

(Research/Review) Article

Indonesia-Singapore Diplomatic Relations: Exploring Historical Ties, Economic Cooperation, Security, and Legal Challenges in All Aspects

A. Junaedi Karso*

Government Study, Muhammadiyah University of Makassar, Jl. Sultan Alauddin No.259, Gn. Sari, Kec. Rappocini, Kota Makassar, Sulawesi Selatan, Indonesia 90221

* Corresponding Author : junaedi@unismuh.ac.id

Abstract: The relationship between Indonesia and Singapore has deep historical roots, tracing back to the ancient kingdoms. In the 7th century, the Strait of Singapore was part of the Srivijaya Empire. Later, in 1365, the Javanese hymn Nagarakretagama, written during the Majapahit era, mentioned a settlement on the island called Temasek, highlighting the long-standing connection between the two regions. Trade between Indonesia and Singapore has grown significantly over the years, reaching S\$36 billion (US\$29.32 billion), with Singapore being the largest foreign investor in Indonesia, having invested US\$1.14 billion across 142 projects. Additionally, trade between the two nations surged to approximately \$68 billion in 2010, with Indonesia's non-oil and gas exports to Singapore reaching their highest levels. The two countries have established robust cooperation in various sectors, including tourism, security, counter-terrorism, and environmental concerns. However, the relationship is not without its challenges. One significant issue is Singapore's role as a haven for Indonesian corruptors, with many fugitives from corruption cases seeking refuge there. This has led to tensions, particularly regarding the extradition of individuals convicted of corruption. To address these challenges, both nations must enhance the implementation of bilateral agreements, especially in political and security matters. There is a need to accelerate the technical finalization of military training areas as part of the defense cooperation agreement. Additionally, executing the extradition agreement and updating the memorandum of understanding between the Attorneys General of both countries would be crucial steps in addressing these issues and improving bilateral relations. In conclusion, while Indonesia-Singapore relations are multifaceted, with both cooperation and challenges, mutual commitment to resolving issues through diplomatic and legal means will be key to strengthening their ties in the future.

Keywords: Bilateral Relations; Diplomatic Ties; Economic Cooperation; Indonesia-Singapore Diplomacy; Security and Legal Issues

Received: 12 July, 2025

Revised: 29 July, 2025

Accepted: 20 August, 2025

Published: 25 August, 2025

Curr. Ver.: 25 August, 2025



Copyright: © 2025 by the authors.
Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY SA) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)

1. Introduction

Indonesia and Singapore established diplomatic relations on September 7, 1967, a month after the formation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on August 8, 1967. Indonesia and Singapore are two of the five founding members of ASEAN (including Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines). Both countries are also members of the Non-Aligned Movement and APEC.

Over the years, Indonesia and Singapore have regularly exchanged high-level visits, supported by strong economic cooperation in various sectors, including health, defense, and the environment. In the last decade, Singapore has consistently been Indonesia's largest foreign investor.

2017 marked the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries in a celebration known as RISING50, a combination of the words "RI" for Republic of Indonesia and "SING" for Singapore.

The relationship between Indonesia and Singapore dates back to the ancient kingdoms, when the strait was part of the Srivijaya Empire in the 7th century. The Nagarakretagama, a Javanese hymn written in 1365 during the Majapahit era, also refers to a settlement on the island called Temasek ('Sea City' in Old Javanese, spelled Tumasik).

In 1299, the ruler of Palembang, Sang Nila Utama, established the Kingdom of Singapura in Temasek. In the mid-1390s, a Palembang prince, Parameswara, fled to Temasek after being overthrown by the Majapahit Empire. During the 14th century, Singapore was caught in a power struggle between Siam (now Thailand) and the Java-based Majapahit Empire for control of the Malay Peninsula. According to the Malay Annals, Singapore was defeated in a single attack by Majapahit. He ruled the island for several years before being forced to relocate to Melaka, where he established the Sultanate of Malacca.

In the early 19th century, Singapore came under British control as a Straits Settlements and later as a Crown colony, while during the same period the Indonesian archipelago gradually fell under the control of the Dutch East India Company and the Dutch East Indies.

In early 1965, a group of Indonesian soldiers blew up a building in Singapore (while Singapore was still part of Malaysia). Two soldiers were captured and sentenced to death. The executions took place in 1968.

Following Indonesia's independence in 1945 and Singapore's separation from Malaysia in 1965, the two countries established bilateral diplomatic relations in 1966. In 1967, they established ASEAN, along with Thailand, the Philippines, and Malaysia, to promote peace and stability in the region. Official diplomatic relations between Singapore and Indonesia were established on September 7, 1967.

The 100th anniversary of Indonesia-Singapore diplomatic relations was marked by a series of events in August: a one-on-one meeting between the two leaders, the launch of the book *RISING50*, the issuance of a joint commemorative stamp, and a tree planting at the Singapore Botanic Gardens. The first joint flight involving 20 fighter jets from the Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) and the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI-AU) was also held, in the formation of the number "50." In the economic sector, an investment forum was held and nine memorandums of understanding (MOUs) were signed, including cooperation in education and research, student exchanges, the environment, and energy.

