

SPECIAL EDITION

IndoConnect

CONNECTING INDONESIANS IN SINGAPORE

Boost in Bilateral Ties & Investments Despite COVID-19



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SPECIAL REPORT: INTERVIEW WITH AMBASSADOR SURYO PRATOMO
TIME TO LOOK AT INDONESIA IN A NEW LIGHT

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Welcome to
H.E. Suryo Pratomo

*Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia
to Singapore*



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SILVER LININGS AND HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL



New years bring new perspectives and with 2020 practically wiped out with the horrors of the pandemic, 2021 has arrived with a silver lining in the form of vaccines to counter COVID-19's deadly impact.

It is in this environment, where the spirit of hope shines through the dark clouds of last year, that Singapore welcomes the new Indonesian ambassador to the Republic, HE Suryo Pratomo, who replaces outgoing ambassador, HE Gede Ngurah Swajaya, who has been serving here since 2015.

President Joko Widodo surprise choice of giving this critical assignment to the former president director of private television station Metro TV, has given a completely new turn to the course of HE Suryo Pratomo's career path; what's very unique about this background is that it brings with it an interesting take on his duties as Indonesia's new ambassador.

Moving out of the framework of media, which has long been his comfort zone, HE admits, that it's not going to be easy going the diplomacy route. At the same time he has faith, and is confident, that he will do justice to the job entrusted to him by the President. HE believes the strengthening of

trust and confidence between Indonesians and Singaporeans will be pivotal for a better understanding of each other and a catalyst for developing more avenues of growth and opportunity.

Supporting him in his new assignment in Singapore is his wife, Madame Noeri Widowati, who herself is no stranger to working for the Indonesian government. While HE Suryo Pratomo, who she met when they were at university together, went on to pursue a career in journalism, she served as a veterinarian for 32 years at the Directorate of Animal Health in Jakarta. She then went on to join the Ministry of Agriculture. She feels closer people-to-people connects can bring about deeper understanding, which can be very rewarding when it comes to the cause of women and bringing Singaporeans and Indonesians closer together. On a lighter note while touching upon her duties as a hostess, she remembers when her husband was working as a journalist and he invited guests, eating out was quite casual and mostly in restaurants – and she did not need to seek his approval for the meal!

Dr Vivian Balakrishnan's visit to Indonesia in March heralds a new approach to 'business as usual', despite the deep constraints brought in by COVID-19 on the economy the world over. In fact, the pandemic did not dampen dynamic growth in diplomatic ties as well as Singapore's investments in Indonesia which went up by 50 percent during the last year, which reveals its confidence in Indonesia's growth potential and future.

When talk comes round to bilateral ties it's heartening to note that the confirmation of the holding of the Leaders Retreat in Bintan is something to look forward to; it will be an excellent opportunity for underpinning the further strengthening of relations. IndoConnect, taking cognizance of these positive developments, will keep readers posted about the highlights and the outcomes of the Bintan Retreat, as they unfold.

Vaccine Diplomacy between Singapore and Indonesia, we are happy to report, has been given an extra boost with the two nations embarking on an active vaccination programme with the hope that before the year ends visits and travel will open up; this will assuredly give an impetus to greater people-to-people ties and be even better than before the pandemic threw a spanner in the wheel. ©

Nomita Dhar

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Martin is one of the photographers and prime movers behind 'The 10 New Bali Book' whose second edition is being featured in this issue. You will see

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She's been a Consulting Editor for 15 years to the Outlook Traveller group of publications and contributed to Discover India, BBC Good Food

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MARCIANO NG

Fresh from the army and a polygraduate, Marciano loves to write and create or edit stories *first* for the video medium as well as now for publications in print and online. He adds another multi-

dimensional touch to stories told with sound, animation with moving visuals for the online edition of IndoConnect.

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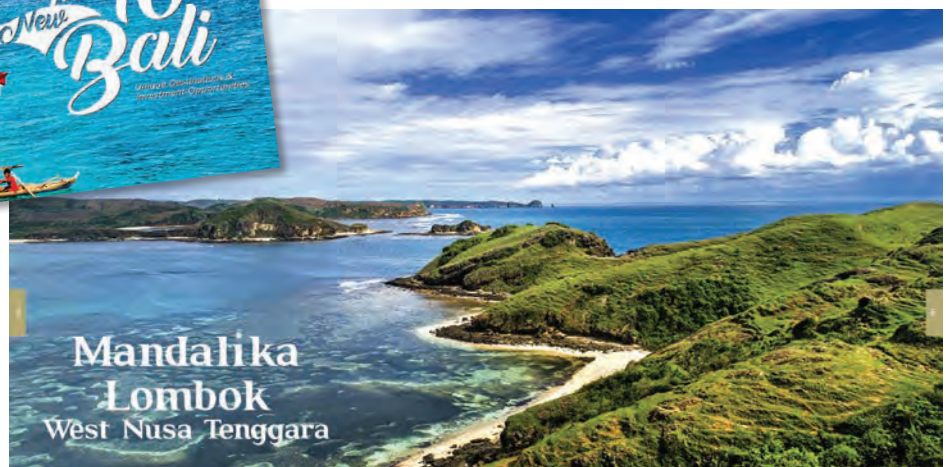
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Boost in Bilateral Ties & Invest

Dr Vivian Balakrishnan visit in March showed the pandemic did not dampen dynamic growth in diplomatic ties nor in Singapore's investments in Indonesia, which went up by 50 percent!

Reports compiled by Marciano Ng

There is no doubt that the last one year has been a challenging one for both countries, no thanks to COVID-19, but in his remarks to the press during the Joint Press Conference held with Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, HE Retno Marsudi on 25th March 2021, Singapore's visiting Foreign Minister Dr Vivian Balakrishnan went out of his way to stress: "The first point I want to make is that we have shown everyone that we have been good, steady and reliable partners throughout both good times and tough times. We have looked out for each other, You will recall that even through the depths of the crisis, our supply chains continued to remain open."

The press conference, which came at the conclusion of his two-day visit to Indonesia, was held at Gedung Pancasila at the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (KEMLU). Dr Vivian Balakrishnan went on to say that: "We were also able to help each other with respect to the tests for COVID, PPE (personal protective equipment), reagents and the rest of it. The point is that we have gone through a crisis together. We have successfully collaborated. We have saved lives, and we have helped to cushion the economic impact on our people together. That is the first point - that our relations with Indonesia are very, very good, and have withstood a stress test."

This underscored the strong bilateral tests, which was confirmed by the level of engagement between both countries in the last year. Dr Vivian revealed that despite all the challenges both KEMLU



and MFA had "a very busy time."

The visit by the Singapore Foreign Minister capped several initiatives that have been going on for some time. In the last few days several agreements were signed; this included:

- **Bilateral Investment Treaty** signed by Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi and Singapore Minister of Trade and Industry Mr Chan Chu Sing.

- **Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement** that awaits ratification.

- **The Bilateral Financial Arrangement** was renewed by both countries' central banks. This is a US\$10 billion arrangement to mutually stabilise the Singapore Dollar and Indonesian Rupiah during times of crisis.

Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi in her remarks outlined how good progress has been made on the economic front. Singapore remains Indonesia largest foreign investor. Despite COVID-19,



Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from Singapore into Indonesia rose by almost 50%. This reflects, in concrete terms, a vote of confidence by Singapore in Indonesia, its prospects for economic growth and its future.

Minister Vivian Balakrishnan also added that: "With all the other agreements that we outlined just now, I expect this number to continue to grow. If you also think about the other projects that we have – the Kendal Industrial Park is going on well. In fact, it is now reaching a point where we actually need to promote the development of a port to support Kendal's industrial development."

ments Despite COVID-19



Minister Balakrishnan's meetings with (clockwise from extreme left):

■ Minister for Foreign Affairs Retno Marsudi

■ Indonesian Minister of Finance Sri Mulyani Indrawati

■ At breakfast with Jakarta Governor Anies Baswedan

■ Indonesian Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs Airlangga Hartarto

Photos: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore



“We are truly friends in need who have demonstrated reliability and trustworthiness. We have been able to work together very closely, economically, and at the people-to-people level. We have been able to sign agreements, despite all our busyness. The future prospects for investments, for growth, within Indonesia are very, very great. Singapore, not just as an investor, has confidence in Indonesia and its prospects for the future.”

