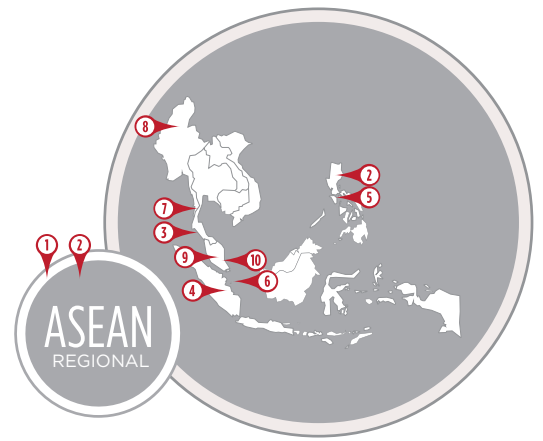
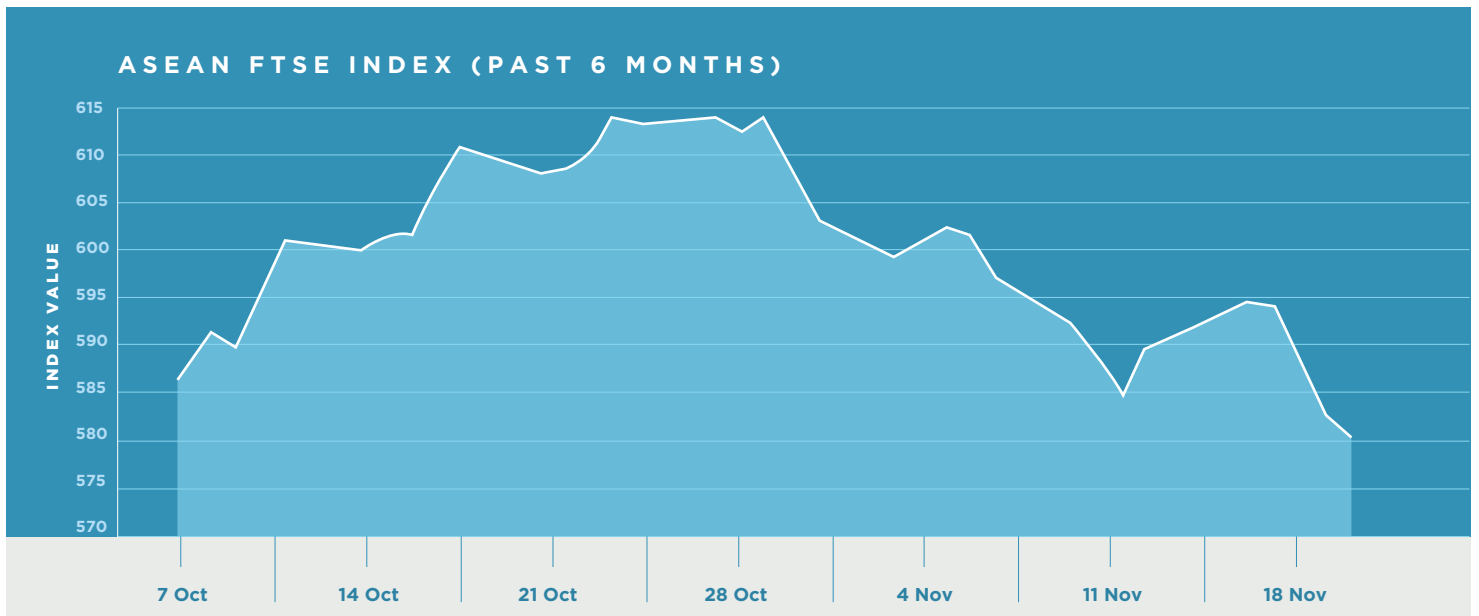


# CARI CAPTURES



## 01 ASEAN MEMBERS TO LAUNCH JOINT INDEX



**Seven Asean stock markets will jointly launch their own Asean/FTSE Index, with 180 constituents aimed at drawing both regional and global investors to increase their exposure to the region's markets.**

▶ President of the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET), Charamporn Jotikasthira, on Monday said that the FTSE/Asean Index contract will be signed in Bali, Indonesia, late this week, during a meeting of the presidents of seven stock exchanges in Asean