Located on the busiest sea lane in the Strait of Malacca and serving as one of the world's major hubs, trade with and through Singapore is crucial for Indonesia, providing a global trade route. Conversely, Indonesian businesses are also important for Singapore. Trade and commerce are key drivers of both countries' foreign relations, and each major trading partner is a key trading partner for the other.

The trade volume between Indonesia and Singapore reached S\$36 billion (US\$29.32 billion). Singapore is the largest foreign investor in Indonesia, with a cumulative total of US\$1.14 billion across 142 projects. Trade between the two countries also reached approximately \$68 billion in 2010. At the same time, Indonesia's non-oil and gas exports to Singapore were the highest in the region.

Poultry meat exports from Indonesia to Singapore increased significantly following Malaysia's chicken export ban. An agreement was reached when, on June 30, 2022, Singapore approved Indonesia as a new source of frozen and chilled chicken. On July 21, 2022, a second Indonesian company began supplying chicken to Singapore.

On July 21, 2022, Indonesia announced its intention to establish a large chicken farm in Batam, a city in the Riau Islands, specifically for export to Singapore. These chickens would also be fresh, given Batam and Singapore's geographical proximity. It is believed that such a farm could begin operations in 2023. Similarly, Singapore has had a years-long agreement with Indonesia to import fresh pork from a farm located on an island near Batam, known as Pulau Bulan. On July 28, 2022, another Indonesian company announced that it would establish three farms on Bintan Island to supply live chickens to Singapore starting later that year.

Singapore is Indonesia's number one source of foreign tourists, with 1,373,126 visitors in 2010. Conversely, Indonesia is also Singapore's number one source of foreign tourists, with 2,592,222 visitors in 2011.

Besides business purposes, Indonesian tourists are drawn to Singapore primarily for shopping, city breaks, and island resorts with their amusement parks, zoos, museums, and gardens. Although Singaporeans are drawn to Indonesia primarily for its nature and culture, Bali and its neighboring island of Batam are particularly popular among Singaporean tourists.

On October 3, 2005, Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong met with Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in Bali, just two days after the Bali bombings. They agreed to strengthen counter-terrorism efforts and also discussed cooperation in the fields of economics, trade, energy, and investment.

Relations with Indonesia are generally good, although there are some unresolved issues, including the ban on the export of sand and granite, which are the mainstay of Singapore's construction industry.

Singapore's scarcity of land and space has prompted them to expand their island through land reclamation. The materials needed for reclamation, sand and granite, are largely imported from Indonesia. Sand mining from Indonesian territory has raised environmental concerns.

In August 2005, Singapore and Indonesia signed a Memorandum of Understanding to expand overflight rights between the two countries.

In June 2013, Singapore suffered from haze resulting from slash-and-burn practices used to clear land for plantations in neighboring Riau, Sumatra, and Indonesia. The June 2013 haze reached its worst on record, reaching the highest haze pollution levels since 1997. The haze triggered health warnings from the Singaporean government, angered Singaporean citizens, and also caused diplomatic tensions as the Singaporean government protested Indonesia's delay in addressing the issue and urged the Indonesian government to find effective measures to reduce transboundary haze pollution.

Furthermore, there are also disagreements between the two countries regarding the management of the Riau Islands Flight Information Region (FIR). Singapore generally claims that it controls the FIR under arrangements established by the International Civil Aviation Organization, and that this is a matter of aviation safety and efficiency. However, several Indonesian officials, both former and current, have challenged Singapore's right to do so, arguing that the FIR is a crucial determinant of Indonesia's sovereignty and air defense.

In January 2022, the 5th Singapore-Indonesia Leaders' Retreat held at the Sanchaya Resort in Bintan witnessed the signing of three agreements addressing bilateral FIR issues, defense cooperation, and fugitive extradition, which are important to both parties. Under the airspace management agreement, Singapore and Indonesia have agreed to realign the boundaries between the Jakarta Flight Information Region (FIR) and the Singapore FIR. Indonesia will delegate to Singapore the provision of air navigation services in a portion of the airspace within the realigned Jakarta FIR. This agreement will remain in effect for 25 years and can be extended by mutual consent. Under the Defense Cooperation Agreement, Singapore and Indonesia will continue to strengthen their defense partnership and deepen cooperation in areas of mutual benefit. This agreement will be in effect for 25 years. Under the Extradition Agreement, Singapore and Indonesia will grant extradition for the full list of extraditable offenses covered by the agreement. The signing of the agreement is seen as a mutually beneficial outcome for both countries.

2. Proposed Method

Based on the background above, the formulation of the problem in this paper is: "Indonesia-Singapore Diplomacy Relations in All Aspects"?

The Data Collection Technique uses Online Data Search/Internet searching, browsing, surfing or downloading data, Books, magazines, Journals, Theses, Dissertations, online news, media, websites and Sources from Experts related to matters related to "Indonesia-Singapore Diplomacy Relations in All Aspects".

