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01 THAILAND

THAILAND'S KING BHUMIBOL ADULYADEJ DIES AT 88

THE LIFE OF KING BHUMIBOL ADULYADEJ

- 5 December 1927** Bhumibol Adulyadej was born
- 9 June 1946** Ascends the throne, appoints his uncle Rangsit, Prince of Chainat as Prince Regent whilst completing a degree in political science in Switzerland
- 28 April 1950** King Adulyadej marries Mom Rajawongse Sirikit Kitiyakara
- 5 May 1950** Long delayed cremation of King Ananda Mahidol, King Adulyadej's brother and coronation
- 16 September 1957** Prince Regent Rangsit authorises military coup on behalf of King Bhumibol
- 6 October 1976** Thammasat University Massacre occurs, King Adulyadej affirms military coup which follows
- 1981** King Adulyadej refuses to back April Fool's Day coup, which fails
- 1985** King Adulyadej refuses to back the Share Rebellion, which fails
- 1992** King Adulyadej publicly intervenes in general election demonstrations in efforts to avoid a civil war, summons General Suchinda Kraprayoon and Major General Chamlong Srimuang to a televised audience and calls for peace talks
- 2003** A war on drugs is called by the king in a speech on the eve of his birthday. This led to the government instituting drug collection quotas and blacklists, as well as reported extrajudicial executions
- 2006** Called for the judiciary to take action in resolving boycotted elections, called for clean and fair parliamentary elections
- 13 October 2016** King Adulyadej passes at 15:52 local time as announced by the royal palace.



Revered monarch who ruled the Southeast Asian nation since 1946 passes after a lengthy series of illnesses.

▶ King Bhumibol passed away at Bangkok's Siriraj Hospital on 13 October 2016; the palace did not give a reason for his death, though the highly admired monarch spent most of the past decade hospitalised for a variety of ailments, including kidney and lung problems

- ▶ A constitutional monarch with no formal political role, Bhumibol was widely regarded as Thailand's unifying figure in the nation's fractious political scene
- ▶ Since 1932, Thailand has witnessed 19 coups, including 12 successful ones
- ▶ Bhumibol was the revered "father of the nation"; This are taught about the king's public service efforts at school, cinema-goers have to stand for the royal anthem at the start of films, and people prostrated themselves in his presence

[CNN \(21 October 2016\)](#)

INDONESIA'S BAUXITE MINERS CALL FOR EXPORTS IN ORE POLICY REVIEW

An Indonesian producer group will ask the government to allow exports of bauxite, the raw material used to make aluminium, and grant an annual quota of 40 million metric tons, in a move that would ease the country's ban on all raw mineral ore shipments imposed in 2014.

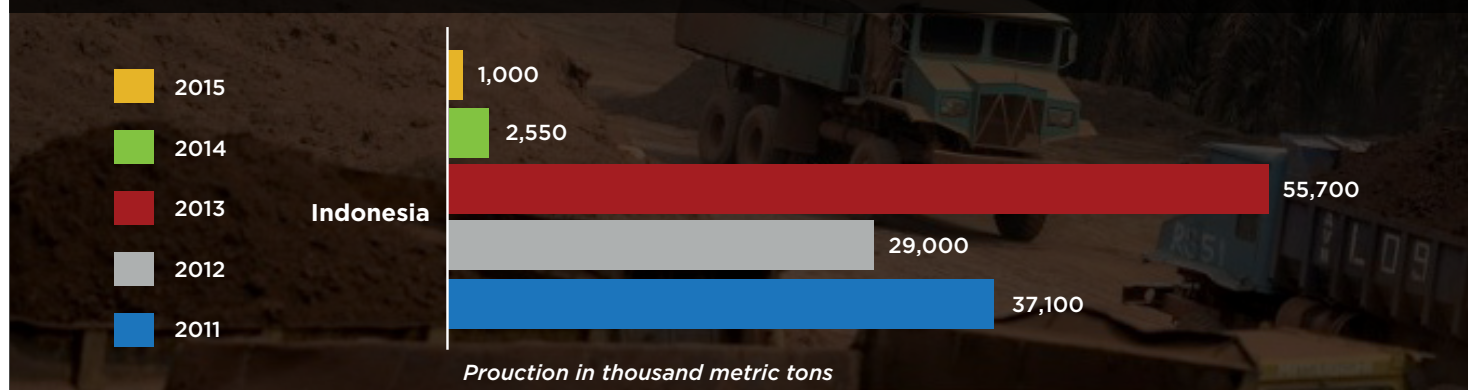
- ▶ Permitting sales "would have a massive domino effect," Erry Sofyan, chairman of the Association of Indonesia Bauxite and Iron Ore Producers, told reporters in Jakarta; "It would create 40,000 jobs and revive the shipping industry in Batam," he said, referring to an island in the north of the country near Singapore
- ▶ The government is set to finalise revisions to the