- Dr Vivian Balakrishnan

BBK Promising Potential

Indonesia's Foreign Minister also highlighted the potential for growth in Batam, Bintan and Karimun (islands) and Minister Vivian Balakrishnan recalled how they both were in Nongsa, in Batam, to launch the island's digital hub. He said: “I am very proud to see that develop, and that we have a digital bridge from Singapore to Batam. As globalisation and as the digital revolution goes on, I see great, great prospects for that bridge to become a vibrant connector – an electronic and human connector – that will harvest opportunities for young people in both Singapore and Indonesia.”

Tourism, Bintan and Leaders' Retreat

During his visit Dr Vivian Balakrishna had also called on Indonesia's Minister of Tourism and the Creative Economy, Mr Sandiaga Salahuddin Uno. They discussed how, as the situation improves, Minister Sandiaga looked forward to a gradual and safe reopening of travel

arrangements. According to Minister Balakrishnan: “Again, we are looking at areas of mutual interest. In our earlier discussion, we had looked particularly at Bintan, perhaps as a site where we could convene our Leaders' Retreat. The Leaders' Retreat will proceed this year. Watch out for the date. Our two leaders will meet in-person and they have got a full agenda ahead of them. ☑



(Above row): Meeting with President Joko Widodo at Istana Merdeka (Photo: Biro Pers Sekretariat Presiden)



Meetings with (2nd row): Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs and Investments Luhut Pandjaitan; (3rd row): Minister of Tourism & Creative Economy Sandiaga Uno and (4th row): former Indonesian President Megawati Soekarnoputri

Leaders Retreat to Go Ahead “Almost Certainly” at Bintan

A hectic, very busy but fulfilling and fruitful two-day visit. In a media wrap up at the Singapore Residence in Jakarta, the Foreign Minister shared highlights of his visit

Foreign Minister Dr Vivian Balakrishnan had the opportunity to meet the President, Joko Widodo to discuss the Leaders’ Retreat between President Jokowi and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. The Minister said: “We agreed we will hold it this year. We agreed that it will be hosted by Indonesia, and that it will almost certainly be in Bintan. What we need to sort out now are the exact dates. We will continue to settle the agenda, the details of the projects and items to be discussed. We also want to give a chance for the vaccination programmes and safe travel measures in Bintan and us here in Singapore, to be better coordinated. Hopefully, that will mark the start of a new phase in the options for travel.”

The Singapore Foreign Minister also had the opportunity to meet the Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs and Investments Pak Luhut Pandjaitan, and the Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs Airlangga Hartarto.

He also met his counterpart, Minister of Foreign Affairs Ibu Retno Marsudi. From the finance side, he met Minister of Finance Sri Mulyani Indrawati and on tourism, Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy Sandiaga Uno.

Other cabinet members included Mr Erick Thohir, the Minister of State-Owned Enterprises and he also had

“President Joko Widodo was also particularly seized with this question of the green economy, and the opportunities that the green economy presents for Indonesia, in terms of Indonesia’s access to hydropower, wind, geothermal, solar panels, and how the economics of renewable energy have been transformed in the last five to ten years.”

a breakfast meeting with the Governor of Jakarta, Mr Anies Baswedan.

In the media wrap he also shared some observations on the state of relations with Indonesia: “First, our relations with Indonesia are in a very, very good state. Despite the challenges of last year with COVID-19, we have stayed in close touch. We have supported each other mutually. We have made sure supply chains continued to flow, especially for products such as essential drugs, medication, and PPE (personal protective equipment). In the early phase of the crisis, we were also supplying PCR machines, reagents and other essential supplies that were in critical shortage at that point in time. Now, we are in a different phase. Both in Singapore as well as Indonesia, the COVID-19 situation is much better than it was a year ago. The other key development in both countries is the rollout of vaccinations. In both countries, vaccination is key to the post-COVID-19 recovery. What I also wanted to do here was to compare notes, share experiences in terms of the delivery of vaccines to the population – how fast and how to do it. Of course, the challenges in Indonesia are far greater and far more complex than in Singapore. But still, it is a useful exercise in its own right.”

In other matters related to COVID, the Singapore Minister said he wanted to start initial conversations about how health authorities will be able to recognise and verify health records related to vaccination status, serology status if applicable and PCR tests. He pointed out that this requires each country to set up its own national system (which Singapore has) and then to be able to exchange relevant information, when necessary, with consent. This he said will help enable the future resumption of safe travel between Indonesia and Singapore.

He had also held similar discussions with Malaysia, and with Brunei. He hoped these initial bilateral discussions will eventually be generalised into a regional series of arrangements, which will, hopefully, in the not-so-distant future, enable people to travel again – to travel for business, studies, social reasons, family reasons, and even tourism when the situation improves.


Indonesia and Singapore also had the opportunity to review matters on the economic front where there has been significant progress. Despite COVID-19, the investment flow from Singapore to Indonesia last year went up by an additional 50%. Singapore remains Indonesia’s largest foreign investor and has been so for the past six years. He observed that in terms of regulatory certainty, in terms of agreements, in terms of investment flow, it has all been very positive. The Indonesian side appreciates this and wants to continue to engage Singapore and to attract more investments.

He also observed that there are many opportunities in Indonesia as they roll out infrastructure, and as they prepare for the green economy; he also highlighted how there have always

been opportunities for Singapore companies: “Now, I think, this is another occasion to look for new investment opportunities, even as the economy restructures in Indonesia, and even after COVID-19, as we prepare for a new world which will focus, I believe, on a greater need for resilience. There will be changes in supply chains. I think it is also an occasion for ASEAN, as an economic centre of gravity in its own right, to be emphasised and for us to increase intra-ASEAN trade as well as the way ASEAN engages and trades with the rest of the world. I have had very useful sessions with a very wide range of Ministers in this short visit here.”

The Minister when asked about his interaction with President Jokowi elaborated how, apart from discussing the Leaders’ Retreat, they also talked about the economy, Myanmar and the discussions that the leaders will need to have. He also revealed President Joko Widodo was also particularly seized with this question of the green economy, and the opportunities that the green economy presents for Indonesia, in terms of Indonesia’s access to hydropower, wind, geothermal, solar panels, and how the economics of renewable energy have been transformed in the last five to ten years.

He said: “Many things, which in the past, you could say were almost aspirational or ideological, make perfect economic sense today, and with the proper regulatory frameworks and no fossil fuel subsidies, let technology and market economics work through the system. I think the green economy, not only in Indonesia, but across Southeast Asia, is going to take off in a big way in the next decades to come. This is a very exciting space and President Jokowi recognised that. We had quite a passionate and enthusiastic discussion on this topic.”

On the topic of a proposed travel corridor between Singapore and Batam Nongsa (and also potentially Bali) that was mentioned by Indonesia’s Minister of Tourism, Mr Sandiaga Uno, Dr Balakrishnan replied: “Well, I want to start by quoting Ibu Retno. As we make these arrangements in the context of a recovery from COVID-19, I think the adjectives that should be used are “gradual, safe and cautious”. I think these are very apt adjectives to describe the way we will do so. I would reiterate the point that we need the COVID-19 situation to improve significantly; ideally for Indonesia to achieve the same level of control as we currently have in Singapore. The other point, I emphasise again, is the need for testing, for vaccination especially, and for us to be able to share records – verifiable, authoritative records – in order to enable cross-border travel. This will take some time. That is why I completely agree with Ibu Retno’s point. Let us do it gradually, carefully and cautiously. That is the way to do it. The last thing you want is to run before you are ready and then you get a big cluster and set us back. Have some patience, but rest assured, we are working on this.” 

