

CARI CAPTURES



01 INFRASTRUCTURE REFORM DERAILED BY INFIGHTING

INDONESIA

Infrastructural Projects with Priority



[US Census Bureau](#)

Almost half of Widodo's 10 priority infrastructural plans highlighted shortly after his inauguration have fallen to political infighting caused by a lack of cooperation amongst various stakeholders and ministries surrounding the reforms.

▶ At the foremost of the delayed projects would be Indonesia's US\$2 billion airport railway line in the capital; designed to cut the travel time of one of the world's busiest airports from three hours to 30 minutes, issues of funding, location, and construction have delayed the project from coming to fruition for at least two years by latest estimates

▶ Currently, Indonesia's cost of moving goods costs as much as 27% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2013, an indication of how underdeveloped its infrastructure is in comparison to its regional neighbours such as Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam

▶ As infrastructural initiatives have long since been viewed as the staple of governments attempting to revitalise their economies, President Widodo's administration must find a way to green light said priority projects if there is any chance for Indonesia to revive its slowing economic growth and growing unemployment rate

[Straits Times 20 July 2015](#)

02 VIETNAM TO SEEK ADDITIONAL LOAN FOR CHINESE-BUILT HANOI ELEVATED RAILWAY



The government has decided to seek an additional loan from the Chinese government for a Chinese-built elevated railway project in Hanoi that is becoming infamous for slow progress and ballooning costs. The estimated cost has increased by \$315 million to more than \$868 million.

- ▶ The loan of more than US\$250 million will be used to complete the Cat Linh-Ha Dong Elevated Railway by 2016

- ▶ The 13-km line was originally scheduled to start in 2008 and finish in November 2013, and estimated to cost \$552.86 million
- ▶ China provided \$419 million in official development assistance. But work only got underway in October 2011

[Thanh Nien News \(20 July 2015\)](#)

03 THAI-LAO-VIETNAMESE BUS SERVICED PLANNED



Thailand's state-owned Transport Co plans to extend bus services to a three state route following successes in its preliminary trials for its transnational services.

- ▶ According to acting president Noppharat Karunyavanich, negotiations were underway with authorities of the two countries to operate passenger bus services from Thailand's Nakhon Phanom province via Thakhek of Laos to Ha Tinh province of Vietnam
- ▶ Transport Co currently operates a total of 14 transnational bus routes, with 12 to Laos and two to Cambodia; successfully linking several Thai provinces with destinations in Laos which include Vientiane, Pakse, Savannakhet, Thakhek, Luang Phrabang and Vang Vieng
- ▶ Deputy Transport Minister Arkhom Termpittayapaisith said he hoped Laos, Thailand and Vietnam could sign the memorandum of understanding for the three-country bus service by the end of July; meanwhile, in a bid to meet increasing demand, Transport Co has doubled its bus frequencies from two to four daily routes to both Laos and Vietnam



[Bangkok Post \(20 July 2015\)](#)

[Google Map](#)

04 NEW TRANSJAKARTA BUSES BRING HOPE FOR BETTER SERVICE



Five new Transjakarta buses that started operating in Corridor 1 on 15 July connecting Blok M in South Jakarta and Kota in West Jakarta received a warm welcome from passengers, who hope the new buses result in improved service.

- ▶ The Institute for Transportation & Development Policy (ITDP) recently said there had been a substantial decrease in the average number of Transjakarta buses per hour at eight of the 12 corridors this year compared to 2012 due to declining service.

- ▶ Lack of enforcement to keep Transjakarta lanes clear of other vehicles and uncertainty over bus arrival times were the most frequently voiced complaints from passengers
- ▶ Besides serving Corridor 1, the new buses would also serve Corridor 9 connecting Pluit in North Jakarta and Pinang Ranti in East Jakarta. Each bus is equipped with CCTVs and can carry up to 140 passengers with 39 seats, including six priority seats

[Jakarta Post \(16 July 2015\)](#)

05 SINGAPORE TO RAISE MINIMUM WAGES FOR FOREIGN WORKERS



The proposed changes by Singapore’s Ministry of Manpower (MOM) extend to foreign workers seeking to bring their families over with them.

