

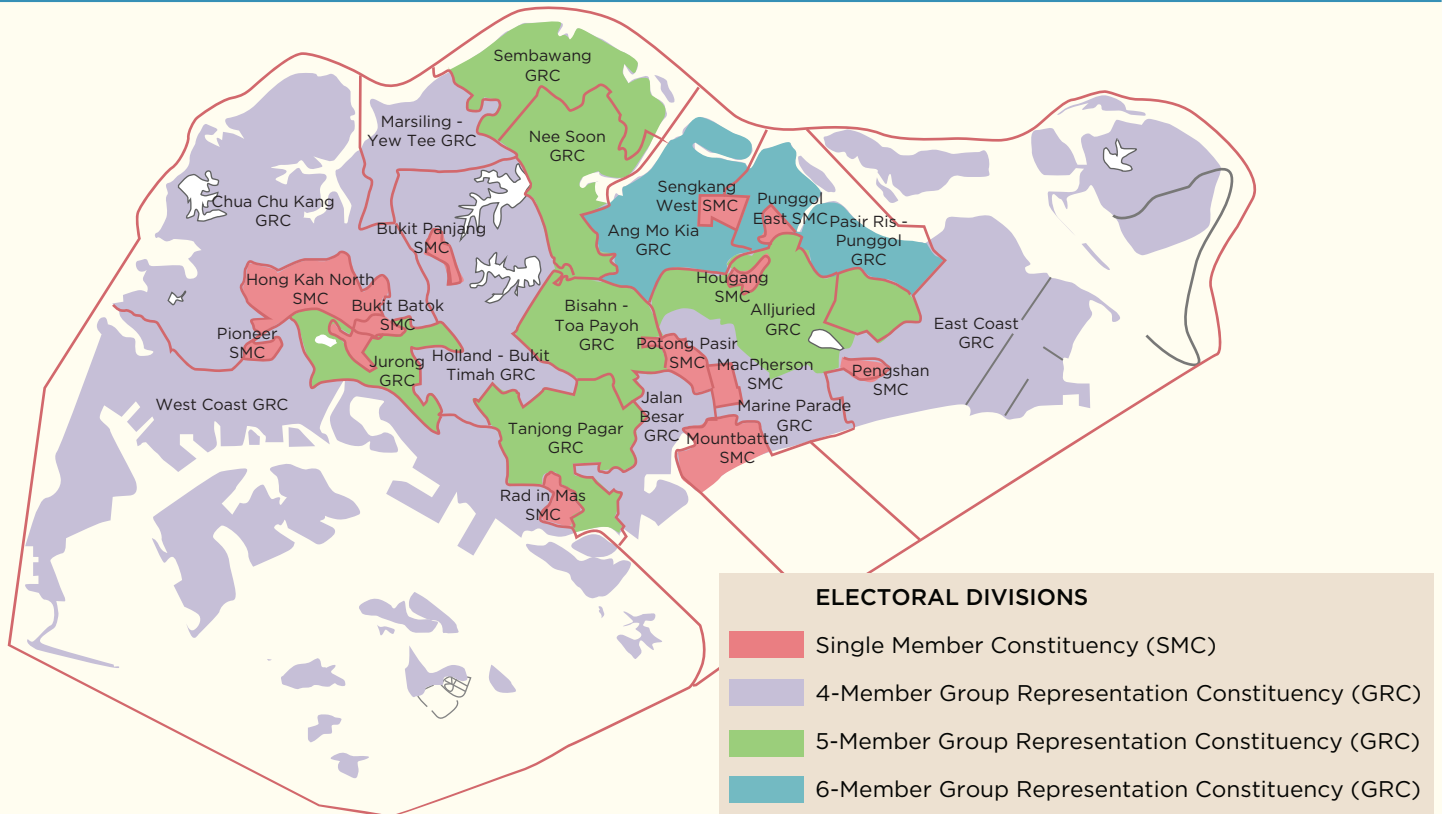
CARI CAPTURES



01 RULING PARTY SECURES SWEEPING VICTORY

 SINGAPORE

Singapore Parliamentary General Elections 2015 Electoral Division Map



[Antara News](#)

Singapore's snap elections carried out on 11 September 2015 saw the ruling People's Action Party (PAP) extend its 56 year reign.

