



Indonesia Sustainable Development News Digest

2025 Issue 9 — 24 April

*The **Indonesia Sustainable Development News Digest** is a biweekly collection of summaries of articles related to conservation, the environment, and sustainability in Indonesia that have appeared in print or online in local, regional, and global English-language media. We welcome comments, suggestions, and corrections. To learn more about us and to access previous editions of the News Digest, please visit our website at www.starlingresources.com. If you would like to add colleagues or friends to our distribution list or unsubscribe, please contact us at newsdigest@starlingresources.com.*

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A. Marine and Fisheries

Indonesian Authorities Capture Malaysian Boat for Illegal Fishing

—Annisa Febiola, *TempoNews*, 22 April 2025

The Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries apprehended a Malaysian-flagged fishing vessel suspected of illegal fishing within Indonesian waters near Sebatik Island, North Kalimantan, on April 20, around 12:30 p.m. local time. According to Pung Nugroho Saksono, Director General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Surveillance, the vessel was intercepted approximately seven miles inside Indonesia's maritime boundary by the Marine and Fisheries

Resources Surveillance Station/PSDKP patrol team from Tarakan, following a resident's tip-off. After a hot pursuit, the vessel, KM. TW 7329/6/F from Sabah, Malaysia, was disabled and found to be operating without valid Indonesian permits and carrying about 60 kilograms of fish, including high-value species like grouper and red snapper. Four Malaysian nationals, including the captain, were onboard. The offenders are being charged under Article 92 in conjunction with Article 26 of Law No. 6/2023 and Law No. 31/2004, facing up to eight years in prison and fines of up to Rp1.5 billion. The incident highlights Indonesia's firm stance on protecting its marine resources from foreign exploitation.

China and Indonesia agree to boost maritime security cooperation in South China Sea despite tensions

— Christopher Bodeen, *AssociatedPress*, 21 April 2025

Indonesia and China reaffirmed their commitment to maritime cooperation during a joint meeting of foreign and defense ministers in Beijing on April 21 amid rising tensions over China's claims in the South China Sea, particularly near Indonesia's Natuna Islands. The two countries signed a memorandum of understanding between their coast guards to promote maritime safety and security, and agreed to enhance infrastructure, mineral development, and law enforcement collaboration. Foreign Minister Sugiono and Defense Minister Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin emphasized the need to counter terrorism, cyberthreats, and transnational crime, while their Chinese counterparts, led by Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Defense Minister Adm. Dong Jun, pledged to deepen security ties through joint counter-terrorism exercises and sustained cooperation. Despite longstanding Indonesian concerns over Chinese incursions into its exclusive economic zone, both nations stressed the importance of peace and stability in the region. Indonesia also announced plans to open a consulate in Chengdu, reflecting deepening economic ties, including Chinese investments in key infrastructure projects under the Belt and Road Initiative.

RI Maritime Ministry Monitors Indonesian Seas to Sustain Fisheries

—Misni Parjiati and Lasti Martina, *RRI*, 20 April 2025

The Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries is intensifying oversight of the country's vast marine resources to ensure sustainability and protect its maritime economic potential, Director of Fisheries Resources Supervision Halid K. Jusuf stated during a radio dialogue on RRI Pontianak, April 19. Speaking on behalf of the Directorate General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Supervision, Halid emphasized the urgent need to guard Indonesia's oceans—which make up three-quarters of its territory—against overexploitation and foreign encroachment. The ministry enforces marine protection through existing national laws and regulations, including Law No. 31/2004 and Government Regulation No. 11/2023, which governs measured fish catching, zoning, and downstream processes. Halid warned against destructive practices like trawling, which harm coral reefs and marine habitats, and stressed that effective regulation is vital to ensuring resources are used sustainably for national benefit. Indonesia's capture fisheries alone hold an annual potential of 14 million tons, excluding contributions from aquaculture and processing sectors, underscoring the strategic economic importance of marine resource stewardship.

Maritime Ministry encourages strong investment, trade with China

—Muhammad Harianto and Katriana, *AntaraNews*, 20 April 2025

The Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries promoted investment and trade opportunities in the fisheries sector during the China-Indonesia Trade and Investment Conference held in Jakarta on April 20. Representing Minister Sakti Wahyu Trenggono, Director General

Tornanda Syaifullah highlighted Indonesia's readiness to collaborate in capture fisheries, aquaculture, processing, and sustainable logistics. The event, organized by the Zhejiang Provincial Government and China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT Zhejiang), aimed to bolster bilateral economic ties in key sectors including maritime, logistics, and renewable energy. Syaifullah emphasized Indonesia's commitment to fostering a competitive investment climate through simplified licensing, incentives, infrastructure, and skilled human resources, aligning with the ministry's blue economy vision. In 2024, Indonesia exported US\$1.24 billion in fishery products to China, achieving a trade surplus of US\$1.15 billion. Main exports included squid-octopus, seaweed, ribbonfish, and shrimp. The partnership is part of Indonesia's broader strategy to build a resilient, inclusive, and globally competitive fisheries industry grounded in sustainable practices.

As sea levels rise, Indonesian woman turns to mangroves to keep floodwaters at bay

—Reuters, *SouthChinaMorningPost*, 19 April 2025

In the submerged hamlet of Rejosari Senik, Demak Regency, Central Java, 55-year-old Pasijah remains the last resident of her village, which has been overtaken by rising seas. As of February 2025, her home—once surrounded by dry land—is now encircled by water, with the nearest dry land 2 kilometers away and the nearest city, Demak, 19 kilometers off, reachable only by boat. Despite the abandonment of the area by neighbors and the encroachment of the sea, Pasijah has stayed, raising her home's floor and planting around 15,000 mangrove trees annually for the past two decades to fend off coastal erosion and tidal waves. Indonesia, with 81,000 kilometers of coastline, is highly vulnerable to sea level rise, which has accelerated to an average of 4.25 mm annually since 1992, worsened by excessive groundwater pumping and land subsidence. As megaprojects like a 700-kilometer northern sea wall are proposed by authorities, Pasijah's grassroots resilience and environmental stewardship offer a poignant example of local adaptation to climate change impacts.