3. Results and Discussion

Indonesia-Singapore Sign 19 Agreements, Including an Extradition Agreement

Indonesia and Singapore have agreed to 19 strategic cooperation agreements, one of which relates to the implementation of the extradition agreement signed three years ago.

The implementation of the extradition agreement was one of 19 strategic agreements made between the Indonesian and Singaporean governments during a meeting between President Prabowo Subianto and Singaporean Prime Minister Lawrence Wong in Singapore on Monday (June 16, 2025). President Prabowo stated that there has been progress in implementing the extradition agreement, which was signed by the governments of both countries at the end of January 2022.

The signing of 19 strategic agreements took place during the annual "Leaders' Retreat" meeting between President Prabowo and Prime Minister Lawrence. The agreements spanned various sectors. The meeting took place at Parliament House, Singapore, as part of President Prabowo's first state visit since his inauguration in October last year. Prior to the Leaders' Retreat session, the two leaders held a one-on-one meeting.

During his visit, the President also attended a state lunch hosted by Singaporean President Tharman Shanmugaratnam at a Singapore hotel. This reception was held in honor of President Prabowo's first state visit to Singapore since his inauguration as President of the Republic of Indonesia.

Regarding the agreements, particularly in the political and security fields, both countries affirmed their commitment to fully implementing the defense cooperation agreement and accelerating the technical finalization of military training areas. Furthermore, progress was reported to have been made on the extradition treaty mechanism, including the renewal of the memorandum of understanding between the Attorneys General of both countries.

During the agenda, the two countries agreed on 19 strategic partnerships in various fields, including politics and security, economics, health, and connectivity.

President Prabowo, in a written statement from the Press, Media, and Information Bureau of the Presidential Secretariat, stated, "In the political and security fields, we reaffirm our commitment to fully implementing the defense cooperation agreement and finalizing all technical details for military training areas. I hope this will be expedited very quickly. We are also making progress on the extradition agreement mechanism." (Kompas.id, June 16, 2025).

The details of this progress were not provided. However, Minister of Law Supratman Andi Agtas stated in a written statement that with the points of the agreement on extradition, the Singaporean government is committed to implementing the agreement signed during the administration of Indonesia's seventh President, Joko Widodo.

He was also optimistic that the Singaporean government's commitment would provide a positive momentum for the two countries to coordinate and cooperate across borders in law enforcement.

For your information, the extradition treaty between Indonesia and Singapore was signed in Bintan, Riau Islands, at the end of January 2022. However, the Indonesian government only ratified the treaty through Law No. 5 of 2023 on January 13, 2023, and the new agreement took effect on March 22, 2024.

The agreement covers 31 types of crimes, including corruption, money laundering, bribery, banking, narcotics, terrorism, and the financing of terrorism-related activities. Furthermore, the agreement stipulates that the nationality of the perpetrator of a crime must be determined at the time the crime was committed. Both countries also agreed to extradite anyone found within their territory, requested and sought by the requesting country, for prosecution, trial, or execution of a sentence for an extraditable crime.

Currently, the Indonesian government is seeking to extradite Paulus Tannos, a suspect in the e-KTP corruption case, from Singapore. The fugitive from the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) has been detained by Singapore's Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) since January 17. However, his repatriation has been delayed because Tannos has applied for a suspension of detention.

A. Other Sector Agreements

Beyond the three agreements on politics and security, the governments of the two countries agreed on 16 issues that essentially strengthen bilateral cooperation in various sectors, including the economy, energy, human resource development, and low-carbon technology.

- a. First, a joint report to the leaders of six bilateral economic cooperation groups.
- b. Second, a memorandum of understanding on cooperation on food security and agricultural technology between the Indonesian Ministry of Agriculture and the Singaporean Ministry of Sustainability and Environment.
- c. Third, a memorandum of understanding on cooperation on sustainable industrial estate development between the Indonesian Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources and the Singaporean Ministry of Trade and Industry.
- d. Fourth, a memorandum of understanding on cross-border electricity trade between the Indonesian Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources and the Singaporean Ministry of Trade and Industry.
- e. Fifth, a memorandum of understanding on carbon capture and storage between the Indonesian Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources and the Singaporean Ministry of Trade and Industry. Sixth, the implementation of the Flight Information Regional (FIR) agreement, in the form of the placement of civilian and military personnel at the Singapore Air Traffic Control Center (SATCC).
- f. Seventh, a memorandum of understanding on mutual recognition of halal certification between the Indonesian Halal Product Guarantee Agency and the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (to be signed on June 18, 2025).
- g. Eighth, bilateral cooperation on financial regulation between Bank Indonesia and the Monetary Authority of Singapore.