- ▶ The party took 83 of 89 Parliamentary seats, garnering almost 70% of ballots cast; the vote showed renewed confidence in the PAP following its worst electoral showings in 2011 when it only took 80 of 87 seats and 60% of the vote
- ▶ Singapore's mandatory democracy saw a 93.56% voter turnout, reinforcing the public's confidence in the PAP's abilities in handling a nation challenged by rising income disparity, aging demographics, and immigration issues

▶ According to the Fitch Ratings Agency, Singapore will continue to retain its AAA- rating in the face of structural issues and fundamental strengths despite the positive outlook the elections pose

[New Straits Times \(12 September 2015\)](#)

02 ASEAN NEEDS \$10 BILLION TO TACKLE DEADLY FOREST FIRES: SCIENTIST



According to Herry Purnomo, a scientist at CIFOR and professor at Bogor Agricultural University, smog-affected ASEAN countries, especially Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, should allocate up to US\$10 billion to cope with unending forest fires in Sumatra and Kalimantan.

- ▶ Indonesia was estimated to suffer \$4 billion in losses this year, in terms of agriculture production, destruction of forest lands, health, transportation, tourism and other economic endeavors
- ▶ A 2013 World Bank report shows the total financial loss from forest fires in Riau province amounted to Rp 20 trillion (\$1.4 billion)
- ▶ Indonesia has at least 11 million hectares of oil palm plantation spread across the islands, from Sumatra to Papua. A number of palm oil companies clear land by burning it in order to reduce production costs

[Jakarta Post, 14 September 2015](#)

03 MALAYSIA, THAILAND AGREE TO BUILD BORDER WALL AMID TRAFFICKING WOES



MALAYSIA



THAILAND

Malaysia and Thailand have agreed to build a wall along their common border next year amid growing concerns about human trafficking. The 640-kilometer Malaysia-Thailand border has long been the site of transnational crime, including the rampant smuggling of weapons, drugs, and people.

- ▶ In May 2015, the issue sparked international furor following the discovery of mass graves in jungle camps in Malaysia near the border used by suspected smugglers of Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar
- ▶ Similar graves were discovered in Thailand, which again received the lowest ranking in the U.S. annual trafficking report this year
- ▶ The idea of building structures to contain cross-border crime itself is not new to the two countries. Most recently, in 2013 both countries separately proposed constructing their own fences along the border for this purpose

[The Diplomat \(15 September 2015\)](#)

04 CAMBODIA TO REPATRIATE DEGAR REFUGEES



200 Montagnards (Degar peoples), whom fled Vietnam claiming persecution, have been asked to return home within three months or face forced repatriation to Vietnam.

- ▶ The last wave of Montagnards to have crossed the central highlands of Vietnam to seek sanctuary in Cambodia's Ratanakiri Province did so in last October; however, it should be noted that recent reports by Human Rights Watch have identified that the montagnards have faced religious and ethnic persecution in Vietnam for years
- ▶ The report concluded that indigenous peoples within the central highlands face abuses by the government such as, but not limited to; arbitrary arrests, abuses in custody, intimidation, surveillance, and religious persecution
- ▶ According to head of the Jesuit Refugee Service, Denise Coghlan, the forced repatriation of refugees would serve as a blatant violation of the Refugee Convention signed by the Cambodian Government

[New America Media \(13 September 2015\)](#)



[Unrepresented Nations And Peoples Organization](#)



05 PLAN TO MAKE PHUKET AND CHIANG MAI 'SMART CITIES'



THAILAND

The Information and Communication Technology Ministry is eyeing Phuket and Chiang Mai as 'smart cities' that focus on tech start-ups as part of a move to turn Thailand into the digital hub of Asean.

- ▶ ICT Ministry Minister Uttama Savanayana said under the policy the ministry planned to roll out pilot projects to drive the country forward, with the "smart city" plan one of them
- ▶ According to him, Phuket and Chiang Mai could be piloted as smart cities because of their technology readiness, location, and internationalism
- ▶ In addition, another possible model for rolling out smart cities was establishing technology hubs in special economic zones

[Nation Multimedia \(15 September 2015\)](#)

06 PHILIPPINES COURT OFFICIALLY DECLARES ABU SAYYAF A 'TERROR' GROUP



PHILIPPINES

Two decades after it started carrying out kidnappings, bombings, occasional beheadings and general mischief in Southern Philippines, a local court has legally declared the Abu Sayyaf a terrorist organisation.