H.E. Suryo Pratomo: Time to Look at Indonesia in a New Light for Closer Ties

Interview by Nomita Dhar

Indonesia's new Ambassador to Singapore believes the strengthening of trust and confidence between the people of the two nations will be pivotal for a better understanding of each other and a catalyst for developing more avenues of growth and opportunity

(Above right): Ambassador Pratomo presented his credentials to President Halimah Yacob at the Istana on 24th November 2020

(Opposite page, top row): Strengthening of ties and cooperation was a constant theme he came back to in his interview

(Opposite page, 2nd row): Welcome reception for the new Ambassador and his wife Mdm Noeri Widowati by the Indonesian Embassy



His journey as a media person, as the former president director of private television station Metro TV, brings with it an interesting take on his duties as Indonesia's new Ambassador to Singapore for HE Suryo Pratomo, for whom life's course has taken a completely new turn with his surprise choice as ambassador by President Joko Widodo, replacing outgoing ambassador, HE Gede Ngurah Swajaya, who has served here since 2015.

Despite having worked in the private sector for most of his working life, Ambassador Pratomo appears to have been well grounded to take on the challenges of a diplomatic career with a matured world-view and positive outlook. This seems to have been largely shaped by what he learned at *Kompas*, where he worked as a journalist for 21 years and served as its editorial chief, inculcating its outlook for offering its readers a balanced view of things, so that they had the right perspective of a situation before forming an opinion about it.

Settling in Singapore during the COVID pandemic, has brought its own lessons for the new resident ambassador at Chatsworth Road. He shares how in

the past he found it difficult to control and monitor travelling Indonesians and asking them to follow the rules. But Singapore revealed to him how people residing in the island nation, regardless of what country they were from, abided by the strict regulations established by the government for their own protection and to contain the contagion. "You know Indonesians have become more paranoid about meeting people because of the situation, but here I feel more confident about stepping out and meeting people because of the strict rules," he says.

Having moved out of media, which has been his comfort zone for so long, he says that it's not going to be easy going the diplomacy route. However, he has been training for it and now feels more secure about conducting diplomatic related matters. He said this also comes from having the support of the embassy staff here who kept him updated on things and apprised him fully about the situation in Singapore before he actually arrived to take up the position.

Regarding being chosen by the President for the post, he shares it had come as a huge surprise when he learnt about this from the deputy foreign minister back February. "I aim to try

“Until now the relations between the two countries have been very good, but I think, we can still further build on the trust and confidence in each other; that’s why the role of media is to also put everything in context so that people have a better understanding and greater depth of knowledge about a situation,”



my best and indeed it is an honour, to do justice to his trust in me to serve my country to the best of my ability,” says His Excellency.

Responding to how he sees his role impacted by his previous experiences as a media man, the ambassador shares that earlier the media could criticize the government, but one could not cross a line, it was only when the country was led by a democratic government that the press had full freedom to express and freedom of speech on anything. “But my years at *Kompas* remind me that the media is not only a tool to criticize. It is also a communicator of hopes, so that’s why the role of media is not just to talk

about anything lacking on the part of the government or in society. It is also to educate. That is the wisdom I acquired there. *Kompas* never tried to exaggerate the facts but tried to offer in a balanced manner a better perspective,” he says.

He underscores his viewpoint by adding that with this kind of background as the new Indonesian ambassador he wants to show his former media colleagues in Indonesia that Singapore and Indonesia can overcome any differences. “Until now the relations between the two countries have been very good, but I think, we can still further build on the trust and confidence in each other; that’s why the role of media is to also put everything in context so that people have a better understanding and greater depth of knowledge about a situation,” reiterates the ambassador.

Speaking at length about the COVID

pandemic and its impact on investment and trade between the two countries, Ambassador Suryo Pratomo believes that the first priority is healthcare. He speaks highly of the ongoing work of the Singapore government and especially singled out Temasek Foundation in providing assistance to the Indonesian people during the pandemic. He also firmly believes that since even today information about the virus is still limited, both nations have an opportunity to come together to share their resources to find better outcomes for containing its spread as the pandemic is still not clearing after all these months.

It is not easy, he says, for the pharmaceutical companies to find the vaccines that are needed to put an end to it and that is why both countries need to work together, not just as a partnership but with the aim of developing the research for its eradication.

COVID Control

HE Suryo Pratomo has spoken to the head of the passport division back in Indonesia about how Singapore has implemented the discipline to contain and monitor the spread of the virus by strict law enforcement and technology. With this in mind, he says, he has tried to connect the Ministry

of Home Affairs, ICA and Indonesia's Research and Development agency BPPT to work together as he was inspired by Singapore's application of technology in tracking and contact tracing during the COVID 'circuit breaker' period.

In his opinion, Singapore, one of the world's most densely populated countries was correct in approaching the pandemic crisis on a war footing and its handling of its spread has been a great lesson for other countries undergoing the same harrowing conditions.

A suggestion has been floated that, says the ambassador, with Indonesia's population of almost 270 million people spread over many islands Singapore's methods may not be possible, but one could start the exercise as a "sampler" in a smaller area, say like on islands such as Bintan; the ambassador feels if they could carry out a pilot exercise at the passport office where they have 1,000 people, and see how the technology works, they can have the confidence to apply it in other areas such as Bali and even Jakarta. He thinks such an exercise can lead to the opening up of 'travel bubbles' e.g. between Singapore and Bintan, once the virus is contained in Bintan.

After COVID

"At the same time," Ambassador Suryo Pratomo says: "we are thinking of how after COVID-19 we can bring the two countries together to co-operate even more closely and with the success of that develop more opportunities." Indonesia he points out has immense natural resources and is a huge market; Singapore on the other hand is very strong in the financial sector and has very good R&D facilities. His Excellency opines that post-COVID there is no reason why both nations cannot learn how to optimize their individual strengths for their mutual benefit. "This is a challenge, but once the vaccine is a success and one can control the pandemic I think the two countries can really strengthen their co-operation further," he says.

Commenting on the matter of vaccine –multilateralism, he feels that there is no country which can isolate itself in these times, simply because it is surrounded by other countries and any people movement between them can be a threat. It's one of the reasons, he says that Singapore agreed to partner and help other countries, for not only would it save Singapore from its spread it would also support the countries around it to handle the spread of the virus.

When asked about the embassy's support of the Indonesian diaspora during the pandemic, the ambassador pointed out that there are 250,000



HE Suryo Pratomo the family man with wife and the families of his two daughters

Indonesians in Singapore. It has not been possible to help everyone travel back to Indonesia but what they have tried to do is reach out to the more privileged and better off members of the community and asked them to think of ways of helping their countrymen who live here and are not so fortunate. They have been encouraging them to be creative and set up networking programmes to open up avenues of revenue, be it in setting up outlets for Indonesian food distribution and the like, that will help the less fortunate.

From Bandung

Born in Bandung, West Java in 1961, Ambassador Suryo Pratomo, popularly known since his media days as Tommy, has been a nationally recognized media personality. Both his parents were teachers in Bandung but he remembers

having travelled to several cities across the country with his father who was also a businessman. Eventually he settled in Bogor and enrolled for study at the Faculty of Animal Husbandry at Bogor Agricultural University; he graduated from there in 1983, but a highpoint of his time here was he met his wife who was a vet and thereafter joined the Ministry of Agriculture. Having enjoyed bringing out the faculty magazine he decided to pursue a career as a journalist and rose to become a nationally recognized media person. One of their daughters is a dentist and runs a clinic in Jakarta. His other daughter living there has recently quit her job in the exhibitions industry to have a baby.

The message Ambassador Suryo Pratomo would like to send out to both Indonesians and to Singaporeans is to build up the platform of trust and confidence to close the gap between new opportunities and capacity building – and in this he feels the diaspora can play a pivotal role in making these changes given their experiences gained by living abroad.