In an ancient Javanese sultanate, coastal women battle climate fallout

—Irfan Maulana, *Mongabay*, 16 April 2025

Coastal communities in Demak and Jepara, Central Java, are battling severe land subsidence and rising seas, pushing residents—particularly women—into economic and social precarity. Sunarti, a 53-year-old mother from Timbulsloko village, was forced to abandon her flood-submerged home and farmland, relocating to Semarang where she retrained as a fisher to survive. Similarly, Sri Wahyuni now leads women's groups processing seafood after sand mining and erosion devastated local ecosystems. The region's rapid sinking—up to nine times faster than global sea-level rise—has displaced thousands, ruined livelihoods, and triggered broader vulnerabilities. Civil society organizations, like LBH Apik and Kiara, warn of rising gender-based violence linked to environmental stress and poverty, exacerbated by a lack of adaptation funding. In 2022, rich nations provided \$28 billion in climate adaptation aid, falling short of global commitments. Despite such challenges, women like Sunarti and Sri are mobilizing to protect their communities and secure alternative livelihoods, showing resilience on the frontlines of climate change. Their efforts highlight the urgent need for inclusive, well-funded adaptation strategies in vulnerable coastal regions.

Susilo, S., et al. (2023). [GNSS land subsidence observations along the northern coastline of Java, Indonesia](#). *Scientific Data*, 10(1).

B. Forests and Land Use

Indonesia strengthens forest monitoring with new tool to meet EU deforestation law

—Hans Nicholas Jong, *Mongabay*, 21 April 2025

As Indonesia prepares for the enforcement of the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) by December 30, efforts to ensure deforestation-free commodity exports are intensifying. One key initiative is Ground [Truthed.id](#) (GTID), a new forest monitoring platform launched by environmental NGO Kaoem Telapak, which uses real-time, geolocation-based field data to trace and verify illegal activities such as unlicensed logging and palm oil plantations in protected forest zones. Unlike satellite-first tools like Global Forest Watch, GTID takes a bottom-up approach, with Indigenous communities and civil society documenting violations on the ground to complement satellite monitoring. Verified by Kaoem Telapak's team, the platform supports legal action by building robust, actionable cases for law enforcement and aims to enhance transparency across the supply chain. GTID's role becomes crucial as Indonesia, the world's largest palm oil producer and a major exporter of timber, rubber, coffee, and cocoa, must meet EUDR's strict traceability requirements. The Indonesian government is also developing a national dashboard to ensure synchronized data for verifying sustainable exports, with GTID aiding independent verification and preventing conflict-linked commodities from entering EU markets.

Agroforestry can reduce deforestation, but supportive policies matter, study finds

—Carolyn Cowan, *Mongabay*, 21 April 2025

A recent study reveals that agroforestry—farming that integrates trees with crops—has significantly curbed deforestation across Southeast Asia, cutting forest loss by about 250,319 hectares annually between 2015 and 2023 and preventing 43.3–74.4 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions each year. Conducted by researchers including Steve Hoong Chen Teo and Lian Pin Koh from the National University of Singapore, the study analyzed 38 subnational areas using causal inference to isolate agroforestry's impact. Results showed deforestation reductions in 22 areas, especially in Laos, northern Vietnam, Myanmar, Malaysia, Sumatra, and Borneo, while increases occurred in 16, such as eastern Cambodia. The findings highlight that agroforestry can offer farmers alternative incomes—such as fruit, timber, or honey—reducing pressure to clear forests, but its effectiveness depends heavily on land tenure, policies, market demand, and governance. Experts urge policymakers to support agroforestry with land rights for smallholders, sustainable land-use planning, and productivity incentives, noting Indonesia's 5-million-hectare social forestry initiative as a model for climate and biodiversity solutions in the region.

Teo, H. C., et al. (2025). [Reduction of deforestation by agroforestry in high carbon stock forests of Southeast Asia](#). *Nature Sustainability*, 8, 358-362.

Indonesia raises concerns over EU deforestation law's impact on smallholders

—Hans Nicholas Jong, *Mongabay*, 17 April 2025

The Indonesian government has raised strong objections to the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), warning it imposes unrealistic demands on smallholders and suffers from vague enforcement standards. Set to take effect on December 30, 2025, the EUDR bans the import of seven commodities — including palm oil, timber, coffee, and rubber — linked to deforestation, requiring evidence that they were not produced on deforested land

since 2020. At a March 20 forum in Jakarta, Deputy Foreign Minister Arief Havas Oegroseno criticized the regulation's ambiguous language, burdensome due diligence requirements, and geolocation data mandates, which he said conflict with the EU's own privacy laws. He also questioned the fairness of a country benchmarking system and cited past failures in EU trade commitments, such as the FLEGT-VPA timber agreement. Responding, EU official Sander Happaerts acknowledged some ambiguity but defended the EUDR's goals and flexibility, adding that the EU seeks deeper cooperation with Indonesia and that the benchmarking results, expected in June 2025, aim to guide inspections and support risk-reduction efforts, not impose trade bans.

Judges charged in Indonesian bribery scandal after clearing palm oil giants of corruption

—Hans Nicholas Jong, *Mongabay*, 15 April 2025

Indonesia's Attorney General's Office (AGO) on April 13 charged four Jakarta-based judges, a court clerk, and two lawyers in a high-profile bribery case tied to palm oil giants Wilmar, Musim Mas, and Permata Hijau. Judges Muhammad Arif Nuryanta, Agam Syarif Baharuddin, Ali Muhtarom, Djuyamto, and clerk Wahyu Gunawan allegedly accepted 60 billion rupiah (\$3.57 million) in bribes, channeled through lawyers Ariyanto Bakri and Marcella Santoso, to deliver a favorable ruling in a 2024 trial over illegal crude palm oil exports during Indonesia's 2022 cooking oil crisis. Prosecutors had sought over 17.7 trillion rupiah (\$1.05 billion) in fines and damages, but the judges controversially issued a Dutch-era ruling discharging the companies without prosecution. The AGO says the lawyers acted as intermediaries and is investigating whether they played similar roles in other cases, including a separate bribery scandal involving a politician's son. The AGO has appealed the verdict and is expanding its probe, while Wilmar denies wrongdoing and pledges to cooperate if called upon.

'Heart of Borneo' dams raze Indigenous forests for Indonesia green energy drive

—Abdallah Naem, *Mongabay*, 14 April 2025

Indonesia is moving ahead with a \$20 billion hydroelectric dam project in North Kalimantan, Borneo, aiming to power the planned Kalimantan Industrial Park Indonesia, which officials claim will be the world's largest green industrial estate. Five dams are set to be built by 2035 along the Mentarang and Kayan rivers to support energy needs for aluminum, EV battery, and petrochemical industries. President Joko Widodo inaugurated the first dam in 2023, despite backlash from Indigenous communities, including the Punan people, whose ancestral lands and livelihoods are being disrupted. The project will submerge parts of the Kayan Mentarang National Park, one of Asia's last intact rainforests and home to hundreds of rare species. At least 541 families from nine villages face relocation, and forest clearing has begun. Conservationists and local leaders criticize the initiative as environmentally destructive and unjust, calling it a threat to biodiversity and Indigenous rights. On March 14, affected communities joined a global protest against dams, denouncing the initiative as a false green solution that displaces people and destroys ecosystems.