export policy next week, including deferment of the ban on processed ore exports including copper concentrates by three to five years from January 2017

- ▶ Luhut Panjaitan, then acting energy and mineral resources minister, said on 12 October the country would probably keep its moratorium on nickel ore and bauxite exports
- ▶ Shipments are expected to create jobs, which will also help to revive Indonesia's shipping industry whilst breathing life into its mining sector: groupCountry was the op bauxite supplier to China before Indonesia's bauxite export ban in 2014, a spot which Indonesia's private sector hopes to recapture

[Bloomberg \(14 October 2016\)](#)

INDONESIA'S BAUXITE MINERS CALL FOR EXPORTS IN ORE POLICY REVIEW



PHILIPPINES MINISTER WANTS TO BAN NEW MINES AS CLAMPDOWN DEEPENS

The Philippines' mining minister wants to prolong a ban on new mines and will review all environmental permits previously granted to the minerals industry, ramping up a campaign to clamp down on damage from the sector.

- ▶ Miners criticized the proposals made by Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Regina Lopez, saying she seemed determined to put the "industry to sleep";
- ▶ The Philippines is the world's top nickel ore supplier and an environmental audit that has halted a quarter of its 41 mines, and the risk that 20 more maybe shuttered has spurred a rally in global nickel prices
- ▶ Lopez, a committed environmentalist who has described open-pit mining as "madness", said she wanted to continue a ban put in place by a previous government in 2012, dashing industry hopes that some restrictions may be lifted following the audit that finished in August
- ▶ Lopez also said her agency would review around 800 environmental compliance certificates (ECC) including those granted to mines. That would come on top of the industry audit that led to the current mine suspensions
- ▶ Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte warned miners in August to strictly follow tighter environmental rules or shut down, saying the country could survive without a mining industry

[Reuters \(14 October 2016\)](#)

SINGAPORE STRENGTHENS TIES WITH KEY PARTNERS

Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong has been making the rounds to affirm strong ties and boost foreign relations further, making state visits to six countries in three months; including the United States, China, Laos, Japan, India and Australia.

- ▶ From Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's visit to Washington in August to his address to Australia's Parliament in Canberra, Singapore has been stepping up ties with its key partners; in between those two trips, PM Lee was invited to the Group of 20 leaders' summit in Hangzhou, China, and visited Vientiane in Laos, as well as Tokyo and New Delhi
- ▶ These visits underscore the importance of diplomacy to Singapore's survival and sovereignty as a small state that relies on open trade and respect for the rule of law globally
- ▶ The overriding objective of Singapore's foreign policy is similar to why the country sets great store by defence and a strong, credible Singapore Armed Forces: to ensure Singapore's survival and sovereignty as an independent nation
- ▶ Beyond building ties with partners, it seeks to foster common interests among friendly nations so as to uphold a stable, secure region and a global order that abides by the rule of law