▶ Said stock exchange will include the Indonesia Stock Exchange (IDX), Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), Singapore Exchange (SGX), Bursa Malaysia (KLSE), Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET), Ho Chi Minh City Stock Exchange (HOSE) and Hanoi Stock Exchange (HNX)

▶ The combined market capitalisation of Asean exchanges amounted to US\$2 trillion from more than 3,600 listed firms at the end of 2012, whilst the 30 largest market-cap stocks in the SET50 index will be in the Asean/FTSE Index

# 02 AMERICA ADDRESSES CHINESE GUNBOAT DIPLOMACY



## OCCUPATION IN THE KALAYAAN GROUP OF ISLANDS



**The US gave a strong warning to China not to escalate territorial tensions in the Asia-Pacific region if it doesn't want to face American retaliation; in his statement, a US official used sanctions on Russia over Crimea's accession as an example.**

- ▶ In the most recent developments in the South China Sea, the Chinese military denied a supposed standoff between the Filipino garrison on the BRP Sierra Madre and Chinese coast guards at the disputed Ayungin Shoal off Palawan
- ▶ "It is not true. Things are normal there now," said Lt. Col. Ramon Zagala, public affairs chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines; Zagala said at least two Chinese Coast Guard vessels were sighted in the vicinity of Ayungin Shoal, which promptly left the scene
- ▶ The Philippines and China are locked in a territorial dispute over Ayungin

Shoal, a rich fishing ground with atolls and reefs believed to be sitting atop vast oil and gas reserves; the Ayungin Shoal is 200 kilometres from Palawan, and 1,100 kilometres from the nearest Chinese landmass, however, China insists that it is part of its territory

- ▶ China warned Tuesday that the Philippines has "seriously damaged" bilateral ties by asking the United Nations to rule in their favour in a maritime dispute; Manila at the weekend asked a UN tribunal to declare Beijing's claims over most of the strategically significant South China Sea illegal, submitting nearly 4,000 pages of evidence to back its case

[ChannelNewsAsia \(14 Mar 2014\)](#)

# 03 THAILAND INFLATION ACCELERATES SLIGHTLY



**Thailand's consumer-price index continued rising, hitting a nine-month high in March on the back of higher food prices.**

- ▶ The CPI was up 2.11% from a year earlier, accelerating slightly from February's 1.96% pace, according to the Thai Commerce Minister
- ▶ "Inflation accelerated in March due to a rise in prices of such items as meat and vegetables as well as energy", said Amparwon Pichalai, advisor to the Commerce Ministry. "This is in line with the current economic conditions in Thailand and should be of some help in boosting the economy", he added.
- ▶ Core CPI, which excludes volatile energy and food prices, was up 1.31% from a year earlier, which is within the Bank of Thailand's target range of 0.5% to 3.0% and a slight acceleration from February's pace of 1.22%
- ▶ The Bank of Thailand forecasts the country's economy will grow 2.7% in 2014, compared with 2.9% in 2013. The projected deceleration was blamed on softer domestic demand and delays in government spending caused by months of political unrest.
- ▶ On average, economists polled by The Wall Street Journal forecast March CPI would be up 2.165% from a year earlier and up 0.28% from the month before, while core CPI would be up 1.365% and 0.10%, respectively

[WSJ \(1 Apr 2014\)](#)

# 04 TOUGH ECONOMY RECOVERY PATH FOR INDONESIA



**According to the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) flagship annual publication, Asian Development Outlook 2014, Indonesia's growth is going to plunge slightly to 5.7 percent in 2014 amid the legislative election and presidential election that is going to be held in April and July respectively.**

- ▶ However, private consumption is expected to stay strong throughout the forecasted period due to easing inflation and election-related spending in the first half of 2014 as well as a recovery of investment next year once the elected government clarifies its economic policies
- ▶ Meanwhile, ADB also added that Indonesia might be affected negatively by the economic slowdown in China as China, Indonesia's top export destination experienced a narrow gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 7.7 percent in 2013, the lowest for 12 years
- ▶ Indonesia's non-oil and gas exports to China dropped approximately by 13 percent to US\$ 1.59 billion in February 2014 and China has accounted for 14.29 percent of Indonesian total exports during the first two months of 2014
- ▶ The major concern for Indonesia this year are reducing current-account deficit and Bank Indonesia believes that this level should be between 2 and 2.5 percent of Indonesia's GDP; ADB's deputy country director also pointed out that fiscal reforms alone are insufficient to narrow the current-account deficit as the impact is relatively short and thus the government should also carries out structural reforms to achieve sustained gains in productivity and competitiveness