- ▶ Currently, the minimum wage for foreign workers who qualify for dependant passes for their primary family members to join them in the nation state stand at SGD\$4,000; the proposed changes would raise the monthly salary bar to at least SGD 5,000 by 1 September 2015
- ▶ Furthermore, those who bring their parents to Singapore on Long Term Visit Passes qualify for a minimum salary of SGD\$10,000 per month, up

from SGD\$8,000 prior to the wage reforms; the increased minimum wages are designed to ensure that individuals working in Singapore are able to support their dependants in the face of inflating living costs

- ▶ The reforms, which would potentially affect approximately a total of 349,000 individuals, will undoubtedly attract an influx of foreign workers in the short term; however, critics such as David Leong, MD of the recruitment firm People-Worldwide Consulting, has cautioned that long term prospects for the increased minimum salaries may hurt the competitiveness of businesses in the nation

[The Indian Express \(22 July 2015\)](#)

Foreign Workforce Numbers

Pass Type	Dec 07	Dec 08	Dec 09	Dec 10	Dec 11	Dec 12	Dec 13
Employment Pass (EP)	99,200	113,400	114,300	143,300	175,300	173,800	172,100
S Pass	44,500	74,300	82,800	98,700	113,900	142,400	154,100
Work Permit (Total)	757,100	870,000	856,300	871,200	908,600	952,100	970,600
Work Permit (Foreign Domestic Worker)	183,200	191,400	196,000	201,400	206,300	209,600	211,000
Work Permit (Construction)	180,000	229,900	245,700	248,100	264,500	293,400	306,500
Total Foreign Workforce	900,800	1,057,700	1,053,500	1,113,200	1,197,900	1,268,300	1,296,800
Total Foreign Workforce (excluding Foreign Domestic Workers)	717,600	866,300	857,400	911,800	991,600	1,058,700	1,085,700
Total Foreign Workforce (excluding Foreign Domestic Workers & Construction)	527,100	616,800	588,300	638,900	699,100	731,300	743,000

[American Association of Singapore](#)

06 HUNGER STRIKES, PROTESTS TO OPPOSE THAILAND’S PLAN FOR COAL PLANTS ON ANDAMAN COAST



The popular tourist beaches near southern Thailand’s Andaman coast may soon play host to an unlikely new fixture: an 800-megawatt coal power plant.

- ▶ The plan to build a coal-fired plant in Krabi province, known for its white-sand tranquility, has prompted protests in the capital, an ongoing hunger strike and opposition from environmentalists and the country’s tourism industry
- ▶ More than 100 protesters rallied Monday outside the prime minister’s office in Bangkok. Protesters oppose the state power authority’s plan push ahead with a bidding process for the plant’s construction before an environmental impact assessment has been completed
- ▶ Despite Thailand’s commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, its state power authority envisions building nine coal power plants in the south over the next two decades

[Fox News \(21 July 2015\)](#)

07 GOVERNMENT : FOREIGNERS BANNED FROM PROTESTING



Foreigners who join protests against the government will now be subject to arrest and deportation, Phnom Penh’s governor and the government’s spokesman said yesterday, in the latest effort by the CPP to curb outside influence in the country’s political affairs.

- ▶ The municipal governor Mr. Pa Socheatvong defended the government’s decision to push ahead with the Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations
- ▶ He said one of the reasons that many NGOs were against the law was because foreign-funded groups were involved in political activities outside their stated purpose, adding that the government would no longer tolerate the involvement of foreigners in protests

[Cambodia Daily \(18 July 2015\)](#)



08 MYANMAR MONITOR

ECONOMY

▶ After successfully meeting all of Myanmar's Central Bank requirements, Japan's Mizuho Bank and Malaysia's Maybank have been awarded final licence, allowing them to begin operations on 3 August. Only Australia and New Zealand Banking Group has not yet received a final licence among the nine banks that won a tough contest in October last year.

[Myanmar Times \(28 July 2015\)](#)

▶ In its 2015 Climate Change and Environmental Risk Atlas, business risk analysis firm Maplecroft placed Myanmar 19th of 32 countries at "extreme risk" to climate change over the next three decades. "Since 2011, Mandalay Region has suffered both record-breaking drought and record-breaking rains, in July and August," U Kyaw Lwin Oo, director of the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology said, adding that "neither is good" for farmers.

[Myanmar Times \(29 July 2015\)](#)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

▶ After being closed since 1976, a new Myanmar consulate in Chiang Mai officially opened on 29 July. The ceremony was attended by Myanmar's foreign minister Wunna Maung Lwin and ambassador to Thailand Win Maung in attendance. "The consulate reopening comes as bilateral relations between Thailand and Myanmar are at their best in 2015," the ambassador said.