[The Straits Times \(14 October 2016\)](#)

ADB OFFICIAL URGES VIETNAM TO FOCUS ON GROWTH TREND, NOT ON FIGURE

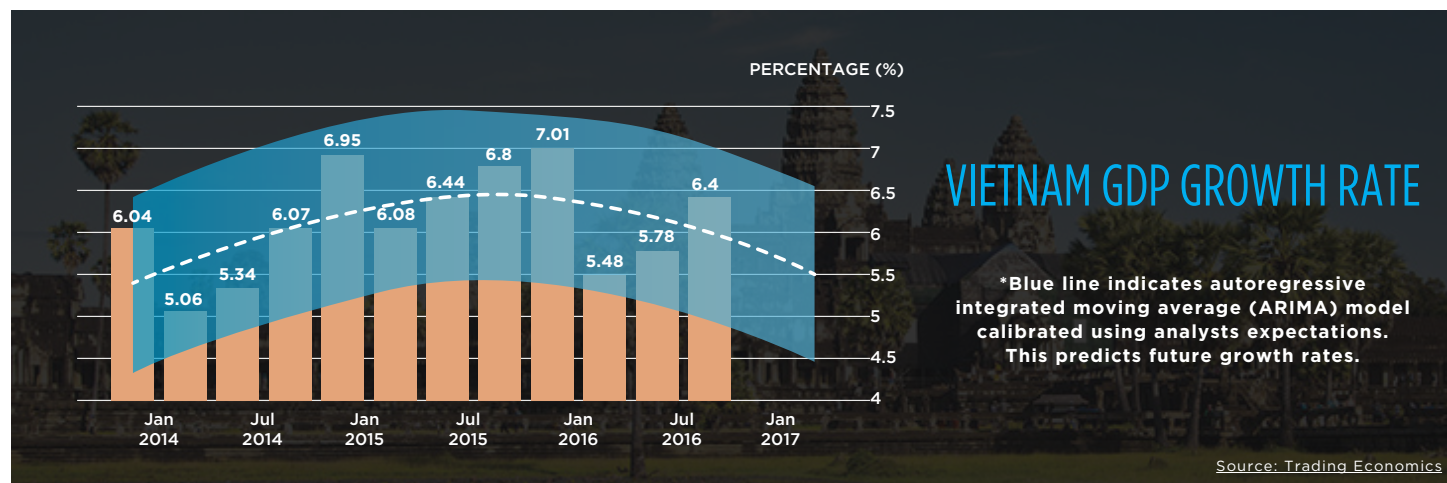
Eric Sidgwick, Asian Development Bank Country Director for Vietnam, has called on Vietnam to focus on its growth trend instead of only on figures.

- ▶ In discussions about how much the Vietnamese economy will expand this year and the fact that it remains a hot topic in the country, the official said that it is more important to define underlying factors that allow or encourage the growth trend as well as what factors prohibit the trend from being sustained
- ▶ Previously, the Vietnamese government had forecast the country's gross domestic product (GDP) to reach 6.7% in 2016; however, the yearly estimated growth

was lowered to between 6.3-6.5% in early October 2016

- ▶ Explaining that the underlying point is not the actual growth rate itself in 2016 or even in 2017, the expert said that the more important factor is how to ensure growth in a sustainable way every year and that growth is shared by more and more people who contribute to the rate
- ▶ "The critical issue for Vietnam is how to sustain a high rate of growth. The country has many things to do with the businesses of infrastructure, environment, human skills, capital and access for finance, among others," noted Sidgwick

[Xinhua \(13 October 2016\)](#)



THAI EDUCATION SERVICE TO SET UP CAMBODIAN BRANCH

Private tutoring company OnDemand Education plans to set up a branch in Cambodia by next year to help middle-class parents prepare their children to get into a respected university.