[Jakarta Post \(1 Apr 2014\)](#)

## 05 ADB: FILIPINO ECONOMY IS EXPECTED TO REMAIN ROBUST



PHILIPPINES

In the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) annual economic publication **Asian Development Outlook 2014**, the Philippine economy is likely to grow by 6.4 percent in 2014 and 6.7 percent in 2015.

- ▶ The Philippines will sustain its strong growth and continue delivering well above its recent average growth rate for year 2014 which is largely due to an improving business climate and rising investment; Meanwhile, Filipino investment also expected to enjoy growth such as positive business sentiment and increasing foreign direct investment underpinned by the multiple investment grade sovereign credit ratings and gains in global competitiveness during last year
- ▶ Apart from that, private consumption is also expected to benefit from remittance inflows and positive consumer sentiment this year; likewise, manufacturing and construction sectors will improve due to strong domestic demand and improvement in exports as well as government's expansion of its 2014 infrastructure budget
- ▶ The Filipino service sector is also expected to grow this year as it is supported by a boom of the business process outsourcing industry and tourism sector
- ▶ Nevertheless, the biggest challenge for the Philippines in 2014 might be the search for ways to turn this strong performance into employment opportunities in order to further reduce poverty and support inclusive growth

[Philippine Star \(1 April 2014\)](#)

## 07 TENSIONS ESCALATE IN BANGKOK



THAILAND

**A Thai anti-government protester was shot dead and four were wounded as they were ambushed by gunmen as they left the Chaeng Wattana protest site.**

- ▶ The supporters of the Network for Students and People for Reform of Thailand (NSPRT) and the People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) were returning from the rally site situated close to the government complex when they were met with fire from unknown assailants
- ▶ The chief of the NSPRT, Nasser Yeema said that the gunmen were likely targeting a truck carrying protesters and security guards which were passing through that area at 2.30pm.
- ▶ Additionally, a 52-year old guard identified as Wasant Khamwong was shot in the head and died shortly after at Ramathibodi Hospital while four protesters travelling in the bus were wounded but are recovering
- ▶ Thailand has been going through a series of grenade attacks and shootings since last year which have specifically targeted protesters and has caused approximately 24 deaths and hundreds wounded; Protesters want Thailand's caretaker, Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra to step down to make way for an unelected interim government to oversee reforms

[Jakarta Post \(1 April 2014\)](#)  
[Jakarta Post \(2 April 2014\)](#)