- ▶ Basilan Judge Danilo Bucoy granted a request by the Department of Justice to classify the Abu Sayyaf as a terrorist group, thus officially recognising the group as a terror organisation as defined by the Philippines' Human Security Act of 2007
- ▶ In his decision, Bucoy pointed out that while the term "terrorism" is specifically mentioned in the Abu Sayyaf preamble, the manner how the group carries out its activities towards achieving its political ends is apparent
- ▶ Abu Sayyaf established a brand of Islam that espouses religious violence in carrying out its political objective of establishing a strict state for Muslims in Southern Philippines' Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Zamboanga peninsula area since 1995

[The Gulf News \(14 September 2015\)](#)

07 JOKOWI KICKS OFF LRT CONSTRUCTION



INDONESIA

The first phase of building Jakarta's Light Rail Transit (LRT) has started, with President Joko Widodo pushing the button to officially kick off construction in Jakarta on 9 September.

- ▶ The LRT was part of the mass transportation integration plan, along with the existing Transjakarta busway and the commuter train as well as the Mass Rail Transit (MRT), which is also still under construction
- ▶ The project will be divided into two phases, the second phase starting in early 2016, and both phases projected to finish by 2018
- ▶ The purpose of this training programme is to build the capacity of labour inspectors with basic knowledge and skills relating to their core functions. These include the Labour Law 2014, the minimum wage, and

inspection techniques

- ▶ The first phase of the construction will connect Cibubur in East Bekasi with Dukuh Atas, passing through Cawang. This phase will be 42.1 kilometers long, and include 18 stations. The second phase will extend the network a further 41.5 kilometers, with routes including Cibubur-Bogor, Dukuh Atas-Palmerah-Senayan and Palmerah-Bogor

[Radio Free Asia \(12 September 2015\)](#)

Freedom of The Net (FOTN)

Country	OVERALL				CATEGORY TRAJECTORIES			
	FOTN 2013	FOTN 2014	Overall Trajectory	FOTN 2014 Status	A. Obstacles to Access	B. Limits On Content	C. Violations of User Rights	
Cambodia	47	47		Partly Free	14	15	18	
Indonesia	41	42	▼	Partly Free	11	12 ▼	19	
Malaysia	44	42	▲	Partly Free	8 ▲	14 ▲	20	
Myanmar	62	60	▲	Partly Free	19 ▲	16	25 ▲	
Philippines	25	27	▼	Free	10	5	12 ▼	
Singapore	*	40	▼	Partly Free	6 *	14 *	20 *	
Thailand	60	62	▼	Not Free	11 ▼	21	30 ▼	
Vietnam	75	76	▼	Not Free	14	28	34 ▼	

[Freedom House](#)

08 MYANMAR MONITOR

POLITICS

▶ Politicians and activists in Myanmar have criticized an influential Buddhist national group for holding large public gatherings across the country to celebrate the passage of a set of four controversial laws. The Association for the Protection of Race and Religion has hosted rallies among tens of thousands of its supporters in recent weeks to call attention to the passage of the Race and Religion Protection Laws ahead of Myanmar's general elections.

[Radio Free Asia \(25 September 2015\)](#)

ECONOMY

▶ Myanmar's state-owned Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise (MPPE) has agreed to a joint venture with Singapore's Puma Energy Group Pte Ltd to distribute jet fuel, state media reported on 27 September. Last year, MPPE chose Puma Energy as its partner amid a rise in demand from new airports and a boom in tourist arrivals.

[Reuters \(26 September 2015\)](#)

▶ The World Bank's International Finance Corporation (IFC) has signed up to advise the Myanmar government on its controversial plans to build more hydropower dams. The IFC will help the government improve the management of the environmental and social risks of such projects.

[The Irrawaddy \(26 September 2015\)](#)

▶ Both the International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank warn that a continued global slump in natural gas prices could damage Myanmar's economic prospects. According to the IMF, global prices for natural gas are expected to be 20 percent lower in the current fiscal year, compared with last year. The government's earnings from gas could take a dive, despite rising production in Myanmar's offshore gas fields.