The media too, he believes can play its role by responsibly providing balanced perspectives to ensure that the twin tools of trust and confidence will work towards creating greater people-to-people ties; it will, he opines, change their approach to the differences between the two nations and perceive each as being a land of hope and opportunity.

He feels that instead of focusing on and exaggerating their differences it would be mutually more beneficial to strengthen one's common goals. He believes that initiatives, such as Singapore's move to diversifying its supply chain and the explorations of the Singapore-Indonesia 6 Bilateral Economic Working Groups platform, will be pivotal to fortifying this outlook and the relationship between the two nations. ©



Events Highlights (1st row, from l to r): Chingay Festivities - Ambassador Suryo Pratomo and Ibu Widowati with Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong; Courtesy call on Singapore's Senior Minister & Coordinating Minister for National Security Mr Teo Chee Hean. (2nd row) The Ambassador also met Senior Minister and Coordinating Minister for Social Policies Tharman Shanmugaratnam; Minister for Sustainability and the Environment and Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Grace Fu and Attorney General Mr Lucien Wong. (3rd row): Ambassador gratefully received donation of 60 personal computers on behalf Sekolah Indonesia Singapura from an Indonesian company; he also met, online, the Indonesian community in Singapore. (4th row): Two sessions of the first Business Connect Meetings

Mdm Noeri Widowati: A Heavy Responsibility but Grateful for the Opportunity to Serve

Interview by Nomita Dhar



The wife of Indonesia's new Ambassador to Singapore, H.E. Suryo Pratomo, shares what this unexpected assignment means to them both

“Frankly speaking,” says Madame Noeri Widowati, “I started to feel nervous, anxious even, yet at the same time also grateful, because it is a heavy mandate and there is so much going on between Singapore and Indonesia,” while recalling the night her husband came home and told her about the assignment.

Nervous and anxious she may well have been, considering her prior trips to Singapore were about family holidays with her two daughters. Returning to Singapore as the wife of the new ambassador of Indonesia to this island-nation was for Madame Noeri Widowati (herself a retired civil servant) is loaded with many connotations. For one the fact that her husband for many years was a journalist of national acclaim, which brings a very unique twist to the ambassadorship and the supportive role she will assay.

In all her years as the wife of a journalist she was well aware of the nature of her husband's job, which did not always entail being diplomatic about what you had to say while filing your reports. By his own admission, in an interview, HE Suryo Pratomo was alive to this aspect of his work as a leading journalist. So she does agree with him that the new assignment came with its challenges. “It was difficult given our backgrounds, but we felt this was God's will and we prayed to Him to help us carry out this heavy mandate.”

It's been over three months since Madame Noeri arrived in Singapore with the ambassador and she has settled in quite comfortably already. She is eager to play the supporting role with dignity and grace that appears to be part of her Zen-like bearing. Born in Malang in East Java, Madame Noeri is the second in line of her six brothers and sisters. While her mother was a teacher, her father's duties in his career in the legal department took the family to many places. It was in her college days that the family settled down in Jakarta where she was living with her sisters.

“It was difficult given our backgrounds, but we felt this was God's will and we prayed to Him to help us carry out this heavy mandate.”

First Meeting

Madame Noeri met Ambassador HE Suryo Pratomo in 1980 when they were both studying at Bogor Agricultural University. They were both members of the university choir and became friends; and gradually when the relationship deepened got married in 1986. While he went on to pursue a career in journalism, she served as a veterinarian for 32 years at the Directorate of Animal Health in Jakarta. Mostly the work here involved

preparing concepts of policy briefs, regulations and requirements for export and imports of animals and controlling and preventing animals from disease. She then went on to join the Ministry of Agriculture.

Regarding what Singapore and Indonesia can do together in this area, Madame Noeri shares that Indonesia has a good relationship with Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) of Singapore and they hold bilateral meetings each year to talk about what can be implemented between the two countries. Singapore has a higher requirement for animal products than Indonesia; so it's quite possible with improvement of standards in Indonesia in all likelihood Singapore would expand its trade in this area, she feels.

Dharma Wanita and Pandemic

Adjusting to life as the ambassador's wife in Singapore also entails activities and duties that are separate from that of her husband. As the head of Dharma Wanita (an organization for the wives of Indonesian civil servants) she also drives some of the activities that have needed to be tailored to the concerns of the pandemic and its restrictions. “I had a lot of dialogues and conversations as to how to proceed with Ibu Hadi, who is my neighbour, as I had no

“Sometimes we invited the Indonesian ladies living in Singapore to join us, but in small numbers. Actually, during the COVID-19 outbreak we don’t have high expectations, just small things we can do during this pandemic situation. We want to help Indonesian migratory workers in our shelters to improve their capacities because there they don’t have any chance to learn like their friends outside the shelter.”



(Above): From Ibu Noeri Widowati’s Instagram account: Members of the Dharma Wanita Persatuan KBRI Singapura in several activities held over a period of a month earlier this year at the Indonesia School in Singapore

Speaking about the status of women in Indonesia, she says: “In my opinion women who have adequate education are generally treated on the same level as men, but when women are less educated, especially those in the villages or more remote areas, it is the men who hold the power. I think if women are better educated, they will have a wider thinking, wider knowledge, so they can hold the same position as men in society.”

experience at all in this area. It was difficult for us to plan the big events that were done earlier. We instead planned and prepared simple activities that involved members only. Sometimes we invited the Indonesian ladies living in Singapore to join us, but in small numbers planning for activities such as flower arrangement workshops. Actually, during these times (COVID-19 outbreak) we don't have high expectations, just small things we can do during this pandemic situation. We want to help Indonesian migratory workers in our shelters to improve their capacities because there they don't have any chance to learn, like their friends outside the shelter” she says.

Eating & Entertaining

Speaking about her duties as a hostess, she remembers when her husband was working as a journalist and he invited guests eating out was quite casual and mostly in restaurants – and she did not need seek his approval for the meal! But now, it's all very formal since he is the ambassador; as his wife she has to follow strict protocol about the guest list, the dishes to be served, the elaborate table setting and coordinate all this with his Chief of Staff and get his OK for everything.

Luckily, she says, they have a good chef




who has much experience in cooking for Indonesian diplomats. Not only is he much admired by the embassy staff for his accomplishments, he also greatly support her efforts. She had managed to get him from the previous Ambassador of Thailand. She herself quite enjoys going to Singapore's fruit and vegetable market and the meat and chicken shop... all of which she finds is of high quality. She notes that: “Singapore imports a lot of its produce, so you have quite a choice of good quality stuff.”

Returning to the matter of her family, she reveals that they have two daughters and three grandchildren. Speaking about how things have changed in Indonesia for women, she recalls her mother was quite active in her duties as a teacher while her father

was busy with his work in the legal department: “We learnt a lot from her and just absorbed what she did by way of example.”

Things have not changed that much except that when she was young, she says: “You just did what your parents told you to, but now my daughters have the freedom to express their wishes, argue and have different opinions from their parents.” Speaking about the status of women in Indonesia, she says: “In my opinion women who have adequate education are generally treated on the same level as men,

but when women are less educated, especially those in the villages or more remote areas, it is the men who hold the power. I think if women are better educated, they will have a wider thinking, wider knowledge, so they can hold the same position as men in society.”

Living in Singapore as the ambassador's wife has set another rhythm and routine to her life. She enjoys morning walks in the Botanical Gardens; in particular she likes its cleanliness and wide spaces. Whenever she finds time from her duties, she enjoys watching thrillers on TV, continues to do quilting and other leisure activities she did back home when Bapak Tommy was travelling, before coming to Singapore as ambassador. 

