

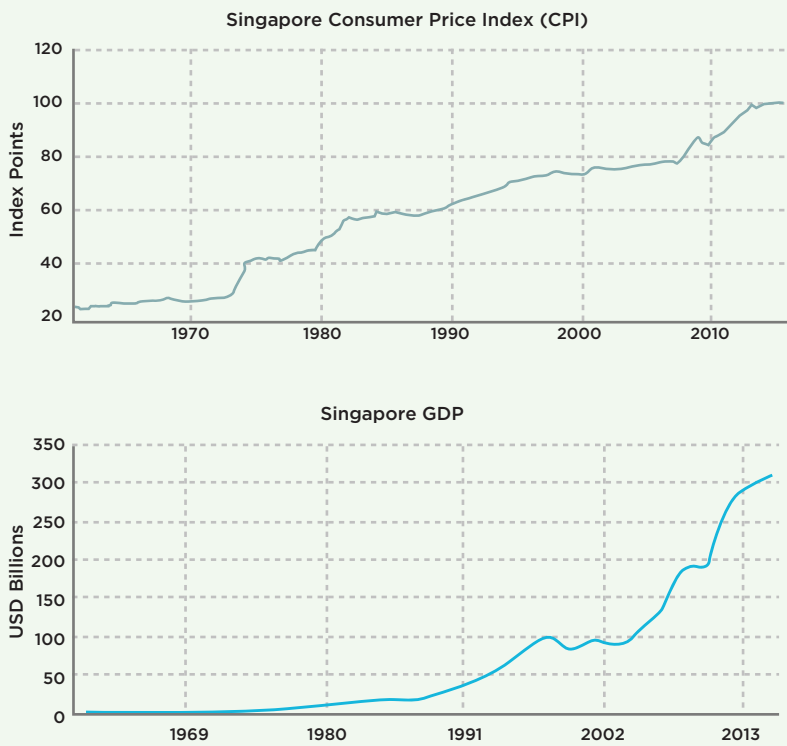
CARI CAPTURES



01 SINGAPORE CELEBRATES 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE



Singapore Consumer Price



www.tradingeconomics.com

Since its Independence from Malaysia in 1965, the city state has relentlessly pursued and achieved unrivalled economic success in a region plagued with poverty and political instability.

- ▶ The weekend celebrations continued to celebrate Singapore's sense of unity and pride, whilst paying tribute to its founder and longest serving leader, Lee Kuan Yew, who died in March 2015 at age 91
- ▶ Currently, Lee Kuan Yew's son, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, now leads the nation state and will face a general election expected to be held on 12 September; the ruling People's Action Party, which holds 80 out of 87 Parliament seats, suffered its worst results in the nation's history following the 2011 elections

- ▶ As a result of its rapid economic development and relative social stability, Singapore is now faced with new challenges; with an ever-growing foreign population to equal half of Singapore's total population in 2030, declining national birth rates, and soaring living expenses, only time will tell if the nation state will be able to address its burgeoning issues

[CNBC \(9 August 2015\)](#)

02 MISSING SHIP FOUND IN INDONESIA, MINUS CARGO WORTH \$969K



A ship with 3,500 tonnes of marine fuel oil that was reported missing in the Malacca Strait off Malaysia on 8 August, Saturday has been found in Indonesian waters without its cargo. The oil cargo was worth US\$700,000 (S\$969,000).

- ▶ The 10 crew members of the Singapore-registered tanker MT Joaquim, which had been on its way to Langkawi, Malaysia, from Tanjung Pinang, Indonesia, were released by a group of hijackers at 8.55am on Sunday
- ▶ According to the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency, "phantom ship" was believed to be involved in the incident. There was also a possibility that an "insider" was involved as the tanker had been heading north before changing course to a southern direction

[Straits Times \(10 August 2015\)](#)

03 ANGRY THAI FARMERS HEADED TO BANGKOK AIRPORT



The farmers are reportedly travelling to Bangkok in a convoy of about 400 e-tan trucks, 50 pick-up trucks, 12 six-wheel trucks, 10 ten-wheel trucks, and some 150 motorcycles. They left from provinces in the Lower North of Thailand on Wednesday, stopped overnight in Sing Buri and are expected to pick up more protesters along the way before reaching Bangkok.