C. Biodiversity, Conservation and Protected Area

The Touching, Hilarious, and Happy Story of Releasing Six East Kalimantan Orangutans

—Sucipto, *Kompas*, 22 April 2025

On April 22, six rehabilitated orangutans were released into the Kehje Sewen Forest in East Kutai, East Kalimantan, after completing at least six years of rewilding at the Samboja Lestari Orangutan Rehabilitation Center, managed by the Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation (BOSF) in collaboration with the Ministry of Forestry. Transported 530 kilometers by truck, the release marks another milestone in BOSF's ongoing efforts to return captive and human-accustomed orangutans—rescued from illegal pet ownership or human-wildlife conflict—back into their natural habitat. Forestry Minister Raja Juli Antoni, who attended the release, emphasized the urgent need to protect forests and enforce laws amid development pressures, highlighting orangutan rehabilitation as an indicator of forest degradation. BOSF Chairman Jamartin Sihite reported that 130 orangutans have been released into Kehje Sewen since 2012, and 539 nationwide. Currently, 355 orangutans remain in rehabilitation. Orangutan caretakers like Rusdiani view each release as both emotional and hopeful, underscoring orangutans' ecological importance and the call for truly sustainable development in Indonesia.

Expert Urges Ecosystem-Based Conservation to Solve Ciliwung Watershed Crisis

—Rahma Khoirunnisa, *UGMNews*, 21 April 2025

Dr. Hatma Suryatmojo, a forestry expert from Gadjah Mada University, warned that the Ciliwung River Basin—one of Indonesia's vital watersheds—is facing a critical ecological and hydrological crisis, contributing significantly to Jakarta's recurring floods. Environmental degradation, driven by upstream deforestation in areas like Puncak and Cisarua, rampant urbanization, and weak spatial planning enforcement, has severely diminished the watershed's rainwater absorption capacity. Forest cover now stands at only 9.7%, far below the 30% needed, while built-up areas dominate 72% of the basin. This imbalance causes rainwater to run off directly into the Ciliwung River, contributing to 32% of Jakarta's flood volume. Additionally, the river suffers from high pollution, with waste levels exceeding its ecological carrying capacity. Despite ongoing efforts such as river normalization and cloud seeding by BMKG, Dr. Suryatmojo criticized these as short-term and insufficient. He urged a shift toward ecosystem-based, long-term solutions including forest rehabilitation, riparian restoration, and stricter planning controls to break what he termed a “stagnant disaster cycle” of floods and unprepared response.

Illegal trafficking of siamang gibbons is a concerning and underreported crisis

—Sinan Serhadli, *Mongabay*, 18 April 2025

On March 3, Indonesian authorities intercepted a vessel off North Sumatra en route to Malaysia carrying human trafficking victims and 10 trafficked gibbons—seven of them endangered siamangs—underscoring the growing illicit trade in wildlife tied to human and drug trafficking. In a related incident, five infant siamangs were confiscated at Chennai International Airport, marking India as an emerging destination for smuggled gibbons, likely via Sumatra and Malaysia. With an estimated 100,000 individuals left, siamangs (*Symphalangus syndactylus*) are the most trafficked of all gibbon species, driven by their larger size, slower movement, and still-strong populations. Unlike orangutans, whose trafficking has declined, gibbons remain a lower law enforcement priority, especially in Indonesia—the trafficking hotspot. Most rescued siamangs come from the domestic pet trade, particularly in Java and Sumatra. Conservationists warn that weakened funding from the U.S. government and limited prosecution could worsen the crisis. Experts emphasize that each

smuggled infant represents not only severe cruelty but also the death of mothers and family groups, threatening wild populations and gibbon survival across Southeast Asia.

Action plan aims to save Asia's leaf-eating monkeys amid 'alarming' declines

—Carolyn Cowan, *Mongabay*, 15 April 2025

On April 18, primatologists and conservation groups launched a groundbreaking 10-year action plan to save langur monkeys across Southeast Asia's Sundaland region, spanning Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, and Thailand. Spearheaded by Mandai Nature and the IUCN Primate Specialist Group, the plan targets all 20 species of the genus *Presbytis*, over 85% of which are threatened with extinction due to deforestation, hunting, and poaching for the pet trade and traditional medicine. With Sundaland losing over 50% of its forest cover since 1970, langurs—arboreal leaf-eaters highly vulnerable to habitat loss—are now genetically isolated and increasingly exposed to poaching. The action plan outlines key conservation priorities, including habitat protection, law enforcement, ecotourism promotion, and community awareness. Experts emphasized the ecological role of langurs as forest seed dispersers and called for greater policy, funding, and private-sector engagement. The initiative also established “International Colobine Monkey Day” on August 25 to rally global attention. Conservationists hope the plan will elevate langurs on national agendas and secure resources to prevent further declines.

Nijman, V. (2005). [Decline of the endemic Hose's langur *Presbytis hosei* in Kayan Mentarang National Park, East Borneo](#). *Oryx*, 39(2), 223-226.

Snared, skinned, sold: Brutal March for Indonesia's Sumatran tigers

—Junaidi Hanafiah, Rahmi Caroline and Vinolia, *Mongabay*, 10 April 2025

Indonesian authorities have made multiple arrests across three provinces in early March 2025 in a crackdown on wildlife crimes involving critically endangered Sumatran tigers. On March 2, six suspects were arrested in Riau province after officials discovered the mutilated remains of a tiger allegedly poached and butchered for illegal trade. A separate incident on March 12 in West Sumatra saw conservation staff rescue a young female tiger, later named Si Maung, who lost a leg due to a snare trap near human settlements in Agam district. The spate of incidents continued in Aceh on March 14, where five men, including a repeat offender, were detained for attempting to sell tiger body parts. All suspects face charges under Indonesia's 1990 Conservation Law, which carries penalties of up to 15 years in prison. Conservationists and government officials condemned the poaching and called for urgent action to curb snare traps and strengthen law enforcement, as fewer than 400 Sumatran tigers remain in the wild. The Ministry of Forestry pledged intensified patrols and public education to protect the species.