Jakarta Ranked as One of Asia's Most Important Startup Ecosystems

empower magazine highlights a city's startup ecosystem and level of support for innovation and entrepreneurship and chose Jakarta as one of the three focus cities along with Singapore and Bengaluru in Asia

A German non-profit organisation that empowers entrepreneurs called *enpact* e.V has compiled a Startup Friendliness Index (SFI) that it started in 2017 to analyse the entrepreneurial ecosystems of cities and their ability to grow and sustain startups. In March, *enpact* together with AsiaBerlin (a collective platform connecting startup ecosystems) powered by the Berlin Senate Department and Redhill (a Singapore communications agency) launched a new publication titled *empower!* whose inaugural issue focussed on Jakarta, Singapore and Bengaluru as three of Asia's most important startup ecosystems.

Under the SFI, each city receives a score for 91 normalised indicators, which are divided into six vital domains for entrepreneurs (human capital, finance, infrastructure, startup scene, market and macro) and 17 subdomains. These scores are then aggregated into a domain score and a final SFI score. The best-performing city for a single indicator is given a perfect score of 100 in terms of what is most beneficial for startups. As the world's fourth most populous country and the 10th largest economy, Indonesia is a fast-growing hub for startups. Its capital city, Jakarta, has an SFI score of 43.23, supported by key strengths such as robust technology infrastructure, massive market size and affordable, high-quality talent. All five of the country's unicorns are based in Jakarta and the FinTech sector, in particular, has grown by 83 percent from September 2019 to August 2020.



In the inaugural issue of *empower!* author Joao Castel-Branco described Indonesia having a unique position in ASEAN as “a massive market with eager young entrepreneurs is exactly what has made it a center of startups and innovation. For its vast population, Indonesians seek to create solutions for their environment. Additionally, neighboring countries such as Singapore often turn to Jakarta for skilled talent.” Globally, Jakarta ranks 12th out of 58 cities in the SFI ranking. The strengths and highlights of the city according to the magazine are:

- Low salaries which is advantageous for startups (average salary US\$455 and minimum wage US\$137)
- It is simple and fast to start a business there (costs US\$73 and takes only 10 days)
- Access to finance (only 3.8% of firms consider access to finance a constraint here)
- All five of Indonesia's unicorns are based in Jakarta
- Indonesian fintech startups are experiencing substantial growth (e.g. in 2019 Jakarta had 821 startups, which has doubled

to 2,492 by the start of 2021

FinTech Well Regulated Indonesia realises freedom to innovate cannot come at the cost of the loss of credibility and *empower!* highlighted that policy makers in Indonesia have created a mutually beneficial relationship with its startups. In a section titled “Policies in FinTech

Regulated” it described how in November 2017: “Bank Indonesia (BI) introduced a regulatory sandbox through Regulation No 19/12/PBII/2017. This is a broad regulation on all FinTech sectors and although it is not the first of its kind, it still serves as the baseline regulation in the FinTech market. Indonesia's Financial Services Authority (OJK), has the authority to regulate matters relating to non-payment financial services in the banking, capital markets, insurance, pension fund and financing sectors. For P2P lending institutions, which were legally recognized in December 2016, major policies regarding finance include a foreign ownership limit of 85%, prohibition of carrying out any on-balance sheet lending and a lending limit amount of around \$141,000 USD. As a result of the regulation, OJK has already blocked more than one thousand illegal P2P players from fraudulent activity. ©

For more in-depth profile of the cities featured in this issue, you can download a free copy of *empower!* at this link: <https://enpact.org/blog/publications/empower-issue->



Preferred Partner for Doing Business in Singapore

BISA, the Business Indonesia Singapore Association, was established 12 years ago and has helped many find business opportunities in both Singapore and Indonesia



Stephanus Titus Widjaja is the Founder and Director of BISA

According to Stephanus T. Widjaja, one of the three original founders of BISA, the core of the business has always been to offer business solutions to Indonesia companies that would like to establish their presence and branding in Singapore and the region. BISA first started with the idea of assisting Indonesians new to the Singapore market by setting up its “Kantor Bersama BISA” or “BISA Office Sharing” services here.

BISA can be considered a boutique business networking platform that has grown since the idea of its launch was hatched in 2009. Stephanus said “Singapore is an excellent business hub and we are able to have many international and domestic networking events, seminars, coffee meetings, business trips etc.”

Indonesia Startup Insight

BISA was officially established in 2012 and since then its stature and profile has risen significantly as it kept up

with the times and now offers digital marketing and online business activities as well. For example, it is the organiser of the annual Indonesia Startup Insight (ISI) that it started in 2015. The event brings together the movers and shakers of the Indonesian business and startup scene to exchange ideas, bridge knowledge gaps and re-imagine what the future of business and technology will look like.

The event is supported by the Indonesian Embassy in Singapore and has attracted the participation of more than 100 companies and organisations including ATM Capital, Bank of Singapore, Indogen Capital, Investor Ready, UMG Myanmar, Social Collider and KADIN Indonesia Singapore Committee.

Stephanus shared that: “Since its inception ISI has grown into a leading platform for start-ups and businesses to come together to explore ideas and best practices that have the potential to help advance growth and opportunities

as a whole. Given the global COVID-19 pandemic, it is a challenging yet fascinating time for businesses in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, and we are expecting more native Indonesians and the Indonesian Diaspora to take part this year.”

The last ISI was held on November 2020 on the theme ‘Reshaping Our Future’. The Guest of Honour was Indonesian Ambassador to Singapore, H.E. Suryo Pratomo, with prominent keynote speakers: Ambassador H.E. Ngurah Swajaya Director General of American and European Affairs at the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Dr. Ir. Hari Santosa Sungkari M.H. Deputy Chairman of Infrastructure and Destination Development of Indonesia’s Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy; Mr Michael Goutama Ph.D the representatives of KADIN in Singapore and Ms Caroline Stockmann Chief Executive at the Association of Corporate Treasurers. They were joined by other speakers representing the IT, Fintech, Banking industries as well as academia.





The last ISI has also found widespread support and sponsorship from firms and organisations such as Ducatus Global, ID Integrated, Prespective Design, ENCE Public Relations and Sekolah Indonesia Singapura.

Exciting Component

One exciting component of the event is the Startup Pitch Battle competition where teams of Indonesian startups present their business ideas virtually to win cash and in-kind prizes.

The Challenge provides budding start-ups a platform to present their business plans, analyses and strategies to a panel of expert judges who are industry influencers and entrepreneurs from various industries including commodities, fintech and creative sectors. It also allows fellow entrepreneurs to gain first-hand insights into the innovative approaches Indonesian start-ups adopt in pivoting their businesses further.

Why Singapore for Business?

At its heart BISA is ideally positioned in a country that is economically and geographically a springboard for the regional and world markets.

BISA highlights how many Indonesian companies are following in the steps of many other foreign companies who have set up shop on the island. According to Singapore's Economic Development Board (EDB) website, there are more than 7,000 foreign MNCs and about 10,000 foreign SMEs from all over the world, out of a total of 37,400

international companies who base their operations out of Singapore, with more than half of those running their Asia-Pacific businesses from the city state.


A strategic gateway, Singapore is ranked first in ease of doing business by the World Bank; it is ranked the third wealthiest nation in the world by Forbes Magazine and third most globalised economy among the world's 60 largest economies.

BISA has identified growth areas for companies who may want to expand to Singapore. It offers convenient 'one-stop' services for new companies arriving here, such as competitive packages to set up a Trading Company or establish a Dropshipping online business (which means you source and sell online products without managing costly inventory and have the supplier fulfil your order). Another option for the post-COVID pandemic period can be the setting up of exhibition-style pavillions for various brands for seasonal events or occasions to launch or introduce a brand into this market.

Support & Collaboration

Apart from professional help in setting up a business here, Stephanus highlighted that the spirit of BISA as a business network platform is still to keep in touch and connected with everyone. The aim, he says, is to "support each other and collaborate" as well as practise some "gotong royong", the Indonesian term for the "can do spirit" of entrepreneurship. One of the ways it does this is through its regular

"Since its inception ISI has grown into a leading platform for start-ups and businesses to come together to explore ideas and best practices that have the potential to help advance growth and opportunities as a whole. Given the global COVID-19 pandemic, it is a challenging yet fascinating time for businesses in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, and we are expecting more native Indonesians and the Indonesian Diaspora to take part this year."