## 06 HOUSING MARKET PRICES SLIDE IN SINGAPORE

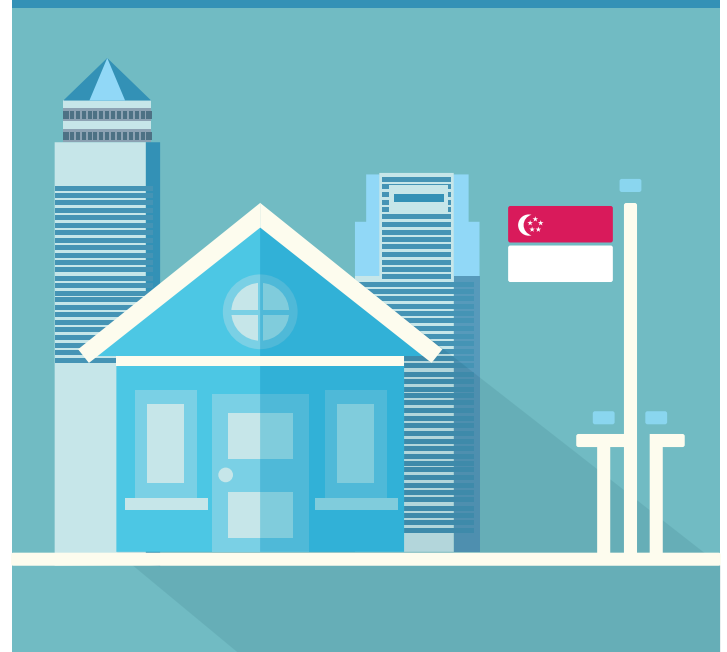
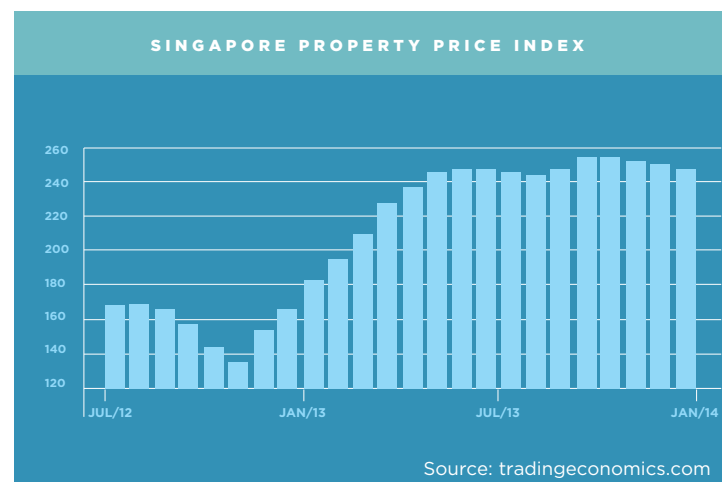


SINGAPORE

**Singapore's first-quarter home prices slid by 1.3% for a second consecutive quarter as tighter mortgages cooled demand in Asia's second-most expensive housing market.**

- ▶ Home prices increased by 1.1 percent in 2013, lower than the 2.8 percent gain in 2012 and the smallest annual increase since 2008 when prices slid 4.7 percent; apartment prices fell 1.3 percent in prime districts in the first quarter after sliding 2.1 percent in the previous three months, the URA data showed
- ▶ Meanwhile, those in the suburbs slid 0.3 percent, compared with a 1 percent decline in the previous quarter, according to the data. Prices in areas near prime districts fell 2.8 percent, compared with the 0.4 percent increase in the previous quarter, the data showed.
- ▶ The latest price drop "will set the tone for 2014," said Donald Han, managing director of Chesterton Singapore Pte. "Prices in prime areas could fall more than suburban areas as prime districts are primarily resale apartments so there is no control over pricing whereas the suburbs have new projects where prices can be controlled by developers."

[The Edge \(1 Apr 2014\)](#)  
[Blomberg \(1 Apr 2014\)](#)



## 08 MYANMAR MONITOR

### POLITICS

- ▶ The Myanmar government imposed an overnight curfew on a township on the outskirts of Yangon following sectarian clash. Attacks on houses forced local police to intervene which led to the injury of one policeman.

[Bernama \(5 April 2014\)](#)

### ECONOMY

- ▶ Surging credit growth in the banking sector, rising investments and continued economic reform last year resulted in economic growth at 7.5% for the 2013 fiscal year, according to the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The ADB highlighted a 59.5% increase in capital goods imports to US\$5.8 billion last year, as well as resurgence for the agriculture sector.

[The Myanmar Times \(2 April 2014\)](#)

- ▶ A multi-donor trust fund established by the World Bank, the UK's Department for International Development and the Australian government will provide US\$55 million worth of finance to support the modernisation of Myanmar's public financial management systems.

[Mizzima \(3 April 2014\)](#)

- ▶ Pan Pacific Hotels Group has announced the opening of PARKROYAL, the first international hotel in the Myanmar capital Naypyidaw. The launch will also make PARKROYAL the first international hotel brand in Myanmar with presence in two major cities.

[Breaking Travel News \(6 April 2014\)](#)

- ▶ Sand dredged from a river estuary in southeast Myanmar for sale to Singapore is causing causing landslides and river erosion, a report said. Several ASEAN countries, including Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam, have banned the export of sand to Singapore in recent years because of environmental damage.