[The Irrawaddy \(29 July 2015\)](#)

▶ Myanmar expressed its commitment to deepening security and defence engagement with India, weeks after Indian troops carried out a surgical strike in Myanmar to hunt down Naga insurgents. The commitment was conveyed by Commander-in-Chief of Myanmar Defence Services Senior General U Min Aung Hliang when he met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi.

[The Economic Times \(29 July 2015\)](#)

▶ Myanmar's House Speaker Shwe Mann took some time out on 29 July to welcome UN goodwill ambassador Angelina Jolie to parliament in Naypyidaw. Jolie is visiting the country for four days "to learn more about the situation in the country and encourage efforts to build a peaceful and inclusive future for all its people", according to a statement from the British embassy.

[Bangkok Post \(29 July 2015\)](#)

POLITICS

▶ The Myanmar Parliament will resume discussion of the controversial draft Condominium Law on 10 August that was first introduced in late 2012. There are a few issues that have divided the parliament on the law, including whether for foreigners should be able to buy condominium units.

[Myanmar Times \(29 July 2015\)](#)

09 MORE WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT NEEDED FOR DEVELOPMENT: PRESIDENT

LAOS

President Choummaly Sayasone has encouraged the Lao Women's Union (LWU) to continue its past achievements in socio-economic development and expand its membership nationwide, targeting the involvement of ethnic women.

- ▶ "The union has been continuously contributing their efforts to the development of the nation since the country went through the difficult time of the war against the aggressors," he said
- ▶ Mr Choummaly noted that LWU members of every period have contributed significantly to the nation's socio-economic development
- ▶ He also said women are a major engagement in the efforts towards socio-economic development, especially in the agriculture sector and the preservation of Lao culture
- ▶ President Choummaly also stressed that Lao Women's Union members nationwide should also work harder to continue their outstanding achievements as well as train more women to become self-reliant in earning incomes to support their families

[Vientiane Times \(21 July 2015\)](#)

10 VACCINE RATES RISE IN CAMBODIA

CAMBODIA

According to new estimates released by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on the 15th of July, coverage for various vaccines administered to infants in the Kingdom increased significantly over the past year, whilst the National Immunisation Program (NIP) scheduled by 2016 hopes to capitalise upon this trend.

- ▶ According to the WHO report, coverage for a Hepatitis B vaccination administered at birth increased from 60% in 2013 to 87% in 2014, while polio vaccination coverage rose to 98% from 77% in 2013; the number of children under 2 years of age who have received the required three doses of vaccines for diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis, as well as a later Hepatitis B shot, was up to 97% in 2014, a 5% gain
- ▶ The NIP, which will introduced inactivated polio vaccines in October, will further protect newborn infants from oral strains of the poliovirus; meanwhile, the NIP has already introduced a new rubella vaccine combined with a Measles vaccine (MR) in 2014 and coverage is already at 94%
- ▶ Earlier in 2015, the NIP committed to including the Japanese Encephalitis vaccine in its schedule on February 2016 and is submitting a proposal for the vaccine alliance GAVI to finance a new pilot program for the human papillomavirus (HPV)

[Phnom Penh Post \(22 July 2015\)](#)

NIP Immunisation Targets

Hepatitis B Serological Prevalence among children at 5 years	<1%
Hepatitis B Birth Dose < 24 hours	80%
Pentavalent Vaccine COverage	95%
Measles Vaccine 9 months coverage	95%
Measles Vaccine 18 months coverage	95%
BCG Coverage	100%
Neonatal Tetanus Cases	<1/1000 LB/district
Measles Cases	<1/1 Million Total Population
T12+ Pregnancy Women	80%
NIP Fully Immunized	90%
Hepatitis B Birth Dose Wastage	10%
Pentavalent Vaccine Wastage	5%
BCG Wastage	60%
OPV Wastage	25%
Measles Wastage	50%

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
No of births	409587	419126	361780	370318	379058	388003	397160	406533	416127
BCG%	85%	91%	92%	93%	94%	100%	100%	100%	100%
HepB birth dose <24hours to 7 days%	53%	60%	65%	70%	75%	80%	>80%	>80%	>80%
DPT - HepB/Hib1%	87%	90%	91%	92%	93%	95%	95%	96%	97%
DPT/HepB3/Hib3%	82%	84%	86%	88%	90%	95%	95%	95%	95%
MCV1%	79%	82%	84%	86%	88%	95%	95%	95%	95%
MCV2%	-	-	-	-	-	95%	95%	95%	95%

[The GAVI Alliance](#)