BISAKITA series of online and hybrid programmes that showcase a great variety of topics that can range from the potential of bitcoins technology to the Challenges & Opportunities in Education! Prior to COVID-19 these were casual and open meet-ups, which later had to be restricted to eight people per session (for the hybrid programmes) to follow mandated health protocols. For more information about BISA visit www.bisakita.com. 


BISA Key Services

- Office Share in Orchard Road
- Marketing & Expanding to Indonesia
- Finding Local partner in Indonesia
- Expanding to Singapore and the Region
- Build Your Singaporean Company

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The Future of **Jamu**

Indonesians are already familiar with the health benefits of these traditional herbal preparations but how will they fare in a post-COVID world?

The world is still reeling from the deadly effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the race to find a safe and effective vaccine is now over and countries are fighting back with their vaccination programmes, there is a movement to also find more natural and holistic ways to maintain one's health using herbal medicine which have antimicrobial or antiviral, anti-inflammatory, and immunostimulatory properties.

For centuries now the indigenous science for medicinal plants has been thriving amongst the Chinese and Indian people; there are cultures worldwide, in fact, to which this is an integral part since time immemorial. One must remember the identification of medicinal plants growing on community land for the procurement of traditional medicinal materials has been carried out by the community since the ancient days.

Ever since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic people in Indonesia have been stocking up on jamu, derived from the ancient Javanese word "jampi" (magic potion), a traditional herbal drink known for its immunity-boosting properties and the maintenance of good health.

For over 1,200 years now, since the Mataram Kingdom in Java, the Javanese have used medicinal plants as a deterrent / inhibitor to diseases found in the body, by drinking herbs sourced from medicinal plants. A homemade product, jamu, is made with fresh and raw ingredients like tamarind, galangal, ginger, and turmeric. From grannies in the urban spaces to healers in the village communities, jamu has been the go-to herbal drink to stave off ill health. Even President Jokowi swears by his jamu which he has been taking for almost 20 years!

Indonesia is well regarded for the growth of various plants of empon-empon or herbs and spices that go into the making of traditional Javanese medicinal drinks, popular for maintaining health and treating diseases, as they are considered to be safe from chemical drugs.



Jamu as the "next espresso?" but with immune boosting, anti inflammatory properties with orange and turmeric!



President Jokowi prefers to drink his own homemade jamu to prevent illness and maintain his health and stamina. He shared his jamu recipe in a vlog as a mixture of temulawak (curcuma zanthorrhiza, ginger and turmeric). Photo: still from President Jokowi Instagram video)

Jamu is very much part of life in Indonesian homes and in fact it's not unusual to find peddlers, known as *jamugendong*, going around selling their wares from place to place; this is, of course, common enough practice amongst many world communities. As is also the fact that knowledge of traditional herbal formulas have been preserved and transmitted down orally from one generation to another. Turmeric and tamarind for example are mainstay components for *jamukunirasem*, while in *jamuberaskencur*, the supporting components are rice and *kaempferiagalanga* in addition to *kawak acid*, *kedawung seeds*, ginger

rhizome, cardamom seeds, *temukunci*, cinnamon, turmeric, lemon and nutmeg. To scale down the bitter edge natural sweeteners such as brown sugar, granulated sugar, rock sugar or honey were added to the concoction.

There is no one given formula for jamu; in fact, across Indonesia hundreds of ethnic groups have, over the centuries, evolved their own specific traditional prescriptions, sourced from the medicinal plants from the botanical wealth on community land. These are often created from a single ingredient or a combination of several constituents. The mainstay of jamu, however, for long has been plants from the ginger family (Zingiberaceae) as also Curcuma, Kaempferia, Zingiber, Alpinia, Elattaria and Costus.

It is also well known that different medicinal plants used in jamu will have different forms of efficacy, even though they are generally good for improving one's own wellbeing. Little wonder then that the pandemic has also encouraged Indonesian researchers to step up efforts to look into the potential of jamu ingredients as a herbal medicine. In a story published by *The Jakarta Post* last April, it reported how researchers in Indonesia have started zeroing on the potential for several medicinal plants often used as jamu ingredients, such as turmeric, *secang* (sappanwood), bitter leaves and galangal, as shared by Mangestuti Agil, a professor at the Pharmacognition and Phytochemistry Department of Airlangga University's School of Pharmacy in Surabaya, East Java.



Pre-COVID times: A herbalist in Yogyakarta serving a customer; Jamu is sold through many herbal drink stalls found throughout the country.
Photo: Annisa Fitri Muthmainah / Shutterstock.com

The newspaper also reported how market reports have painted a “bright, post-pandemic future for Indonesian jamu.” National jamu sales in 2019 generated Rp 21.5 trillion (US\$1.38 billion) in revenue, up 13.1 percent from Rp 19 trillion in 2018, according to figures published by the Indonesian Jamu and Traditional Medicine Producers Group (GP-Jamu).

While last year’s figure remains indeterminate due to the COVID19 outbreak’s impacts on logistics and consumer buying power, the available figures and reports indicate a promising future for the herbal medicine market.

The Jakarta Post stated that even amid the economic downturn due to the government’s COVID-19 emergency measures, the first quarter of 2020 saw the jamu and herbal supplements segment contribute more than 68 percent of its Rp 730.72 billion sales revenue, a

healthy during the pandemic, and the profit surge is quite large,” Sido Muncul director Irwan Hidayat, whose family owns majority shares in the company, told The Jakarta Post. Irwan also estimated a 30 percent surge in demand this year, with customers flocking to buy jamu containing plants from the curcuma genus, such as turmeric and ginger. With this promising outlook, he estimated a 10 percent increase in both sales and profit by the end of the year.

This optimistic outlook is borne by other market research reports on how COVID-19 is impacting food and drink markets in Southeast Asia. Mintel, the global market research firm found many consumers are turning to traditional remedies to boost their immune system

According to the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) the country has over three-quarters of the more than 40,000

According to the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) the country has over three-quarters of the more than 40,000 medicinal plants in the world and is an “untapped source of the global market for herbal medicines.”

year-on-year (YOY) increase of 2.4 percent. Meanwhile, Indonesia’s herbal medicine giant Sido Muncul saw its profit jump 10.85 percent YOY to Rp 231.53 billion in January-March. “I think demand has increased because people want to stay

medicinal plants in the world and is an “untapped source of the global market for herbal medicines.”

The newspaper report also included a snapshot of the industry: “In 2018, Indonesia had 1,247 jamu producers, of which 129 were large manufacturers using modern technology. The remaining 1,118 producers were micro, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), the majority of which used traditional jamu production methods. The segment employed up to 15 million workers, comprising 3 million workers in the jamu and traditional medicine segment, and the remaining 12 million workers employed in related sectors and markets that used jamu products, such as the food and beverage and cosmetics industries, as well as the spa services and aromatherapy markets.”

Market observers and industry players are confident that jamu culture can transform and penetrate the pharmaceutical [industry], and through restaurants to become part of the food and beverages industry as well. The hope is that the jamu consumption trend would emerge as the new normal after the crisis. Business research and consultancy Inventure Indonesia even dubbed jamu as “the new espresso” in its report on shifts in consumer behavior as an impact of COVID-19 with predictions that jamu consumption trend would shift from mere functional food to lifestyle. 

