World War II.

The government had been planning to develop the airfield into a commercial airport since 2012, but construction work only began in 2015 after President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo started his initiative to improve access to Indonesia's underdeveloped regions.

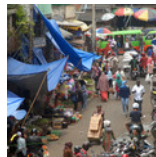
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## Dodgy Donations Can Get Nominees Disqualified in 2018 Elections

Officials from Indonesia's Election Supervisory Board (Bawaslu) and Financial Transactions Report and Analysis Center (PPATK) signed an agreement on Tuesday (13/02) to work together to monitor campaign funding for the 2018 regional elections in June. (Antara Photo/Dhemas Reviyanto)

By : Yustinus Paat and Telly Nathalia | on 9:52 AM February 15, 2018  
Category : News, Crime, Politics, Corruption

**Jakarta.** Indonesia's Election Supervisory Board, or Bawaslu, issued a statement on Tuesday (13/02) warning mayoral, district head and governor nominees in June's **simultaneous regional elections** and their party backers and campaign teams that they will face disqualification if they get their campaign funding from illegal sources, including graft.

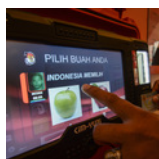
"If a candidate gets his or her [campaign] donation from a criminal activity, including corruption, or if the funding sources are unclear, he or she can be disqualified by the KPU [General Elections Commission] based on our recommendations," Bawaslu commissioner Fritz Siregar said as reported by BeritaSatu.com.

The commissioner said Indonesia's election laws forbid political parties from receiving donations from foreign sources — government, non-government or individual — and locally from the government, state-owned companies or unidentified donators.

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## Female Sumatran Elephant Shot to Death Inside Lampung Conservation Park

The remains of a female Sumatran elephant was found in Lampung's Way Kambas National Park on Monday (12/02). The body was riddled with bullets. (Photo courtesy of the Environment and Forestry Ministry's Instagram)

By : Telly Nathalia | on 9:16 AM February 15, 2018  
 Category : News, Crime, Environment, Featured

**Jakarta.** Rangers at the Way Kambas National Park and Rhino Protection Unit in Lampung found the remains of a female elephant on Monday (12/02) near the Kuala Penet resort inside the conservation area, Indonesia's Environment and Forestry Ministry said in a statement on Wednesday.

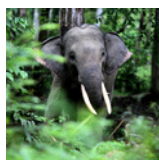
Five bullet wounds were found in the animal that had been dead for some days. It was missing some of its body parts, including the teeth, tusks and trunk.

A team of veterinarians had conducted a post mortem examination on the rare animal. The rangers have asked for help from the local police to find the elephant killers.

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# Maldives Tries to Fight Off Travel Alerts as Tourists Stay Away

Tourists have been cancelling hundreds of hotel bookings in Maldives every day since the imposition of a state of emergency last week, tour operators say, despite government assurances things are normal in the resort islands, far from the capital. (Reuters Photo/Stringer)

By : Mohamed Junayd | on 9:00 PM February 15, 2018  
Category : International, Asia-Pacific

**Male.** Tourists have been cancelling hundreds of hotel bookings in Maldives every day since the imposition of a state of emergency last week, tour operators say, despite government assurances things are normal in the resort islands, far from the capital.



China, India, the United States and Britain issued travel warnings after President Abdulla Yameen imposed the emergency and arrested judges who had ordered him to free jailed opposition leaders.

"We have had about 50-60 room cancellations per day and the number is consistent since it started. This is the same for all of our properties in the country," said a spokesman for Paradise Island Resort-Villa Group which runs the 282-room hotel, a 20-minute ride by speedboat from Male where the turmoil is centered.

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## Sime Darby's Africa Ambitions Stall Pending New Deforestation Rules

*When Malaysia's biggest plantation company Sime Darby leased 220,000 hectares of lush forest in northwest Liberia in 2009, executives said they had found a much needed new frontier in global palm oil development. (Reuters Photo/Thierry Gouegnon)*

By : Edward McAllister and Emily Chow | on 8:00 PM February 15, 2018  
 Category : International, Asia-Pacific

**Gbah, Liberia/Kuala Lumpur.** When Malaysia's biggest plantation company Sime Darby leased 220,000 hectares of lush forest in northwest Liberia in 2009, executives said they had found a much needed new frontier in global palm oil development.

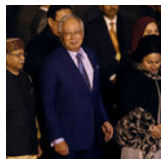
Undulating hills, a tropical climate and plenty of untouched land made the West African country's interior ideal for palm oil growers running out of room in Southeast Asia.

Nine years later, however, Sime Darby Plantation has planted only 10,000 hectares in Liberia and has not laid a seed in two years, stalled by uncertainties over new environmental standards.

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## Ex-Student Arrested After 17 Shot Dead at Florida High School

Rescue workers prepare to transport a victim on a stretcher near Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School following a shooting incident in Parkland, Florida, U.S. February 14, 2018 in this still image taken from a video. (Reuters Photo/WSVN.com)

By : **Bernie Woodall** | on 3:36 PM February 15, 2018  
 Category : International, Featured, News

**Parkland, Florida.** A 19-year-old gunman returning to a Florida high school where he had once been expelled opened fire with an assault rifle on Wednesday (14/02), killing 17 people and wounding more than a dozen others before he was arrested, authorities said.

The shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, a placid, middle-class community about 45 miles (72 km) north of Miami, ranked as the second-deadliest act of gun violence ever on a US public school campus.

The attack began shortly before the school's dismissal.

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## Asia's Soaring Gas Demand Opens Window for New LNG Projects

*Soaring gas demand from China, India and Southeast Asia is sucking up an LNG supply glut previously expected to last for years, opening opportunity for new production from East Africa to North America that had been deemed part of the overhang. (Reuters Photo/Stringer)*

By : Jessica Jaganathan and Henning Gloystein | on 9:00 AM February 15, 2018  
 Category : International, Asia-Pacific

**Nusa Dua, Indonesia/Singapore.** Soaring gas demand from China, India and Southeast Asia is sucking up an LNG supply glut previously expected to last for years, opening opportunity for new production from East Africa to North America that had been deemed part of the overhang.

Trade flows in Eikon show global liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports have risen 40 percent since 2015, to almost 40 billion cubic meters (bcm) a month. Growth accelerated in 2017, with imports up by a fifth, largely due to China, but also South Korea and Japan.

Asia's LNG market has been glutted since 2015, following massive development that began in the early 2000s. But a gasification program in China last year and strong economic growth across Asia pushed up demand, contributing -- along with a cold winter -- to a doubling of LNG spot prices from mid-2017.

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## Philippines, China to Work Out How to Tap Oil, Gas That Both Sides Claim

*The Philippines and China have agreed to set up a special panel to work out how they can jointly explore oil and gas in part of the South China Sea that both sides lay claim without having to address the explosive issue of sovereignty. (Reuters Photo/China Newsphoto)*

**By : Manuel Mogato** | on 8:00 AM February 15, 2018  
 Category : International, Asia-Pacific

**Manila.** The Philippines and China have agreed to set up a special panel to work out how they can jointly explore oil and gas in part of the South China Sea that both sides lay claim without having to address the explosive issue of sovereignty.

China claims most of the South China Sea, where \$3 billion in sea-borne trade pass every year, and has competing claims in various parts of it with Brunei, Malaysia, Taiwan, Vietnam and the Philippines.

"It's just the start of a process," Philippine ambassador to China, Chito Sta. Romana, told reporters late on Tuesday (13/02) after diplomats from both sides met for the second time under a bilateral mechanism aimed at defusing longstanding maritime tensions.

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