[The Irrawaddy \(26 September 2015\)](#)

▶ Myanmar and Japanese dignitaries on 23 September launched the first phase of the Thilawa Special Economic Zone (SEZ). Housing everything from children's toy manufacturing to a car assembly plant and a deep sea port, the economic zone has risen rapidly from the tropical countryside in recent years with major investment from Japan.

[The Japan News \(24 September 2015\)](#)

09 LUANG PRABANG ADOPTS ELECTRIC BUSES

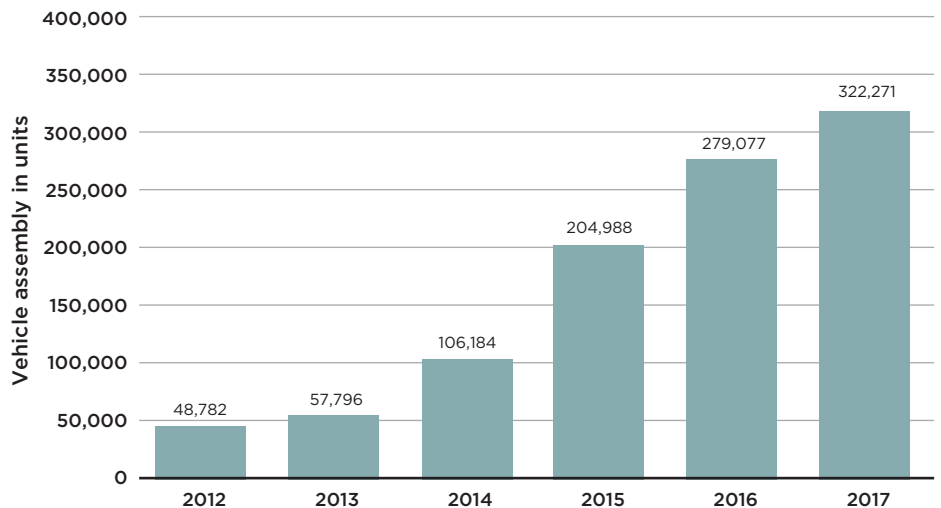


In a bid to improve the environment and atmosphere of Luang Prabang, a World Heritage town, Laos has launched an electric bus service within the area.

- ▶ The e-Bus project involves 34 electric mini-buses including 14 provided as a grant from the Japanese government and 20 operated by the Lao Green Company; each e-mini-bus can carry six passengers, however, taking into account the baggage tourists often carry estimates for foreigners lie within the four passenger range
- ▶ The project, which is sponsored by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), will continue to 2017 with a total offering of 100 electric vehicles being provided by the Agency; furthermore, if the project is considered a success, additional offerings will be continued within the Vientiane and Champassak province
- ▶ Whilst the initiative is largely viewed as sustainable, it should be noted that should JICA funding stop, the maintenance of such vehicles may be viewed as prohibitively expensive, which may result in the cancellation of such future projects by the Lao government

[TR Weekly \(10 September 2015\)](#)

Projected Assembly of Electric Transmission-Equipped Automobiles in Asia Pacific from 2012 to 2017 (in units)



Note: There are no statistics regarding the usage of electric vehicles in ASEAN, as there isn't a significant number of EV users in ASEAN.

[TelcoMasia.net](#)

10 BRUNEI'S FIRST GREEN FACTORY TO START OPERATIONS 2016



Local fire extinguisher manufacturer RAB Global Green Sdn Bhd is set to begin operations by the first quarter of 2016 as the company looks to resolve the construction issues of its green factory.

- ▶ The green factory building is currently 80-per cent completed and is awaiting installation of the 'skin' and glass
- ▶ The factory, will boast a number of environmentally friendly features including wall and window panels that are designed to optimise usage of sunlight and energy reduction. It will also be equipped with a rain water collection system which has a storage capacity of 80,000 gallons
- ▶ The building, located at the industrial site in Kg Serasa which is owned by the Brunei Industrial Development Authority (BINA), is partially financed by Bank Islam Brunei Darussalam (BIBD) through a government enterprise funding scheme

[Malay Mail \(Asia One \(15 September 2015\)\)](#)