- h. Ninth, a memorandum of understanding on capacity building for government employees in the maritime sector between the Indonesian Ministry of Transportation and the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore.
- i. Tenth, a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in library and information management between the National Library of Indonesia and the National Library Board of Singapore.
- j. Eleventh, cooperation on the establishment of the Ciputra SMG Curie Cancer Center (CSCCC) between Ciputra Hospital and Singapore's Curie Oncology, Singapore Medical Group (SMG).
- k. Twelfth, investment in the Nusantara Sembcorp Solar Energy Power Plant in the Indonesian capital.
- l. Thirteenth, a collaboration between Sembcorp and the Panbil Group JV for the development of two low-carbon industrial areas in Batam.
- m. Fourteenth, technical arrangements for a youth exchange program. Fifteenth, a young farmer development program. And, sixteenth, the launch of flights to and from Singapore, Kertajati, and Padang by Scoot.

President Prabowo welcomed the agreements. He emphasized the importance of the Indonesia-Singapore strategic partnership, which has existed for more than five decades. "I am very confident that this bilateral relationship will continue to grow stronger with increasing trust and confidence in each other over time."

Furthermore, economically, President Prabowo expressed his appreciation for Singapore's position as a major investor in Indonesia. Regarding food security, the President welcomed Singapore's offer to transfer modern agricultural technology, including urban farming and sustainable post-harvest practices.

In the health sector, President Prabowo invited Singapore's active participation in supporting the transformation of Indonesia's health system, including the establishment of new medical and nursing faculties. Meanwhile, cooperation on the placement of skilled Indonesian workers was also discussed, particularly in the areas of elderly care and caregiving.

Regarding connectivity, Indonesia is committed to adding direct flights to Singapore and improving airport infrastructure. "In principle, I want to see easier and faster access to our airports."

In his remarks, Prime Minister Lawrence Wong expressed his appreciation for President Prabowo's visit and called this Leaders' Retreat an important milestone in a new chapter in bilateral relations between the two countries. Prime Minister Wong also highlighted the strong ties that have existed between the two countries.

"This year's Leaders' Retreat is the first for both of us in our current capacities, and I look forward to working with you, Mr. President, and your delegation, as well as your ministers and officials, to chart a new path forward in this new era of bilateral relations between our two countries."

Prime Minister Wong also expressed his confidence in Indonesia's economic potential and strength. "Last year, Singapore contributed more than a third of all realized foreign investment in Indonesia. This reflects our confidence in the Indonesian economy, its potential, and strength."

Meanwhile, President Tharman stated that President Prabowo's visit was an important opportunity to discuss a new phase in bilateral relations between Indonesia and Singapore. He stated that cooperation between the two countries has reached a new level and is on a very promising path.

President Tharman also highlighted the positive trend of Singaporean private sector investment in Indonesia, which has continued to grow significantly in recent years. He also appreciated the diversification of Singapore's investment across various strategic sectors, such as industrial estates, logistics, connectivity, data centers, and renewable energy.

"Even this year, in the first quarter, we have seen very significant progress. Several companies, including Singaporean companies, are investing in solar power and low-carbon industrial estates."

After witnessing the signing of the strategic agreement between the two countries, President Prabowo and PM Wong attended the Renewable Energy Interconnectors Milestone Ceremony, also held at Parliament House, Singapore.

Through this launch, Indonesia and Singapore made a concrete commitment to addressing the challenges of climate change while opening up new investment opportunities in the development of sustainable industrial zones, cross-border electricity trade, and low-

carbon energy infrastructure. This activity also serves as an important symbol of a strategic partnership that not only has regional impact but also contributes to the global agenda of energy transition and sustainable development.

B. Peaceful Solutions

During the meeting, President Prabowo Subianto and Prime Minister Lawrence Wong also agreed to promote peaceful resolutions to a number of pressing regional and global issues.

President Prabowo emphasized that both countries share deep concern over the escalating conflict in the Middle East, particularly in Gaza, and the rising tensions between Israel and Iran. "We discussed regional and global issues. We expressed deep concern over the situation in Gaza and the escalating Israel-Iran conflict. We emphasized the importance of peaceful solutions, negotiations, and we called for an immediate ceasefire."

The situation in Myanmar was also discussed. "Regarding Myanmar, we agreed that we must also concentrate on achieving peaceful engagement and outcomes in Myanmar."

Prime Minister Wong also conveyed Singapore's commitment to continuing to strengthen regional cooperation with ASEAN member countries. "As founding members of ASEAN, we will continue to work with fellow ASEAN member states to strengthen our region and uphold a rules-based multilateral system."

In the spirit of multilateralism and regional stability, the two leaders emphasized that Indonesia and Singapore have strategic roles in maintaining peace and strengthening the rules-based international order.

C. Indonesia-Singapore Cooperation Agreement

The governments of Indonesia and Singapore agreed on 19 cooperation agreements across various sectors on Monday (June 16, 2025). The signing of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) was witnessed by President Prabowo Subianto and Prime Minister Lawrence Wong at Parliament House, Singapore.