D. Climate Change, Energy and Mining

Church pressure spurs scrutiny of Indonesian geothermal projects

—Ebed De Rosary, *Mongabay*, 23 April 2025

East Nusa Tenggara Governor Emanuel Melkiades Laka Lena announced on April 4, a pause on all new geothermal energy development on Flores Island, following strong objections from the Catholic Church. The move came after a March 10–13 pastoral letter by six bishops, led

by Archbishop Paulus Budi Kleden, condemned geothermal projects in Flores and Lembata for threatening the natural ecosystem and clashing with regional goals for tourism and agriculture. The Church's intervention reflects broader local opposition, particularly from Indigenous communities near the Poco Leok volcano, where around 3,000 residents rely on farming and have protested land-use changes. Although Indonesia, situated on the Ring of Fire, has vast geothermal potential and Flores was branded a "Geothermal Island" due to its estimated 1,200 MW capacity, concerns over environmental risks, including groundwater pollution and gas leaks, persist. While experts like Surya Darma of ICRES defend geothermal as safe with proper assessments, critics argue current plans lack transparency and local consent. The suspension highlights growing tensions between renewable energy ambitions and community-driven ecological and cultural preservation.

Indonesia, Denmark extend renewable energy cooperation

—Putu Indah and Raka Adji, *AntaraNews*, 21 April 2025

Indonesia and Denmark on April 21 extended their decade-long green energy cooperation by signing the third protocol to amend their memorandum of understanding (MoU) on renewable energy and energy conservation at Indonesia's Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources office in Jakarta. Energy Minister Bahlil Lahadalia emphasized the significance of the renewed partnership amid global geopolitical and economic uncertainty, noting that strong international cooperation is crucial as countries reassess their climate commitments following events like the U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Agreement. Danish Foreign Affairs Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen affirmed Denmark's continued support for Indonesia's energy transition, highlighting the shared aim of developing a green economy. He acknowledged the opportunities and financing challenges involved, but reiterated Denmark's role as a leader in green economy funding and its commitment to sharing expertise. The renewed agreement signals a deepened strategic partnership aimed at accelerating renewable energy adoption and energy efficiency in Indonesia, reinforcing both nations' dedication to sustainable development and climate goals.

Global Warming Increases Arsenic Levels in Rice Fields, Increasing Cancer Risk

—Ahmad Arif, *Kompas*, 17 April 2025

Climate change could significantly raise health risks in Asia by increasing arsenic levels in rice, according to a recent study published in *The Lancet Planetary Health*. Led by Dongming Wang of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and involving researchers from Johns Hopkins and Columbia University, the study found that rising temperatures and CO₂ levels—expected to surpass 2°C by 2050—cause a synergistic increase in inorganic arsenic in rice grains due to changes in soil biogeochemistry. Using long-term field experiments on 28 rice strains and advanced modeling, researchers estimated future cancer and non-cancer risks in countries like Indonesia, China, India, and Vietnam. The findings project millions of additional cancer cases, especially in China, by 2050 due to increased rice consumption under these conditions. Experts, including Columbia's Lewis Ziska, warn this trend may escalate the global burden of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and developmental disorders. The team urges urgent actions such as plant breeding, soil management, and public education to mitigate arsenic exposure and safeguard food security amid climate change.

Wang, Dongming, et al. (2025). [Impact of climate change on arsenic concentrations in paddy rice and the associated dietary health risks in Asia: an experimental and modelling study](#). *The Lancet Planetary Health*.

As big money wavers, Southeast Asia's green startups fight to stay powered

—Philip Jacobson, *Mongabay*, 15 April 2025

In early March, Ho Chi Minh City-based SmartSolar, a renewable energy startup led by Swiss founder Kevin Junker, secured \$1.85 million in its first venture capital round to scale its rooftop solar panel services in Vietnam, where electricity demand is expected to surge 14% this year. The funding aims to expand operations tenfold, but future growth may face hurdles as U.S. development aid cuts and shifting geopolitical priorities reduce support for clean energy, making investors more cautious. Junker had sought backing from the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC), but its focus has shifted to countering China's Belt and Road Initiative. Meanwhile, other agencies like Germany's GIZ continue to provide support, connecting SmartSolar to local authorities for new initiatives like balcony solar panels. Across Southeast Asia, the investment climate for renewables is tightening, with startup funding down 40% last year and EV subsidies in Indonesia uncertain amid budget cuts and inflation concerns. Startups like Swap Energi, despite raising \$22 million, must now focus on rapid profitability amid rising investor scrutiny and economic headwinds.

Electric Vehicles Worsen CO₂ Emissions, Unless Powered by Renewable Energy Sources

—Ahmad Arif, *Kompas*, 14 April 2025

Electric vehicles (EVs) may increase rather than reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions in countries where electricity still comes largely from fossil fuels, according to a study published in the *Energy* journal in February by researchers from the University of Auckland and Xiamen University. Using data from 26 countries over 15 years, the study—led by Miaomiao Tao, Stephen Poletti, and Boqiang Lin—found that rising EV adoption is linked to higher CO₂ emissions if electricity grids rely on coal or oil. This challenges the widespread belief that EVs inherently support decarbonization. The findings are particularly relevant for Indonesia, where as of 2022 only 19.6% of electricity came from renewables. The researchers emphasized that EVs only reduce emissions when powered by clean energy, highlighting the urgent need for countries like Indonesia to accelerate their renewable energy transition alongside EV adoption. They also recommended supportive policies such as renewable subsidies, fossil fuel subsidy removal, carbon pricing, and investment in smart grids to maximize the climate benefits of electric transportation.

Tao, M., Poletti, S. and Lin, B., (2025). [Deciphering the impact of electric vehicles on carbon emissions: Some insights from an extended STIRPAT framework](#). *Energy*, 273(3), p.134473.

E. Pollution, Waste, Water and Disaster

Waste banks key to ending open dumping in Indonesia: govt

—Prisca and Kenzu, *AntaraNews*, 22 April 2025

In celebration of Earth Day, the Ministry of Environment on April 22 emphasized the importance of strengthening waste banks as a key strategy to reduce waste and end open dumping, following a new ministerial regulation. Agus Rusly, Director for Waste Reduction and Circular Economy Development, highlighted the critical role of waste banks in sustainable waste management and praised the launch of a Training of Trainers (ToT) module for waste bank development. The ToT is part of the PHINLA Program, a German-supported global initiative implemented by Divers Clean Action (DCA) and humanitarian group Wahana Visi

Indonesia (WVI), aimed at improving livelihoods through integrated waste systems until 2027. WVI National Director Angelina Theodora noted the program's focus on child-centered environmental solutions and transnational cooperation, acknowledging that much beach waste in Jakarta originates from abroad. Environmental expert Rositayanti Hadisoebroto added that the educational module could revitalize dormant waste banks and expand their operations across the country, aligning with national goals for a more structured and effective circular economy.