Some jamu ingredients and their health benefits

Ingredients	Health benefits
Turmeric	Turmeric contains curcumin which reduces swelling, pain, headaches, and osteoarthritis. Some people also use it for inflammatory bowel disease, itching, stress, and depression too.
Tamarind	An excellent source of dietary fibre which binds toxins, bile salts and surplus cholesterol; reduces blood sugar level and promotes good cardiovascular health due to its potassium content. Rich in organic compounds, it is high in antioxidants. It is also commonly used as a natural laxative, gently aiding digestion and alleviating stomach discomforts due to constipation. It is also effective in aiding weight loss
Ginger	Lowers cholesterol levels and also replenishes body’s levels of iron, sodium, vitamins A and C, flavonoids and phytonutrients; also promotes healthy weight and digestion
Honey	Also contains high level of oxidants; soothes many minor ailments, reducing cough symptoms and promote better sleep
Lime	Rejuvenates skin, boost vitamin C levels and help with iron absorption



Second Edition The 10 New Bali – Immersive and Engaging

by Ranees Sahaney

Apart from the new makeover of its cover, this definitive guide to Indonesia's hottest upcoming destinations now features practical travel tips, beautiful new visuals and infographic maps to help ease your holiday plans once travel restrictions are lifted!

To discover more beautiful Indonesian destination photos and information (as well as order the book)

visit

www.dolanesia.travel

An even more sumptuous showcase of the *10 New Bali*, in the Second Edition of the photo book, ups the ante for the allurements of Indonesia's premier tourist attractions featured in the 2018 version.

The smashing new edition pulls out all the stops to highlight the natural splendour, the history and heritage and cultural showpieces of the *10 New Bali* – identified as the Borobudur Temple (Central Java), Belitung (Sumatra), Mount Bromo (East Java), Labuan Bajo (East Nusa Tenggara), Lake Toba (North Sumatra), Thousand Islands (Jakarta), Mandalika (West Nusa Tenggara), Wakatobi (Southeast Sulawesi), Tanjung Lesung (Banten), and Morotai (North Maluku).

That this edition intentionally serves to direct visitors to Indonesia's grand scale of holiday options for their natural beauty and diversity, is amply evident from the new cache of fabulous visuals, design and beautiful production of this lavish photo book. Each carefully curated image captures the very essence of the featured destination; at the same time the appeal of the images themselves lies in their ability to narrate stories that are truly compelling.

President Joko Widodo came up with a project called the *10 New Bali* in order to overcome the concentrated tourism in Bali, the project focuses on tourism development on 10 new destinations across Indonesia to replicate the tourism growth that has been enjoyed in Bali.

In 2018 the launch edition of the *10 New Bali* photo book by the Indonesian government was aimed at inviting investors to participate in the development of the country's designated priority destinations. The inception of the first edition of the *10 New Bali* photo book came as an inspiration from H.E. Ngurah Swajaya, the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Singapore.

The Second Edition of *10 New Bali* features messages from the Foreign Minister of Indonesia, H.E. Retno L.P. Marsudi and the new Director General for American and European Affairs, HE Ngurah Swajaya.

H.E. Retno L.P. Marsudi, while welcoming the arrival of the publication of the second edition of the photo book, recalls that it was initiated by Ambassador Ngurah Swajaya when he served in Singapore. In her message in the new edition she further shares that: "The first edition has impressed readers, including many leaders during the ASEAN Leaders' Gathering and the IMF & World Bank Annual Meeting held in Bali, Indonesia in October 2018. The book was launched on the occasion of the Leaders' Retreat between Indonesia and Singapore to mark the 50th Anniversary of bilateral relations."

Great Honour

H.E. Ngurah Swajaya, Director General for American and European Affairs Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Republic of Indonesia, who served as the Indonesian ambassador in Singapore (2016-2020), in his message in the Second Edition says: "It has been a great honour to welcome the launching of the second edition of the *10 New Bali* Photo Book after the successful messages we have conveyed in implementing the initiative as officially launched by the President Joko Widodo in Singapore in 2017. We have seen significant developments in these destinations since the official launch of the *10 New Bali*, and we also have many interests to visit and to invest all of these magnificent destinations."

The Second Edition also features a prologue by the team leader Martin Lukas who reveals that the Second Edition has added stunning photographs with an enhanced description of each destination. He adds that: "We are proud that many young Indonesians volunteered to carry the baton by joining as contributors for this



Mandalika Lombok West Nusa Tenggara

WELCOME TO MANDALIKA LOMBOK

HOW TO GET THERE?

By Plane

By Road

Activities

Surfing

Enjoy the Sunsets & Sunsets

Island Hopping

Divine & Thrilling

Thrilling, Camping and Hiking

Family-friendly?

What to Eat?

Accommodation

Amenities

Special

Public Station

Specialty Souvenir

10 CUISINES

Come and enjoy a touch of exotic paradise that is Lombok, a new word of excitement and beauty in just one small island!

A more comprehensive treatment for each destination such as the Mandalika Lombok section above now offers many travel tips and an infographic map

edition. Hopefully, tourism and investment would bring the world closer to the locals opening up their minds to achieve a higher standard of living. It is also an encouragement for them to maintain their traditions, culture and cuisines which they inherit from the generations before them.” He further adds: “We hope that the colourful photographs of this book will entice you to dream of visiting Indonesia when the pandemic is over. Seeing is believing, when these magnificent scenes and more unfold before your eyes and senses. Immerse, savour the rich heritage of cultures and traditional cuisines.”

The Indonesian archipelago has 18,307 islands, all abrim with stunning natural beauty – so choosing the *10 New Bali* was no mean task for the government. Ultimately there were three important factors that were to help identify the choices before them. These were: attraction, access and amenities. To make the project more focused, Indonesia’s president picked 4 Priority Destinations.

The chosen four were Borobudur, Mandalika, Labuan Bajo and Lake Toba.

What you will discover in the new edition of *10 New Bali* is the inclusion of an array of information on each destination, including facts such as How to Get There, Activities, Tips, Accommodation, Amenities, Cuisines etc. It also includes beautifully illustrative maps and info graphics, apart from the individual attractions of each destination – in order to sustain its appeal factor on a practical level.

Sumptuous Display

The sumptuous display of the Second Edition opens up with the gorgeous setting of Lake Toba, before moving on to Tanjung Kelayang Belitung, then Tanjung Lesung, Kepulauan Seribu & Kota Tua, Borobudur & Prambanan Temple, Bromo Tengger Semeru, Mandalika Lombok, Labuan Bajo & Komodo National Park, Wakatobi and finally Morotai.

It may be recalled that the launch edition

began with Morotai and ended with Lake Toba – so in the Second Edition, the destinations have kind of turned head over heels!

You will also notice that the new version features an array of new photos; in some cases they replace the old ones to further enhance the appeal of the destination. As you turn each page you will notice that space and picture size have been carefully chosen to optimize the visual appeal of each image. The balance of colour and variety of subjects, on each page, has also been given special attention, to further enhance its impact on the viewer.

Don’t miss the stunning visuals of blacktip sharks cavorting in the azure waters of Morotai, or the mind-blowing images of the prehistoric Komodo dragons to be found in the primordial environs of Komodo National Park.

Appealing Cultural Insights

The double spread of Tipang Bakkara truly does justice to the splendour of the natural landscape. The tranquil spirit of Samosir Island comes through in this excellent shot of buffaloes grazing by a lake. The visual of the Batak Dancers at Simanindo or the culinary images from the Makan Bedulang Festival open up a window to appealing cultural insights.

The colours of Indonesia offer a striking mosaic of enticements for visitors. From the salmon-pink hued beach fronts and iconic pink bicycles to ride in Kota Tua to the swathes of emerald paddy fields and azure waters for watersport lovers... from cherry-lipped smiling children to betel-nut chewing elders... from star spangled skies to deceptively smoking but silently seething volcanoes... from mountains of sands to wooly-headed summits— there are images that are unmissable for their memorable appeal in the Second Edition. **IC**

Singapore's 5-Star Staycation

by Jenny Tan

A luxury staycation in Singapore that probably comes closest to taking you literally away from it all is a getaway to Sentosa Island. The two wonderful choices you have are: the **Capella Singapore** and **Sofitel Singapore Sentosa Resort & Spa**. The first property was thrust into the international limelight as the venue of the Trump – Kim Summit and the latter, located at the top of a cliff rising above Tanjong Beach, is a quaint French-influenced luxury boutique resort where you can stay in the height of luxury. Singapore has many 5-star hotel choices also on the mainland, but even if everything is on par with both, we picked the following for that extra 'X factor', which makes them so unique and sets them apart.