- ▶ An increasing number of rice farmers have come to the capital in recent days and weeks to protest and demand overdue payments from the government's controversial rice-pledging scheme, which is loss-ridden and under investigation for corruption
- ▶ The convoy leader, Chada Thaiseth, a former Charththai Pattana Party MP from Uthai Thanidid not explain why they were going to the airport, but the mere mention of a large protesting group heading to the airport immediately conjures up memories of the 2008 yellow-shirt takeover of Suvarnabhumi for nine days which shut down flights in and out of the city
- ▶ The announcement sent airport officials scrambling to hastily arrange measures to cope with the unexpected visitors. They are reportedly setting aside the airport's long-term parking area to host the farmers

[Thai Visa \(9 August 2015\)](#)

04 INDONESIA RAISES BEEF IMPORT QUOTAS



Following the sharp rise of beef prices in Indonesia, Chief Economics Minister Sofyan Djalil announced the issuance of permits to import another 50,000 cattle.

- ▶ The short term measure came after the Indonesian government decided to reduce the quota of permitted imported cattle imports from Australia by 80% in Q3 of 2015, sparking a dramatic increase of beef prices in Indonesia to as high as \$10 per kilogram; the increase resulted in public anger, prompting the protests of butchers for four days
- ▶ Whilst cattle import quotas adjustments are largely left to private importers to enact, the government's stop gap measures to lower beef prices were undertaken by Indonesia's governmental logistics agency

- ▶ Indonesia's reduction of permitted Australian cattle importations is a continuation of sensitive relations between nations; in 2011, Australia temporarily banned cattle shipments to Indonesia following the discovery of cruel treatment within the nation
- ▶ Furthermore, relations between nations remain tense, after the execution in April of two Australian drug traffickers, and allegations that Australian officials paid the crew of a people-smuggling vessel to turn back to Indonesia

[Jakarta Post \(11 August 2015\)](#)