Two Southeast Sulawesi Nickel Barns Hit by Floods, Disaster Threats Continue to Occur

—Saiful Rijal Yunu, *Kompas*, 19 April 2025

Persistent heavy rains have caused severe flooding in two nickel-rich regions of Southeast Sulawesi—North Konawe and North Kolaka—displacing residents and disrupting vital infrastructure as of April 19. In North Konawe, flooding has spread from the Trans-Sulawesi road in Sambandete Village to seven villages across Asera and Wiwirano Districts, submerging homes and rice fields due to the overflowing Lasolo River. North Konawe BPBD head Aidin reported thousands have been affected, with emergency teams deployed for evacuation efforts. The region's main road remains impassable for over a month, with the promised Bailey bridge yet to be installed. In North Kolaka, four villages in Lasusua District were inundated, sweeping away two suspension bridges and affecting hundreds of houses, according to local BPBD head Andi Faizal. The Kendari Maritime Meteorological Station attributes the persistent rainfall to the active rainy season, atmospheric waves, air mass convergence, and elevated sea temperatures. Authorities urge residents to monitor updates as rain and potential storms are expected to continue over the coming week.

Secrets in the Deep Soil, New Microbe Discovery That Helps Purify Water

—Ahmad Arif, *Kompas*, 14 April 2025

A groundbreaking study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences on March 18, 2025, has revealed the discovery of a previously unknown phylum of microbes—CSP1-3—thriving in deep soils more than 200 meters underground in China and the United States. Led by Wenlu Fang of Northwest A&F University and microbiologist James Tiedje of Michigan State University, the international team uncovered that these microbes, which evolved from aquatic ancestors, are not only active in the nutrient-poor deep Critical Zone but may constitute over half of the microbial population in those depths. Crucially, these organisms play a vital role in purifying groundwater, consuming pollutants as water filters through the earth, making them essential to the global water cycle. The findings enhance our understanding of subterranean biodiversity and microbial adaptation, while opening new possibilities for biotechnological applications in water purification and pollution mitigation. Researchers are now attempting to culture these elusive microbes in laboratories to explore their biochemical properties and environmental significance further.

Feng, W., et al. (2025). [Diversification, niche adaptation, and evolution of a candidate phylum thriving in the deep Critical Zone](#). *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)*, 122(12), p.e2424463122.

Indonesia bets on 'reuse' to curb plastic waste and build a circular economy

—Hans Nicholas Jong, *Mongabay*, 10 April 2025

Following the end of Ramadan, Jakarta's streets are once again dotted with bubur ayam vendors, offering a glimpse into how traditional reuse practices could help Indonesia tackle its

mounting plastic waste crisis. While eat-in customers use washable bowls and spoons, takeout versions rely on single-use plastics—highlighting the contrast between reuse and disposable culture. Tiza Mafira, director of the Indonesia Plastic Bag Diet Movement, is spearheading a push—alongside the Ministry of Environment—to promote a “reuse road map” that integrates refill and return systems into mainstream consumer behavior. Launched in February, the initiative responds to Indonesia’s plastic problem, with 4.9 million metric tons mismanaged annually and up to 1.29 million tons ending up in oceans. Despite global efforts focused largely on recycling, experts argue that reuse—though underfunded—offers greater long-term impact by cutting waste at the source. The road map outlines key infrastructure needs, such as reuse hubs and reverse logistics, and highlights reuse’s economic potential. Advocates believe widespread adoption could shift Indonesia toward a circular economy while reducing environmental and social harm.

Bottled Drinking Water, Between Necessities and Environmental Challenges

—Margaretha Puteri Rosalina, M. Pascalia Judith and Albertus Krisna, *Kompas*, 10 April 2025

From December 2024 to January 2025, Kompas Data Journalism Team analyzed 476 social media discussions across platforms like X, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, revealing that 42% of Indonesians expressed negative sentiment toward bottled drinking water. This sentiment stemmed primarily from concerns over pollution—particularly microplastics found in single-use gallons—plastic waste, and rising prices. A University of Indonesia and Greenpeace study previously detected up to 95 million microplastic particles per liter in bottled samples. Plastic bottle waste, now the second-largest waste type in Indonesia after food, has steadily increased, reaching 19.55% of total waste in 2024. Despite many families relying on bottled water, especially the poorer households, it strains their finances, consuming up to 21.8% of monthly income. In contrast, piped water offers a cheaper, more sustainable solution, with expenditures below 1% across all economic classes. Meanwhile, some local governments’ bans on plastic bottled water and efforts to promote personal tumblers have spurred positive sentiment (27.5%), signaling growing environmental awareness.

F. Technology, Investment and Finance

Govt flaunts critical minerals in trade talks with US

—Divya Karyza, *TheJakartaPost*, 22 April 2025

As high-level trade talks began in Washington, D.C. in mid-April, Indonesia is banking on its critical mineral wealth—especially nickel—to negotiate better U.S. market access and lower tariffs, amid shifting global trade dynamics under U.S. President Donald Trump’s protectionist policies. Coordinating Economic Minister Airlangga Hartarto led the Indonesian delegation, targeting a 60-day timeline to finalize agreements on investment, trade, and supply chain development. While Indonesia previously pursued a limited free trade agreement on critical minerals under the Biden administration’s Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF), the initiative now faces uncertainty. With the U.S. launching a national security investigation into key mineral imports and imposing new tariffs, Indonesia hopes its strategic importance in the global EV battery supply chain can help avert a looming 32% tariff on many of its exports. Officials, including those from state-owned MIND ID, also seek U.S. partners for major EV

projects like Project Titan. Despite challenges, experts urge Indonesia to build strong, resilient partnerships to secure its role in global supply chains and protect long-term export interests.