Sofitel Singapore Sentosa Resort & Spa



Only One Raffles

There is only one Raffles Hotel and a stay at this colonial-style luxury hotel is like experiencing a different era that is so unique because of the history of this grand dame of Singapore hotels. It was opened in 1887 and received royalty and stars with guests such as Michael Jackson, Elizabeth Taylor and Queen Elizabeth II. The hotel's pedigree has been further enhanced by the loving makeover over a two-year refurbishment period, which included new white marble flooring, an upgraded air conditioning system and a fresh coat of paint - all of which was completed by 2019. While there are now new F&B and shopping outlets, the highlight of a stay here must still be experiencing the atmosphere of the Courtyard Suites with their colonial style four-post beds and furniture that hark back to a more distant time. There are a total of about 115 suites with nightly rates starting from about \$600 per night.

(Above): Capella Singapore; (below) Raffles promotional image celebrating its 130th Anniversary



Singapore. Raffles Hotel.



The Fullerton - Centre of the Singapore Skyline

The Fullerton Hotel, renowned for its own unique character, mirrors a similar sense of time, place and grandeur of the colonial era. According to Mr Cavaliere Giovanni Viterale, GM of The Fullerton Hotels and Resorts, “When people think of Singapore skyline, they think of the Fullerton Building which is the home to The Fullerton Hotel Singapore. The National Monument has been a majestic presence in the midst of Singapore’s development. The cityscape evolved. The world-famous skyline arose. The Fullerton stood strong through it all – a reminder of Singapore’s progress,

resilience and an inspiration for the future. As “Mile Zero”, from which all of Singapore was measured, stories that propelled Singapore into first-world status were created, leaders made decisions that steered the course of the nation and it famously hosted the General Post Office called the “Most Important Post Office in the East.” In many ways, The Fullerton is at the centre of the Singapore Story. Rooms here start from S\$630 per night. The Fullerton Bay Hotel Singapore (see box) is also one of the most iconic landmarks in Singapore. It has often been described as “the place to be seen”. It is a vision of modern luxury with rooms starting from S\$528 per night.

Historical note:

Before the advent of air travel, Clifford Pier was the gateway to the Lion City. It was the equivalent of Ellis Island of New York. Immigrants streamed in through the iconic landing point. Just 87 years later, this historic spot has been transformed into the dramatic arrival hall of The Fullerton Bay Hotel (see inset photo top left); today it is also an eponymous destination dining restaurant that serves the best of Singapore’s culinary delicacies represented by a melting pot of diverse cultures including Western classics.

The Gardens of Shangri-La

Going up the super exclusive scale, there’s the Shangri-La, Singapore Hotel’s Valley Wing where world leaders, royalty and celebrities such as former President Obama checked into his (then) Presidential Suite. You definitely feel you are in a different league at this hotel! The Valley Wing’s Singapore Suite costs about S\$7,500 per night.

The hotel’s Garden Wing has contemporary history on its side as well as stunning 15-acre landscaped gardens and tasteful suites. Take your pick from its three premier Balcony Suites (from S\$888 average per night) that are also serve as perfect hideaways for families and leisure travelers. Each suite has an outdoor whirlpool bath, BBQ grill and sun lounger on a grand terrace! ©



All hotels featured here are eligible
for the SGRediscover Vouchers

Sumatran Special: Nasi Kebuli

From North Sumatra, Nasi Kebuli or Chicken Spiced Rice is an easy all-in-one pot recipe to prepare and is incredibly aromatic and delicious!

Ingredients

2 tablespoons butter or oil
500 g boneless chicken, cut in cubes
3 cups chicken stock
1 teaspoon salt
2 cups long-grain rice, washed and drained
small pineapple, peeled and sliced and cut in small pieces

Seasoning

13 shallots, peeled and finely chopped; 7 cloves garlic, peeled and finely chopped; 2.5 cm ginger, peeled and chopped
1 teaspoon coriander
1 teaspoon white peppercorns
1 teaspoon cumin
pinch of grated nutmeg
8 cm cinnamon stick
4 cardamom pods, bruised
2 cloves
1 lemon grass, bruised



Directions

Heat butter or oil in wok; add all ingredients and saute for 2-3 mins. Add chicken and saute over high heat until meat is firm. Add chicken stock and salt, let simmer until chicken is tender. Strain stock and keep aside. Cook rice with 2 cups of stock and bring to the boil. Cover pan and simmer until the rice is almost cooked and the liquid absorbed. Add the cubed chicken and cook over low heat until rice is thoroughly cooked. Garnish with fried shallots and pineapple.

Bonus: Dessert Recipe from Medan: Bika Ambon



Ingredients

1 5 gr instant yeast
20 gm sugar
15 gm flour
75 ml water
15 citrus leaves
350 ml coconut milk
a pinch of salt
300 gm sugar
8 yolk
200 gm tapioca flour
1/2 tsp vanilla

Directions

Mix instant yeast, sugar, flour and water well, and leave it for 25 minutes. Bring together citrus leaves, coconut milk and a pinch of salt in a pan and let it boil. Set aside. Beat the yolk and sugar in a bowl, until smooth, then add the tapioca flour, stir it gently. Add the vanilla and the coconut milk mixture. Take out the leaves, then leave it for about 2-3 hours. Heat up the oven, put the baking dish form inside. When the baking dish form is warm, brush first with some vegetable oil, then pour in the cake mix. Bake for a good 20 minutes leaving the oven door open.

About Sumatran Food

The vast island of Sumatra is full of tastes and flavours that are predominately influenced by Middle Eastern and Indian cuisines. For example, its northernmost province, Aceh, has a popular noodle dish called Mie Aceh that is bursting with Middle Eastern, Indian and Southeast Asian flavours.

One of the most well-known Sumatran cuisines is called *Masakan Padang* or Padang Food that actually refers to all

kinds of dishes from West Sumatra.

Padang food is fiery hot and rich in spices of ginger, cloves, galangal, tumeric, nutmeg, candlenuts and tumeric leaves.

Some of the well-known dishes from West Sumatra are Nasi Kapau, dendeng belado, rendang daging, soto Padang, ayam Pop, ikan dan ayam bakar (grilled fish and chicken) and sate Padang.

Another famous culinary export from Sumatra is food from Palembang, South

Sumatra. In contrast to the meat-based dishes of Padang and surrounding regions, southern Sumatran cooking uses freshwater fish which explains why the most dominant flavour here is sour tangy taste to lessen any fishy taste or smell. Cooking methods reflect Chinese influences in that they are simpler, quicker and use a liberal amount of garlic.

Recipes and information on this page from *Indonesia Culinary Treasures*

PICTURE
POST

SUPERMOON OVER INDONESIA



The 'Supermoon' against the Pancoran Statue in South Jakarta.
Photo by Budi Winarno / Shutterstock.com

Astronomy experts say there will be three 'supermoons' in 2021. The phenomenon occurs when the full moon is closest to earth. Sometimes this has an impact on rising sea waves, especially at night. This year they will take place during consecutive months of April, May and June. The moon will appear slightly bigger and brighter than the usual full moon. ©

CONGRATULATIONS

to His Excellency Suryo Pratomo
on his appointment as
Ambassador of Indonesia to Singapore

From SingHealth Group

Singapore Health Services (SingHealth) is the largest healthcare group in Singapore with four hospitals, five national specialty centres, two community hospitals, and a network of primary healthcare clinics. With over 40 medical specialties and a faculty of 3,700 doctors, the group offers integrated care in a multidisciplinary setting.

SingHealth institutions have earned a strong reputation for setting standards in healthcare for the region. Patients enjoy the benefit of treatments with solid diagnostic and treatment medical technology in a wide range of medical procedures.



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