Indonesia Consumer Price



www.tradingeconomics.com



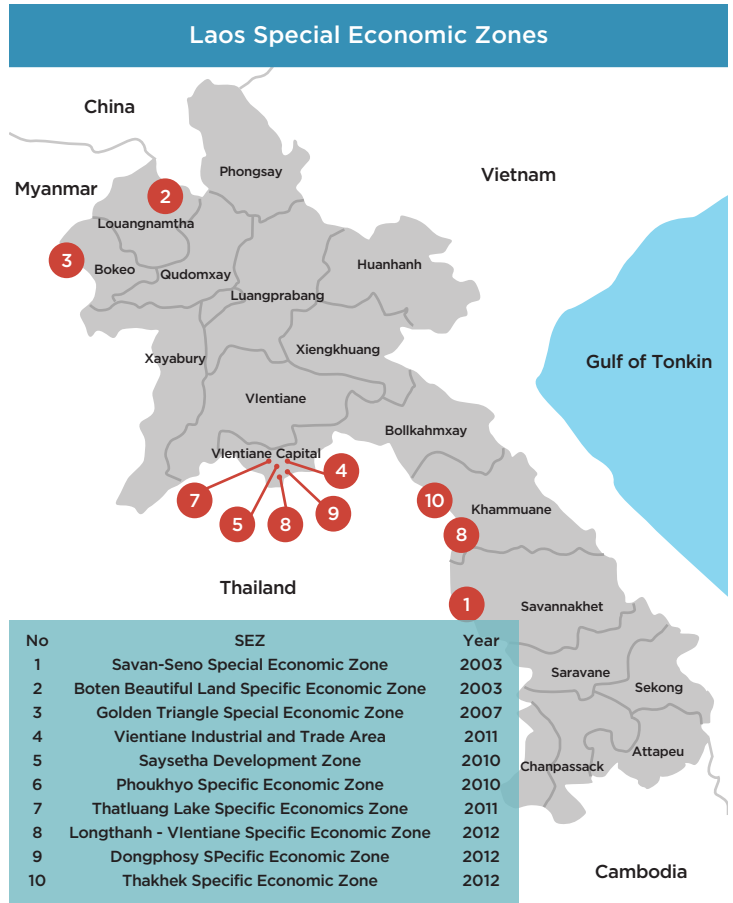
05 LAOS SEZs ATTRACT FOREIGN COMPANIES



A total of 213 companies have set up offices and factories within Lao's Specific Economic Zones (SEZs) in anticipation of the region's upcoming economic integration.

- ▶ The companies represent a total registered capital of US\$4.2 billion with an additional planned future investment of US\$17.39 billion; Of the total figure, more than US\$1.19 billion has already been spent on development activities at the zones, according to the latest report from the Lao National Committee for Special Economic Zones (NCSEZ)
- ▶ Currently, the largest number of foreign companies within the SEZs are from China, followed by Thailand, Japan, Vietnam, and Malaysia; Some 43% of their investment is in the service sector and 30% is in the industrial sector and the rest is in the trading-related sector
- ▶ Special and specific economic zones (SEZs) have become the main driver of growth in the industrial and service sectors in Laos, laying the foundation for diversifying the nation's economy into the future; currently over 11,320 people are employed in the zones, of which 4,229 are Lao and the rest are foreign nationals. Of the total figure, 6,000 people are employed in the Golden Triangle special economic zone in Bokeo province

[Vientiane Times \(10 August 2015\)](#)



[American Association of Singapore](#)

06 INDONESIA FIT TO SERVE AS WORLD MARITIME AXIS



Indonesia which has geographical and demographic excellence can properly serve as the worlds maritime axis as announced by President Joko Widodo.

- ▶ "Geographically and demographically, Indonesia which is situated between two continents and two oceans, can serve as the worlds maritime axis. It plays an important role in the development of global economy and industry," said Achmad Poernomo, the head of the Marine and Fisheries Research and Development Center of the Ministry of Marines and Fisheries
- ▶ Moreover, he said, Indonesia has marine and fisheries annual potential worth US\$800 million dollars. The economic potential of Indonesias marine sector can provide jobs for 40 million people
- ▶ Based on the United Nations Convention of Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), Indonesia has 5.8 million square kilometers of waters, much wider than its land which is only 1.9 million square kilometers

[Antara News \(9 August 2015\)](#)

07 METRO MANILA, CENTRAL LUZON TO GET RAIL LINK



Travel between Metro Manila and provinces in Central Luzon is poised to become a lot more convenient in the coming years after Japan extended a \$2-billion (Dh7.34 billion) assistance package to the Philippines for the construction of an elevated railway.

- ▶ The elevated railway project will connect Central Luzon's capital province, Malolos City, with downtown Manila, particularly Tutuban
- ▶ Phase 1 of the North-South Commuter Rail (NSCR) Project is poised to be the single-biggest official development assistance yen loan package to date. The NSCR involves the construction of a 36.7-kilometre narrow-gauge elevated commuter railway from Malolos City to Tutuban in Manila's downtown Santa Cruz district
- ▶ Although the project has been on the drawing boards since the time of president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, it is only in recent years under the government of President Benigno Aquino that actual construction work has gained momentum. It may be noted though that financing for the project had not been clinched during the time of the previous administration

[Gulf News Philippines \(18 August 2015\)](#)



08 MYANMAR MONITOR 

POLITICS

▶ Shwe Mann narrowly survived a critical test, when lawmakers voted to suspend discussion of a controversial bill that could have hastened his downfall amid the biggest political shake-up since the end of military rule. The vote highlighted his support in Parliament, after the dramatic removal as chairman of the ruling USDP by President Thein Sein last week.