Finance Ministry to backstop foreign investment in Nusantara: OIKN

—Ruth Dea Juwita, *The Jakarta Post*, 21 April 2025

The Indonesian Finance Ministry will provide guarantees to support foreign investments in the construction of Nusantara, the country's new capital in East Kalimantan, to assure investors of the megaproject's continuity, the Nusantara Capital City Authority (OIKN) announced on April 17. The guarantees, issued jointly with PT Penjaminan Infrastruktur Indonesia (PT PII), aim to ease investor concerns, particularly following discussions with a consortium led by China Harbour Engineering Co. Ltd. (CHEC) and Malaysian firm IJM. The group is involved in two key public-private partnership (PPP) projects: building 20 civil servant housing towers worth Rp 13.4 trillion (US\$840 million), and a 26.87-kilometer utility corridor. OIKN chief Basuki Hadimuljono emphasized that no PPP project in Indonesia has ever been abandoned and all require Finance Ministry approval. CHEC's vice president, Liu Baohe, said the meeting boosted the consortium's confidence in long-term investment. With construction entering its second phase and state funding resumed for national strategic projects, Nusantara's Rp 500–600 trillion (US\$31.3–37.5 billion) development is increasingly dependent on private and foreign capital to meet its ambitious goals.

RI Export Commodity Prices Remain Strong Amid Trump Tariffs

—Nikson Sinaga, *Kompas*, 19 April 2025

Prices of major Indonesian export commodities, including coffee, rubber, and palm oil, have remained stable following the U.S. announcement of a 32% reciprocal tariff, which was postponed for 90 days starting April 10. The delay has eased fears in commodity markets, particularly for North Sumatra's coffee industry, which relies heavily on exports to the U.S.—Indonesia's largest coffee export destination. Coffee exporter Manat Samosir reported no price changes since the announcement, with Sumatran Arabica green beans selling for Rp120,000/kg. Rising global demand, coupled with limited production, has helped sustain prices. Similarly, global rubber prices rebounded after falling sharply post-announcement, with TSR 20 rubber hitting 167.4 cents/kg on the Singapore Exchange by April 17. North Sumatra's Industry and Trade Office noted that the province exported \$1.16 billion worth of goods to the U.S. in 2024, with labor-intensive commodities like coffee, palm oil, and rubber at the forefront. Officials and exporters emphasized the need to improve upstream agricultural practices and productivity to strengthen Indonesia's competitiveness and weather global market shocks.

From Gold to Digital Banking, People's Choices in the Face of Uncertainty

—Agustinus Yoga Primantoro, *Kompas*, 19 April 2025

As of April 18, the price of gold in Indonesia soared to IDR 1.96 million per gram, prompting a rush of buyers to outlets like the Antam Gold Boutique in Bintaro, South Tangerang. This surge reflects a growing preference for gold as a safe haven amid financial uncertainty and a weakened rupiah, currently at IDR 16,800 per USD. According to economist Eko Listiyanto from Indef, gold remains a widely trusted investment, particularly among lower- and middle-income groups. The Central Statistics Agency also reported a 41.71% year-on-year inflation in gold jewelry prices in March 2025. Globally, gold has gained traction as investors flee the US dollar, with prices rising 26.69% this year and potentially reaching USD 4,500 per troy ounce by year-end. Meanwhile, digital banks like Krom Bank Indonesia offer high interest rates—up to 8.75%—as safer, more flexible alternatives. The Financial Services Authority

supports banking solutions to maintain liquidity, while financial experts urge the public to align investments with their financial goals and risk tolerance.

Guessing the Impact of Trump Tariffs on Global Climate Action

—Pradipta Pandu Mustika, *Kompas*, 8 April 2025

On April 2, U.S. President Donald Trump announced sweeping new import tariffs from the White House, aimed at reducing the U.S. trade deficit. Dubbed “Liberation Day” tariffs, the policy targets goods from major trading partners including the EU, China, India, Vietnam, and Mexico. Experts warn that this escalation could ignite a global trade war, disrupt supply chains, and hinder climate action. The tariffs increase costs on key components for clean energy—such as wind turbines and lithium batteries—potentially stalling renewable energy projects and slowing emissions reduction efforts worldwide. Analysts, including from the Centre for European Reform and Princeton University, highlight risks to global decarbonization, low-carbon investment, and carbon pricing schemes. The policy may also encourage countries to weaken environmental standards to stay competitive. However, some experts see potential for developing countries to capitalize on the shift, with growing shares in clean energy production. China's dominance in solar and wind technology exports may further increase, suggesting that global climate momentum could persist—just without the U.S. at its center.

G. Human Rights, Indigenous People and Gender Equality

Instead of Hero Titles, Government Asked to Complete Human Rights Violations Cases During the Soeharto Era

—Willy Medi Christian Nababan, *Kompas*, 23 April 2025

Amnesty International Indonesia has rejected the proposal to bestow the title of national hero upon former President Soeharto, urging the government to instead focus on addressing human rights violations committed during his rule. Usman Hamid, the Executive Director of Amnesty International Indonesia, criticized the statement made by Minister of State Secretary Prasetyo Hadi, who downplayed the controversy surrounding the proposal. Hamid emphasized that Soeharto's 32 years in power were marked by state violence, media suppression, and human rights abuses. The government's push for Soeharto's hero status has sparked resistance from civil society groups, including Kontra and the Civil Society Movement to Prosecute Soeharto (Gemas), who argue that the proposal seeks to erase the historical injustices associated with his regime. These groups, supported by an online petition with nearly 4,000 signatures, stress the importance of investigating unresolved human rights violations from Soeharto's era. The Ministry of Social Affairs is reviewing the proposal, which has been debated for 15 years.

Stronger collaboration needed to build safe spaces for women: Ministry

—Anita and Kenzu, *AntaraNews*, 23 April 2025

On May 19, 2023, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection and the Aisyiyah organization, an Islamic NGO focused on women's empowerment, renewed their partnership through a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to enhance women's capacity, family resilience, and child protection. Minister Arifah Fauzi emphasized the importance of

strengthening collaboration between the government and community organizations to create a safe and equitable environment for women and children. Fauzi outlined the ministry's three priority programs for 2024-2029: developing the Indonesian Common Space, expanding the SAPA 129 call center, and establishing gender data collection in villages. Aisyiyah Chairperson Salmah Orbayinah expressed strong support for the renewal of the MoU, highlighting previous successful programs, including training healthcare workers to respond to violence. She stressed the need for further comprehensive training on topics like gender mainstreaming, human trafficking, and the protection of women and children. The renewed MoU will remain effective until 2026, aiming to strengthen grassroots initiatives across Indonesia.