- ▶ Thai private tutoring company OnDemand Education plans to set up a branch in Cambodia by next year to help middle-class parents prepare their children to get into a respected university
- ▶ Regulations in Cambodia now allow international schools and foreign tutoring institutions to set up schools there
- ▶ With Thailand facing a declining birth rate and the number of one-child families on the rise, primary and secondary schools offering English programmes are increasingly a priority for parents who can afford such an education for their children
- ▶ The growing popularity of international school curriculums led OnDemand to offer its first curriculum in March. The course has had positive feedback from students so far; OnDemand's revenue for the first eight months of this year grew 20% from the same period last year
- ▶ The company has 600,000 students enrolled; each year 70,000 more students take courses with OnDemand, with 5-10% enrolled in the international

[Bangkok Post \(16 October 2016\)](#)

MALAYSIA HANDS OVER '3 FETO MEMBERS' TO TURKEY

Malaysia handed over three members of the Fetullah Terrorist Organization (FETO) to Turkey according to Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu.

- ▶ In remarks made to the media in southwestern Turkey's Antalya province, Cavusoglu said a FETO member had infiltrated the Second Asia Cooperation Dialogue Summit in Bangkok last week. "They threw him out. This is an organization which tries to infiltrate everywhere."
- ▶ He reiterated that Turkey would continue its fight against FETO till the end. "Our fight against them will continue till the end, both inland and abroad. We will not stop following them."
- ▶ About his meeting with Malaysian Premier Najib Razak last week, Cavusoglu said Razak told him Malaysia would surrender the three FETO members to Turkey during the summit in Bangkok
- ▶ Turkey accuses FETO, which is led by U.S.-based Fetullah Gulen, of organizing the July 15 coup attempt as well as a long-running campaign to overthrow the state through the infiltration of Turkish institutions, particularly the military, police, and judiciary

[Anadolu Agency \(14 October 2016\)](#)

ECONOMY

- Some 90 percent of businesses in Myanmar are SMEs, yet only about 50,000 businesses are registered with the SME development department, according to government figures. Myanmar's small and medium enterprises are hoping for a policy that encourages greater formalisation of the sector during the government's workshop on 22-23 October, industry sources say. The majority of SMEs are unregistered and lack formal procedures, like correct accounting processing and an understanding of marketing.

[Myanmar Times \(20 October 2016\)](#)

POLITICS

- Food aid deliveries planned for more than 80,000 people in Myanmar's Rakhine state have been blocked because of a military clampdown, according to the UN's World Food Programme (WFP). The state has been closed off after attacks on police posts allegedly by Rohingya fighters over a week ago prompted a surge in government troops. The WFP normally feeds 80,000-85,000 people in the area.

[Aljazeera \(19 October 2016\)](#)

- The Union Election Commission announced this week that all political hopefuls seeking to participate in next year's by-election must register their candidacy between 28 November and 7 December. The final list of candidates will be published on 2 January 2017 and voters in the 18 constituencies will head to the polls on 1 April.

[Myanmar Times \(20 October 2016\)](#)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

- Myanmar and India signed three Memorandums of Understanding on 19 October for cooperation in the insurance, power and banking sectors following delegation-level talks headed by State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This is Suu Kyi's first official visit to India since the NLD took office in March this year.

[Mizzima \(20 October 2016\)](#)

- A recent drop in trade between Myanmar and South-Korea has prompted officials from both countries stressing the need for a bilateral free trade agreement. South Korea is Myanmar's eighth-largest trading partner. Bilateral trade between the two countries rose from US\$ 452 million in the 2010-2011 financial year to US\$ 1.57 billion in the following financial year. Trade fell again and in the 2015-2016 financial year amounted to only US\$ 656 million.