[The Irrawaddy \(5 April 2014\)](#)

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

- ▶ The 18th meeting of the ASEAN finance ministers opened in Naypyidaw on 5 April to discuss the regional and global economic outlook, a post-2015 vision for the ASEAN Economic Community and challenges in banking sector reforms. The ministers agreed to enhance finance cooperation in support of economic integration of the AEC in 2015.

[Global Post \(5 April 2014\)](#)

## 09 MH370 TRAGEDY: A WEEK TO GO BEFORE BLACK BOX SIGNAL VANISHES



**It has been 24 days since Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 disappeared and the authorities now have about a week to find the physical evidence, especially the 'black box' as signals from the recorder will fade out soon.**

- ▶ The black box which has been emitting signals since the flight left Kuala Lumpur International Airport is powered by batteries that will die out after thirty days, which will make it difficult to trace, cause the ongoing search operation to be significantly more difficult
- ▶ The multi-national search operation has identified an area of 254,000 square kilometers in the Indian Ocean, about 1850 km west of Perth, Australia as the likely location where the plane went down
- ▶ The arrival of the vessel Ocean Shield, which is fitted with a towed pinger locator and a Bluefin 21 autonomous underwater vehicle on Thursday in the area hopes that the ship can detect the black box
- ▶ Meanwhile, growing acrimony in China over Malaysia's handling of the MH370 crisis could jeopardise Chinese buyers' appetite for property development in Malaysia, according to the Wall Street Journal
- ▶ Families of the Chinese passengers on the doomed flight and their countrymen became hostile towards Malaysia following its announcement on March 24 that satellite data showed the plane 'ended somewhere in the middle of the Indian Ocean'
- ▶ Also, the Malaysian government, which has come under global scrutiny over the handling of the crisis, said that it would compile 'false media reports' over the crisis and is considering filing lawsuits

[NST \(2 Apr 2014\)](#)

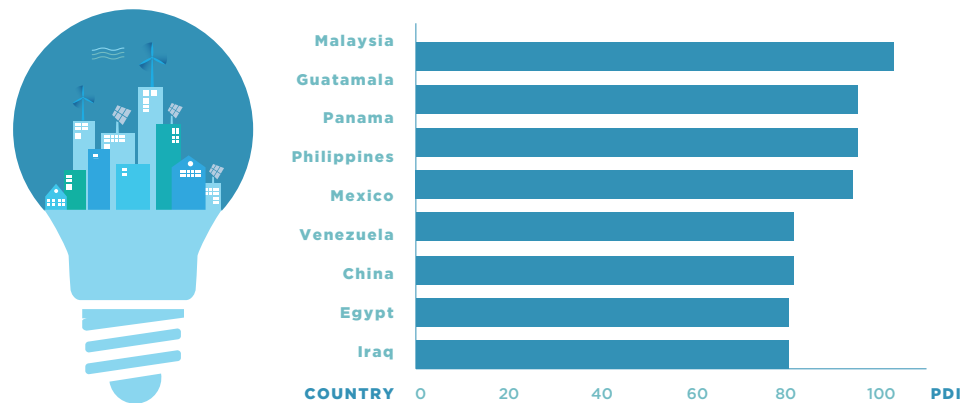
[The Malay Mail \(2 Apr 2014\)](#)

[The Edge \(2 Apr 2014\)](#)

## 10 MALAYSIA DOMINATES GLOBAL POWER DISTANCE INDEX



### GLOBAL POWER DISTANCE INDEX



Source: [clearlycultural.com](#)

**Malaysia once again topped the countries in the world with the highest Power Distance Index (PDI) of 100, indicating that less powerful members of organisations and institutions such as the family accept and expect that power is distributed unequally.**

- ▶ The findings were revealed after 15-month qualitative and quantitative study among almost 3,500 respondents from 18 countries; in the study, selected senior and emerging leaders were asked about 'what's ideal' and 'what's missing' in their current leaders
- ▶ The report added that countries' high power distance may observe traits such as those in authority openly demonstrating their rank, politics being prone to totalitarianism and class divisions within society were accepted
- ▶ Other countries that came in order after Malaysia on the list was The Philippines (94), Bangladesh (80) Sri Lanka (80) and China (80); the country with the lowest score was Austria (11) while other countries in the region such as Japan was the third lowest (54), followed by Australia (36) and New Zealand (22)

[The Star \(2 April 2014\)](#)