After decade of delays, pressure mounts on Indonesia to pass Indigenous rights bill

—Hans Nicholas Jong, *Mongabay*, 9 April 2025

Rights activists have criticized Indonesia's parliament for further delaying the long-awaited Indigenous rights bill, which has been stuck in limbo for over a decade. The bill, first proposed by the Indigenous alliance AMAN in 2003 and adopted by the House of Representatives in 2012, is seen as essential for protecting Indigenous communities' lands and rights amid increasing land grabs and criminalization of land defenders. Despite being listed as a priority every year since 2014, the bill has made little progress, with lawmakers citing the need to map the challenges faced by Indigenous communities. However, activists argue that this is a convenient excuse masking reluctance to share power over land and resources. Golkar Party members have downplayed the bill's importance, with some questioning its constitutionality. Meanwhile, parties like NasDem have expressed support, but a majority in parliament remains elusive. If the bill is not passed by August 2024, activists plan a large-scale demonstration, demanding recognition and protection for Indigenous communities.

I. Government Priority Program

Indonesia considers exporting rice if domestic reserves sufficient

—Huaxia, *Xinhua*, 23 April 2025

Indonesia may consider exporting rice if domestic supply remains secure, the National Food Agency (Bapanas) announced on Tuesday, April 22, in Jakarta. Bapanas Head Arief Prasetyo Adi stated that rice exports could proceed as long as national production is abundant and food reserves meet the government's minimum threshold of 1 million tons. He emphasized that any decision to export or import rice ultimately lies with the president. The possibility of exports comes amid a report from the Ministry of Agriculture projecting a domestic rice surplus of 2.8 to 3 million tons by April 2025. Deputy Agriculture Minister Sudaryono attributed the surplus to strong local harvests, despite global food crises driven by climate and geopolitical instability. The discussion around exports was further sparked by the Malaysian government's recent plan to import rice from Indonesia, reflecting growing regional demand. With an estimated production of 32 million tons, Indonesia sees potential to balance domestic food security while entering the export market, marking a significant shift from its traditional rice-importing status.

Prabowo Responds to Alleged Misappropriation of Free Nutritious Meal Funds

—Eka Yudha Saputra, *TempoNews*, 23 April 2025

President Prabowo Subianto vowed a full investigation into alleged embezzlement of Rp975 million in funds from the Free Nutritious Meals (MBG) program after a Kalibata-based kitchen operator reported the MBG partner foundation, Yayasan Media Berkat Nusantara (MBN), to police. The operator, Ira Mesra, who runs a kitchen under the program's Nutrition Fulfillment Service Unit, claimed she had not received any payments since February 2025, despite continuing operations. She filed the report on April 10 under Articles 372 and 378 of the Criminal Code, citing fraud and embezzlement. South Jakarta Police questioned Ira on April 18, reviewing 28 points mainly concerning contractual discrepancies. Her attorney, Danna Harly Putra, confirmed the case centers on misalignment between agreement terms and actual execution. President Prabowo assured that every rupiah of public money would be protected. Meanwhile, National Nutrition Agency (BGN) Head Dadan Hindayana called the case an internal dispute, noting the unusual subcontracting arrangement where the kitchen and the foundation were separate entities.

Housing Deputy Minister: World Bank to Fund Uninhabitable Home Renovations in Indonesia

—Riri Rahayu, *TempoNews*, 22 April 2025

On April 21, Indonesia's Deputy Minister of Housing and Settlement Area Fahri Hamzah announced that several major international donor agencies, including the World Bank, ADB, AIIB, IDB, and GID, are prepared to support large-scale renovations of uninhabitable homes across Indonesia. Speaking at a post-Eid event in Central Jakarta hosted by the All-Indonesia Housing and Settlement Developers Association, Fahri revealed the World Bank alone is willing to provide up to US\$1 billion annually, bolstering hopes for broader donor engagement. This support is critical, as the government's Self-Help Housing Stimulant Assistance (BSBS) budget currently stands at just Rp900 billion—far short of the Rp16 trillion potentially needed yearly. The initiative is part of President Prabowo Subianto's 3 Million Houses Program, aimed at improving living conditions, especially in slum, coastal, and riverside areas. Private sector figures like Sugianto Kusuma (Aguan), through the Buddha Tzu Chi Foundation, and Kadin have also pledged support, with 500 home renovations already underway. Minister Maruarar Sirait praised these collaborative efforts, expressing heartfelt government gratitude.

Indonesia's Food Self-Sufficiency Program Harms the Environment, Celios Warns

—Alfitria Nefi, *TempoNews*, 19 April 2025

The Center of Economic and Law Studies (Celios) criticized President Prabowo Subianto's food self-sufficiency program for causing significant environmental harm, particularly in ecologically sensitive areas like Merauke and Central Kalimantan. Speaking on Saturday, April 19, Celios Director of Socio-Bioeconomy Fiorentina Refani cited the destruction of forests, savannas, and wetlands in Merauke due to food estate projects, and warned that cassava plantations on peatlands in Gunung Mas could worsen flooding. Fiorentina outlined three main concerns: corporate-driven land use prioritizing profit over ecology, involvement of unqualified and often militarized decision-makers, and a top-down approach that enforces monoculture farming. She argued that uniform food production models force unsuitable crops, like rice in Merauke, onto communities, potentially triggering food insecurity. Criticizing the dominance of military figures in key planning roles and the absence of science-based policy, Fiorentina described the program as “militaristic and technocratically shallow.” Celios'

assessment raises pressing questions about the environmental, social, and governance impacts of Prabowo's national food agenda.

Elimination of Import Quotas Could Harm Farmers and Hinder Food Self-Sufficiency

—Hendriyo Widi, *Kompas*, 10 April 2025

President Prabowo Subianto announced on April 8, during an economic forum in Jakarta, that Indonesia will eliminate import quotas for essential food commodities, allowing anyone to import items such as meat. Intended as a response to the United States' imposition of 32% tariffs on Indonesian products—citing trade barriers like quota systems—this policy is part of the government's effort to demonstrate economic resilience amid global trade wars. However, critics warn the move could flood the market with imports, undermining local farmers and jeopardizing the national food self-sufficiency agenda. Professor Dwi Andreas Santosa of IPB University noted that food imports have already surged to 34.35 million tons in 2024, and further deregulation may dampen farmers' enthusiasm to boost production. Experts like Abra PG Talattov of INDEF stressed that the policy must comply with Indonesian laws requiring food imports only when domestic supply falls short. As the government targets self-sufficiency in rice, corn, sugar, and beef, stakeholders urge a cautious, regulated approach to avoid compromising farmer protection and food security goals.