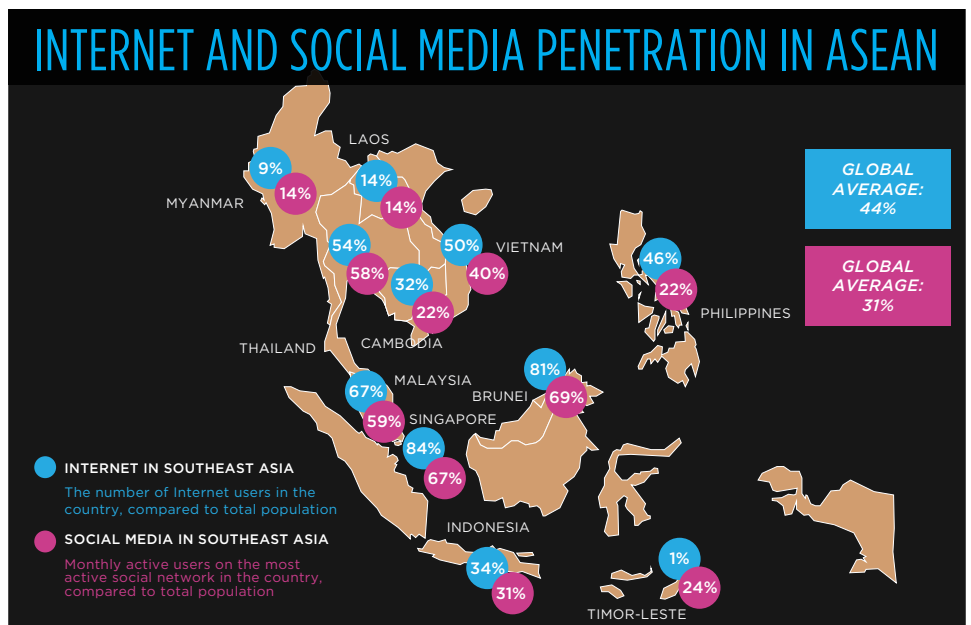
[Myanmar Times \(18 October 2016\)](#)

BRUNEI HAS HIGHEST SOCIAL MEDIA PENETRATION IN ASEAN

Brunei has the highest social media penetration in ASEAN at 69% , more than double the global average, according to data published by We Are Social, a global digital media consultancy.

- A regional report released by its Singapore office, titled 'Digital, Social & Mobile in Southeast Asia in 2015', stated that Brunei had 270,000 active social media users in the fourth quarter of 2015, representing 69% of the population
- The vast majority of these users, some 250,000 people, predominantly used mobile devices to access social media, representing an overall mobile social penetration rate of 64%
- According to the report, Brunei has an internet penetration rate of 81%, representing 319,000 active internet users on both fixed and mobile connections; that figure has grown by almost 8% since 2014
- Brunei has a total of 495,000 mobile subscriptions, 1.26 times its population
- In ASEAN, eight countries have mobile subscription rates greater than their populations, with the exception of Myanmar and Laos

[The Jakarta Post \(14 October 2016\)](#)



10 PHILIPPINES

S&P HIKES PHILIPPINE GROWTH FORECAST

S&P Global Ratings has revised upwards its 2016 growth forecast for the Philippines on the back of a growing middle class, a business process outsourcing (BPO) boom and expansionary fiscal policy with emphasis on public infrastructure.

- In its latest economic research titled "Asia Pacific steadies while China goes silent," the debt watcher said ASEAN economies are seeing stable growth, with the Philippines outperforming the region; S&P now expects the country's gross domestic product (GDP) to expand 6.5% instead of the earlier forecast of 6.1% for this year before slowing down to 6.3 percent in 2017 and 6.2% in 2018
- The country's GDP growth accelerated to seven percent in the second quarter from 6.8 percent in the first quarter amid strong boost from election related spending; this brought the GDP expansion to 6.9% in the first half from 5.5% in the same period last year
- Economic managers penned a GDP growth target of between 6% and 7% this year after easing to 5.9% last year from 6.1% in 2014 due to weak global demand and lack of government spending

[Manila Standard \(21 October 2016\)](#)

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