[The Straits Times \(21 August 2015\)](#)

▶ Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi has hailed Shwe Mann, recently ousted as chairman of the governing Union Solidarity and Development Party, as an "ally". Speaking while MPs gathered in the capital Naypyidaw for a final round of parliamentary meetings before the 8 November vote, Suu Kyi said that Shwe Mann's dismissal by the president made it clear "who is the enemy and who is the ally", adding that the NLD party would work with the "ally".

[BBC \(18 August 2015\)](#)

▶ Myanmar passed two controversial bills on 20 August, MPs told the news agency AFP. Although the exact details of the proposed legislation have not been released, the polygamy law reportedly includes a provision to criminalize extra-marital affairs, while the conversion law would make it more difficult for people to change religion. Opponents say the legislation would be detrimental to human rights.

[RT \(21 August 2015\)](#)

ECONOMY

▶ The conditions in Myanmar are ideal for various forms of criminal activity to flourish, according to a new report from the London-based BMI Research, which warns that legitimate businesses face risks from the poorly monitored financial sector and the lack of preparedness for cyber-attacks. Myanmar ranked third last out of 38 countries in Asia in terms of the risk of business crime, with only North Korea and Afghanistan ranked lower.

[The Irrawaddy \(22 August 2015\)](#)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

▶ Myanmar and the European Union signed an agreement on 21 August to allow EU observers to monitor the country's general election in November. The observation mission will comprise more than 100 representatives from EU member states as well as Canada, Switzerland and Norway.

[Bangkok Post \(21 August 2015\)](#)

09 THE FIRST ASEAN CULTURAL CENTER IN SOUTHEAST ASIA OFFICIALLY OPENS IN BANGKOK



The first comprehensive ASEAN Cultural Center in Southeast Asia has been officially opened in Bangkok. The center now opens from Tuesday - Sunday from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

- ▶ Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Gen Tanasak Patimapragorn said at the opening ceremony of the center that the Thai government hoped the center would provide an active cultural learning space for Thais and ASEAN visitors in preparation for the ASEAN Community Integration at the end of 2015
- ▶ Located on the third floor of the Ratchadamnoen Contemporary Art Center on Ratchadamnoen Avenue in Bangkok, the center has been arranged into six zones. Among those zones are the "Living Together, the "Travel in ASEAN" zone and the e-library where they can experience mocked-up public parks and cultural heritage sites in the region

[Thai News \(7 August 2015\)](#)

10 KUALA LUMPUR HOSTS GRAND PRIX



Malaysia hosted a three day city Grand Prix featuring 16 drivers negotiating bends and corners in 25 laps of a 3.2km street racing circuit.

- ▶ The KL GT City Cup featured a 80km street race exclusively for the Grand Touring (GT) series cars; three support races including the Formula Masters China Series, the Lamborghini Blancpain Super Trofeo, and an exhibition race for the Australian V8 Supercars series, also took place over the weekend
- ▶ During the event, a crash on Saturday's qualifying session involving Malaysian driver Fairuz Fauzy occurred; driving for OD Racing, Fairuz lost control of his Lamborghini Gallardo at one of the 16 turns and collided into a wall but was uninjured
- ▶ A huge throng turned out to catch the race, which started from Suria KLCC, passing through Jalan Ampang, Jalan Sultan Ismail, Jalan Raja Chulan, Jalan Perak and Jalan P. Ramlee, whilst 6am-6pm road closures were enforced for three days

[The Star \(10 August 2015\)](#)

Other Races in the Region

Country	Races
Singapore	Singapore F1 Night Race
Indonesia	Indonesia Grand Prix Pertamax Racing
Thailand	Thai Grand Prix Federal Flex Asia Cross Country Nitto 3K Kumho Thailand
Philippines	Tuason Racing National Drag Racing Manila
Vietnam	Solar Car Racing

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