II. Indonesia in Politics and Geopolitics

Indonesia, Vatican Advance Istiqlal Declaration After Pope Francis' Passing

—Ervana Trikarinaputri, *TempoNews*, 22 April 2025

Indonesian Ambassador to the Vatican, Michael Trias Kuncahyono, confirmed on April 21 that Indonesia and the Vatican are finalizing the Istiqlal Declaration, a landmark document promoting interfaith harmony signed on September 5, 2024, by Pope Francis, Indonesia's Religious Affairs Minister, and Istiqlal Mosque Grand Imam Nasaruddin Umar. Trias revealed ongoing discussions with Cardinal George Jacob Koovakad, head of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, and Father Markus Solo Kewuta, signaling strong Vatican commitment to advancing the declaration through planned meetings and seminars. However, the anticipated meeting between Pope Francis and Grand Imam Umar was delayed due to the Pope's declining health, which restricted his public activities. Pope Francis, aged 88, passed away on Monday morning, April 21 at Casa Santa Marta, Vatican City, after complications from double pneumonia. The Vatican officially announced his death, marking the end of his 12-year papacy. His passing occurred just as plans were underway to further promote the Istiqlal Declaration, which remains a significant symbol of Indonesia-Vatican cooperation on global religious tolerance.

From Bandung to Brics: Indonesia's evolving quest for Global South autonomy

—Amy Sood, *SouthChinaMorningPost*, 19 April 2025

This April marks the 70th anniversary of the 1955 Bandung Conference, where 29 Asian and African nations, mostly newly independent, gathered in Bandung, Indonesia, to promote peaceful coexistence, sovereignty, and non-alignment amid Cold War tensions. While the conference laid the foundation for the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which now includes 120 nations, Indonesia under President Prabowo Subianto has opted not to hold a major commemoration, signaling a shift from symbolic diplomacy to pragmatic engagement.

Analysts view this as reflective of Prabowo's more transactional foreign policy, focusing on economic growth and strategic partnerships, including Indonesia's recent accession to the Brics bloc. As multipolarity reshapes global geopolitics, Indonesia is recalibrating its diplomacy to align with flexible coalitions rather than broad ideological movements like NAM. Experts argue this is both a missed opportunity to reaffirm Indonesia's leadership in the Global South and an indicator of evolving global realities, where maintaining non-alignment is increasingly complex amid great-power rivalries and trade tensions, particularly between the U.S. and China.

Putin's play for an Indonesian airbase was always likely to fail – but Russia has wider ambitions

—Kate Lamb and Angela Dewan, *TheGuardian*, 17 April 2025

A recent defence industry report claimed that Russia requested permanent access to Indonesia's Biak airfield in Papua, raising concerns in Australia due to its proximity to the northern Australian border. However, Indonesian experts dismissed the report, citing Jakarta's long-standing non-alignment foreign policy and commitment to not allowing foreign military bases on its territory. Moscow has sought such access for decades without success. Indonesia's constitution and foreign policy principles strongly oppose foreign military presence. While the request is unlikely to succeed, Russia's interest in Biak is seen as part of its broader strategy to increase its presence in Southeast Asia, especially as it seeks to expand its geopolitical influence. Biak's location near the equator, its potential for space operations, and its proximity to critical US military bases make it strategically valuable. Despite this, experts argue that Indonesia, which recently deepened ties with Russia through joint military drills and trade agreements, is unlikely to concede such a request, especially under the current political climate in Indonesia.

Impact of China Vs America Technology War

—Ahmad Arif, *Kompas*, 16 April 2025

The ongoing tariff war between China and the United States is not only an economic dispute but also a geopolitical battle for global dominance, particularly in technology. Experts, including Graham Allison, have warned that the rising tensions could lead to war, echoing historical patterns of conflict when a new power challenges an established one, known as "Thucydides' Trap." However, many argue that this conflict is more likely to result in a new Cold War centered on technological and digital economic control, rather than military confrontation. China has significantly advanced in strategic technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), semiconductors, and clean energy, aided by its investment in research and development and its efforts to lure back diaspora scientists. China's technological rise is seen as a direct challenge to US dominance, culminating in actions like the US blacklisting Chinese tech giants such as Huawei and TikTok. This conflict, marked by tariffs and technological restrictions, risks global scientific fragmentation, especially as international cooperation is needed to address pressing challenges like climate change and pandemics.

Indonesia dismisses report Russia seeking to base aircraft in country as 'simply not true', Australia says

—Kate Lamb and Josh Butler, *TheGuardian*, 15 April 2025

Indonesia has denied reports that Russia requested to base military aircraft in the country, calling them "simply not true," according to Australian Defence Minister Richard Marles, who said he received direct assurance from his Indonesian counterpart, Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin. The denial follows a report by defence outlet Janes claiming Moscow sought permission to station

long-range aircraft at Biak airbase in eastern Indonesia. The airbase, home to Indonesia's CN235 surveillance fleet, lies about 1,400km from Darwin, Australia. The alleged request reportedly followed a February meeting between Sjamsoeddin and Sergei Shoigu, a key Putin ally. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and opposition leader Peter Dutton both expressed concern, with Dutton warning of destabilization if Russia gained military presence in Southeast Asia. Indonesia's constitutional ban on foreign military bases, reiterated by lawmakers, aligns with its long-standing non-aligned foreign policy. While the Kremlin declined to comment, analysts doubt Indonesia would risk geopolitical fallout by accepting such a proposal. The issue arose amid Australia's federal election campaign, prompting calls for greater transparency from the Albanese government.

Indonesia offers to temporarily shelter wounded and orphaned Palestinians from Gaza

—APNews reporter, *AssociatedPress*, 9 April 2025

Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto announced that Indonesia will offer temporary shelter to Palestinian medical evacuees and orphans affected by the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza. Subianto stated that Indonesia is prepared to evacuate around 1,000 victims, including those injured or traumatized, and provide them with a safe haven until they recover and conditions in Gaza improve. He instructed the foreign minister to coordinate evacuation plans with Palestinian authorities immediately. Subianto made the announcement before departing for a weeklong tour of the Middle East, including stops in Abu Dhabi, Turkey, Egypt, Qatar, and Jordan, where he will consult on the evacuation plans. The Indonesian president also mentioned that other countries have encouraged Indonesia to play a more active role in seeking a resolution to the Gaza conflict, a longstanding issue for the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation, which has been a strong supporter of Palestine. Subianto emphasized the complexity of the situation, yet expressed hope for Indonesia's increased involvement in peace efforts.