Figure 1. Indonesia-Singapore Cooperation Agreement
Source: Antara (06/16, 2025)

D. Indonesia-Singapore Cooperation Continues, Coordinating Minister Airlangga Discusses Strategic Issues with Singaporean Foreign Minister

During his working visit to Indonesia, Singaporean Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan met with Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs Airlangga Hartarto at the Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs Office on Tuesday (April 23). The meeting was in preparation for the Leaders' Retreat between President Joko Widodo and Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at the Bogor Palace on April 29, 2024.

The two ministers expressed optimism that the economic relationship between the two countries will continue to be strong through various potential bilateral collaborations, including green energy, particularly solar farms, carbon capture storage, the development of Batam Bintan Karimun, digital connectivity, and data centers. Furthermore, Coordinating Minister Airlangga also stated that many data centers will be built around the Indonesian capital to support its development, which embraces a modern and digitalized concept.

One of the strategic collaborations emphasized is human resource development through the development of skills, talent exchange in the digital sector, and capacity building in the healthcare sector. "The Indonesian government continues to support strong relations with Singapore, both bilaterally and within the ASEAN framework, for economic growth and regional stability," (Ekon.go.id, April 23, 2024)

Coordinating Minister Airlangga and Foreign Minister Vivian also exchanged views on Indonesia's accession to the OECD and the geopolitical dynamics in the Middle East in an economic context. On this occasion, Foreign Minister Vivian expressed optimism that Indonesia would complete the accession process smoothly.

E. Enhancing Cooperation in Green Energy and Energy Transition

Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs Airlangga Hartarto received a visit from Singtel Chairman and Temasek Board Member Lee Theng Kiat on Friday (July 18). The visit and meeting aimed to introduce Temasek Board Members and discuss Temasek Holdings' role as a global investment company and encourage investment potential in Indonesia.

During the meeting, Coordinating Minister Airlangga expressed his appreciation for Temasek's support for Indonesia's economic development and encouraged Temasek to continue expanding in the country.

"Temasek plays an important role "For businesses in Indonesia, particularly through capital injection schemes in several local startups. The government is ready to facilitate steps to increase Temasek's investment in the country," he said.

In response, Chairman Lee expressed his appreciation to the Indonesian government for its support in conducting business in Indonesia. "Indonesia remains an important partner in developing Temasek's investment portfolio in the Southeast Asia region. Going forward, Temasek will continue to develop existing investments in Indonesia and open up other collaboration opportunities."

Temasek is a Singaporean government-owned asset management company established in 1974. As an investment company, Temasek's portfolio is highly diversified, globally spanning various sectors such as financial services, telecommunications, media, technology, transportation, energy, the environment, and healthcare. As a major investment company, Temasek also has significant investments in Indonesia through its subsidiaries, including ST Engineering, Singtel, and Sembcorp, within the Siloam International Hospitals network, Telkomsel, Matahari Putra Prima, DBS Bank, Olam Internasional, and Sembcorp Industries and Koppel Corporation.

Coordinating Minister Airlangga further emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation on green energy and the energy transition between Indonesia and Singapore. Coordinating Minister Airlangga expressed his support for Temasek's commitment through Sembcorp Urban in early 2025 to develop green industrial areas in West Java, Tanjung Sauh, and Tembesi, Batam. (Ekon.go.id, July 18, 2025).

F. Indonesia-Singapore Trade Value (2017-2021)

Trade in goods between Indonesia and Singapore rebounded after the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021. The value of trade in goods between Indonesia and Singapore grew by 17.74% to US\$27.08 billion in 2021 from the previous year, according to the United Nations (UN) trade database.

Global trade has shown signs of recovery from the slump caused by supply chain disruptions during the pandemic. Indonesia's exports to Singapore grew by 9.11% to US\$11.63 billion in 2021 from the previous year.

On the other hand, Indonesia's imports from Singapore grew by 25.2% to US\$15.45 billion in 2021 from the previous year. (Databoks.co.id, 07/07/2022).

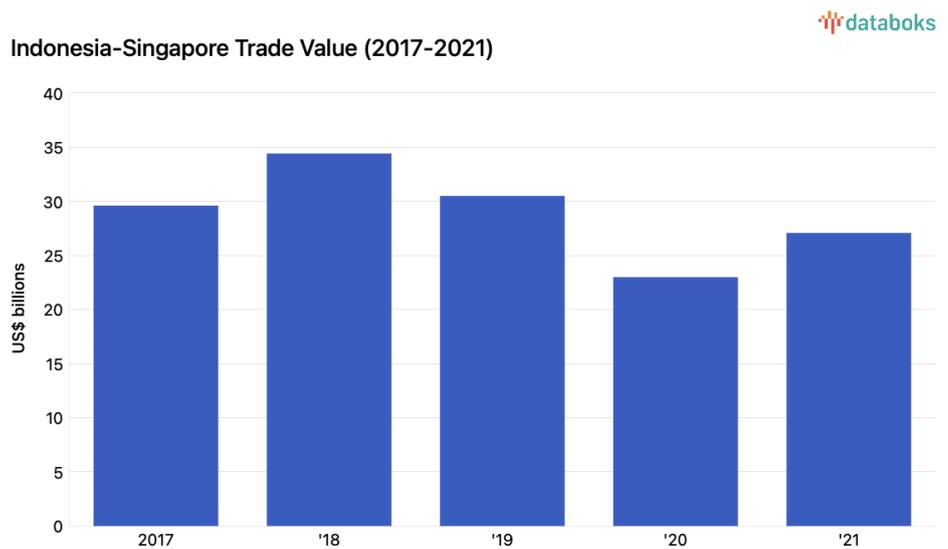


Figure 2. Indonesia-Singapore Trade Value (2017-2021)
Source: UN Comtrade (2017-2021)

G. Singapore Leads Foreign Investment in Indonesia in Q1 2020

Amid the Covid-19 pandemic, Singapore remains the largest source of investment in Indonesia. In the first quarter of 2020, investment from this neighboring country reached US\$2.7 billion across 3,006 projects.

According to BKPM (Indonesia Investment Coordinating Board), the next largest countries of origin were China at US\$1.3 billion, followed by Hong Kong (US\$634.1 million), and Japan (US\$604.2 million).

Total investment realization in the first quarter of 2020 was Rp 210.7 trillion. This figure increased from Rp 208.3 trillion in Q4 2019 and Rp 195.1 trillion in Q1 2019.

Foreign direct investment (PMA) decreased to Rp 98 trillion from Rp 107.9 trillion in the first quarter of 2019. Domestic direct investment (PMDN) rose from Rp 87.2 trillion in the first quarter of 2019 to Rp 112.7 trillion.

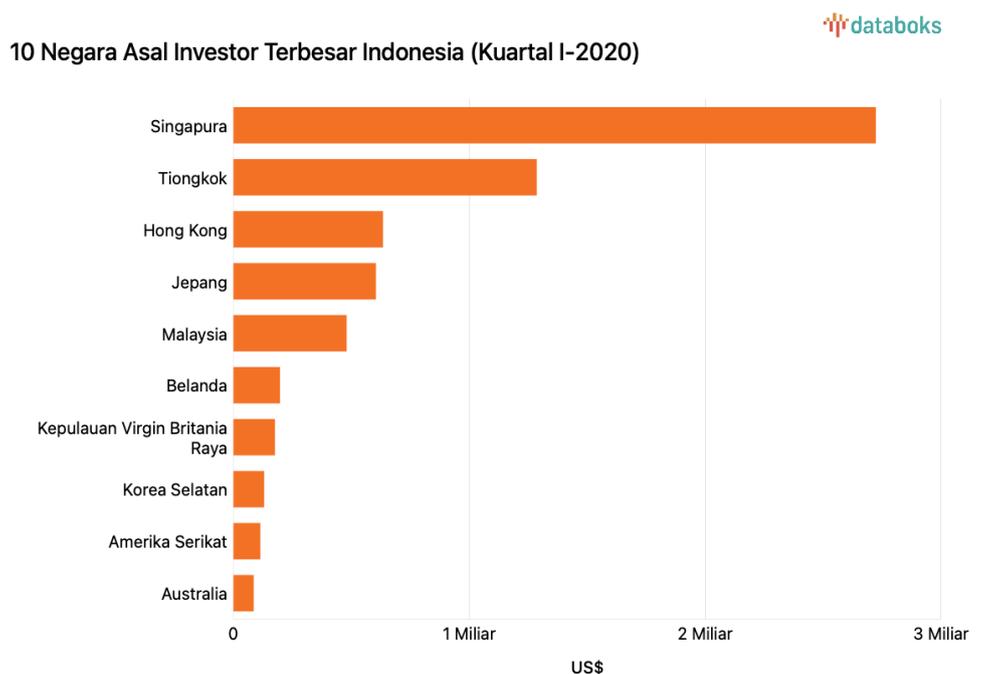


Figure 3. Singapore Leads Foreign Investment in Indonesia in Q1 2020
Source: Capital Investment Coordinating Board (2020)

H. Indonesia Holds Highest Diplomatic Influence Score in Southeast Asia 2023

The Lowy Institute has observed numerous comments regarding Southeast Asian countries' perceived powerlessness, especially in the face of power rivalries and major conflicts in other countries.

In its 2023 Asia Power Index report (February 21, 2023), the Lowy Institute challenges this narrative. The report instead demonstrates the continued dynamism and influence of even small Southeast Asian countries.

The Lowy Institute also ranked diplomatic influence in Southeast Asia. However, it should be noted that the list does not include data from Timor-Leste.

Indonesia ranked first with a score of 60.4 points on a 100-point scale.

The Lowy Institute explained that Indonesia is often criticized for its weak leadership in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). However, recent diplomatic engagement has shown Indonesia to be one of the most active diplomatic players in the Southeast Asian region. "Jakarta hosted the second-largest number of foreign leaders or foreign ministers in 2021, and Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi was a sought-after interlocutor in Southeast Asia and beyond."

Further to 2022, the Lowy Institute noted that President Joko Widodo also sought to mediate the conflict between Russia and Ukraine and host the G20 in challenging geopolitical circumstances.

- a. According to the Lowy Institute, these ambitious steps resulted in improved expert survey scores for Indonesia's leadership at the regional and global levels in 2022.
- b. Vietnam ranked second in diplomatic influence with 55.2 points, followed by Singapore with 52.9 points.
- c. Thailand ranked fourth with 48.3 points, and Malaysia ranked sixth with 43.8 points.
- d. The Lowy Institute noted that despite the ambitions of other ASEAN countries, including Indonesia and Malaysia, to take a tougher-than-usual stance against Myanmar, the military junta appears unwilling to accept external pressure and is increasingly isolated.
- e. Myanmar is the bottom-ranked country in the diplomatic influence score. It is above it, Laos.
- f. The Lowy Institute stated that Laos is the only ASEAN country to score lower in comprehensive power than Myanmar and continues to experience a decline in economic capacity.
- g. In 2022, Laos faced a balance of payments crisis due to rising debt and high global commodity prices.

The diplomacy score index, and other measurements, are conducted solely by the Lowy Institute, using a number of indicators. The indicators are selected based on a literature review and expert consultation.

The Index's methodological framework is informed by the OECD Handbook on Constructing Composite Indicators. A distance-to-frontier approach is used to compare a country's performance with the best and worst-performing countries in each dataset.

The following are the diplomatic influence scores in Southeast Asia according to the Lowy Institute Asia Power Index 2023:

- a. Indonesia 60.4 points
- b. Vietnam 55.2 points
- c. Singapore 52.9 points
- d. Thailand 48.3 points
- e. Malaysia 43.8 points
- f. Philippines 37.1 points
- g. Brunei Darussalam 32.7 points
- h. Cambodia 32.5 points
- i. Laos 27.3 points
- j. Myanmar 24.6 points (Databoks.co.id, 02/21/2023).

Indeks Skor Pengaruh Diplomasi Negara-negara Asia Tenggara (2023)*

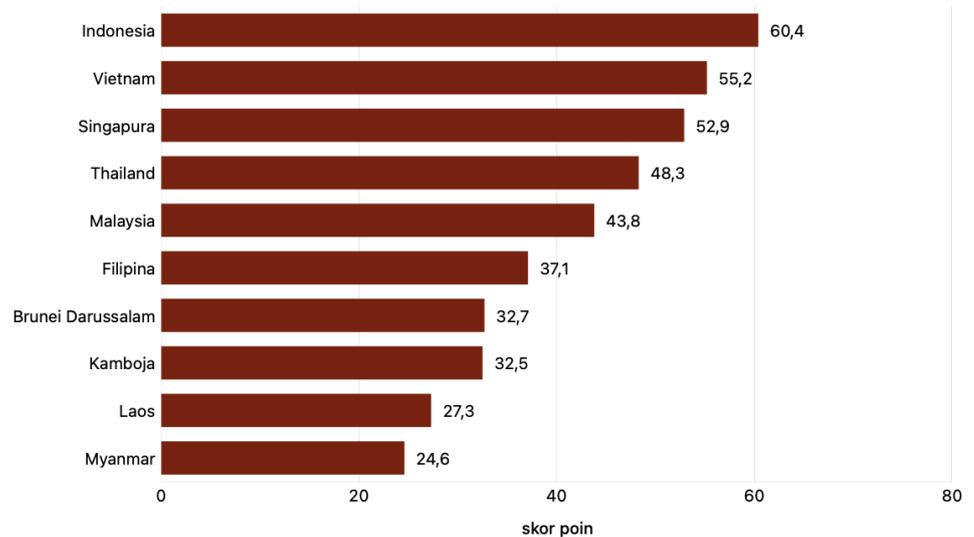


Figure 4. The Index's Methodological Framework
Source: Lavy Institute (2023)

I. Indonesia's Economic Freedom Index Ranks 4th in Southeast Asia

According to the 2021 Index of Economic Freedom report released by The Heritage Foundation, Indonesia has an economic freedom index score of 66.9 points. This score places Indonesia in fourth place in Southeast Asia.

However, this score is a 0.3 point decrease from Indonesia's economic freedom performance last year. The decline in Indonesia's score is due to a decrease in its score in the judicial effectiveness category.

The report also states that efforts to increase greater economic freedom need to be undertaken by implementing effective measures to reduce corruption. In addition, the government needs to strengthen the judicial system, modernize and simplify investment regulations, and provide flexibility in the labor market.

Globally, Indonesia ranks 56th out of 178 countries in terms of economic freedom. Meanwhile, in the Asia-Pacific region, Indonesia ranks 10th out of 40 countries in the region.

Singapore ranks first in Southeast Asia with an economic freedom index score of 89.7 points. This score also places Singapore in first place globally.

Malaysia and Thailand followed in next place with economic freedom index scores of 74.4 and 69.7, respectively. Brunei Darussalam followed behind Indonesia with a score of 66.6. Timor-Leste, on the other hand, had the lowest score among Southeast Asian countries, at 44.7. (Databoks.co.id, January 13, 2022).

The Heritage Foundation's 2021 economic freedom index assesses countries with the freest economies based on twelve factors, including property rights, judicial effectiveness, government integrity, tax burden, government spending, fiscal health, business freedom, labor freedom, monetary freedom, trade freedom, investment freedom, and financial freedom.

A country's score on each factor is then compiled into a single score, based on which country is ranked from the highest score to the freest economy.

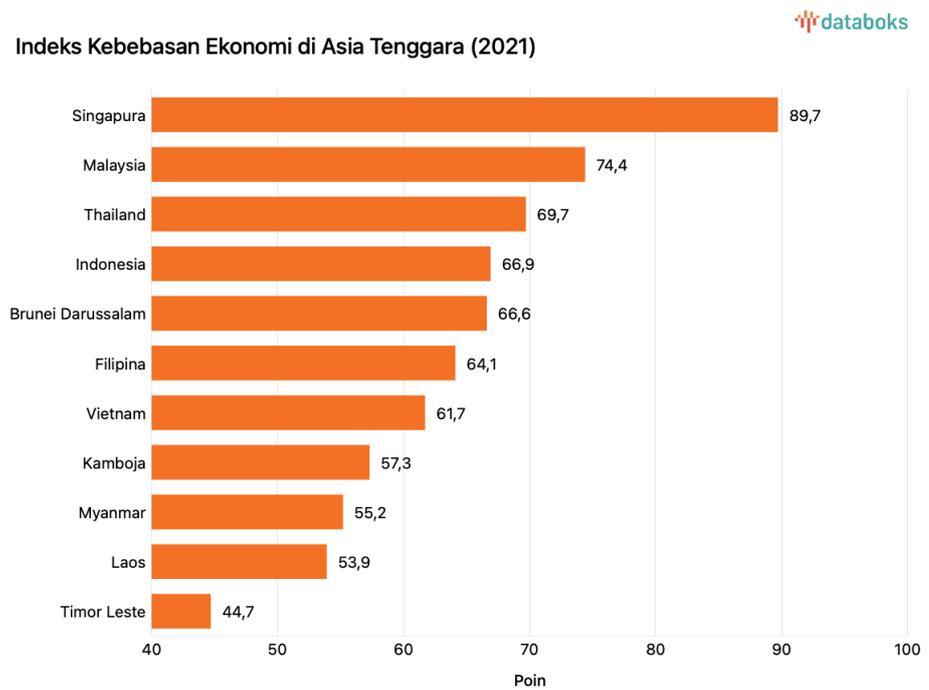


Figure 5. A Country's Score
Source: The Heritage Foundation (2021)

J. Problems in Indonesia-Singapore Relations ***Singapore, a Haven for Indonesian Corruptors***

Harun Masiku, a suspect in the alleged bribery case related to the appointment of elected members of the House of Representatives (DPR) for the 2019-2024 period, is known to have left Indonesia on Monday (January 6, 2020). According to records from the Directorate General of Immigration at the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, Harun left for Singapore on that date. Harun's escape to Singapore adds to the long list of corrupt fugitives hiding in the country bordering Batam Island. Other names recorded as having fled to Singapore include Bambang Sutrisno, Andiran Kiki Ariawan, Muhammad Nazaruddin, Nunun Nurbaeti, Hartawan Aluwi, and many more. One reason Singapore is often a destination for Indonesian corruption fugitives is the unratified extradition treaty. (Kompas.com, January 17, 2020).

For more information on Indonesian corruption fugitives who have fled to Singapore, see the following infographic:



Figure 6. Problems in Indonesia-Singapore Relations
Source: Kompas (2020)

Singapore: A Place of Refuge for Corruption Fugitives Who Have Escaped

The Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) has named Harun Masiku a suspect in an Representatives (DPR) for the 2019-2024 period, which also implicated General Elections Commission (KPU) Commissioner Wahyu Setiawan. However, Harun remains a fugitive. According to records from the Directorate General of Immigration at the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, Harun left Indonesia on January 6, 2020, and headed to Singapore. Harun Masiku's case adds to the growing list of corruption fugitives who have fled to Singapore.

Singapore has once again become a favorite destination for Indonesian corruption fugitives because its extradition treaty has not been ratified by the Indonesian government. This provides an opportunity for law enforcement to apprehend these fugitives. The following are fugitives who have fled to Singapore:

- a. Sjamsul Nursalim
Sjamsul Nursalim is a suspect in the alleged corruption case involving Bank Indonesia Liquidity Assistance (BLBI). Based on a BPK audit, the state suffered losses of IDR 4.58 trillion due to this case. Although the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) placed his name on the Wanted Persons List (DPO) in September 2019, Sjamsul remains at large in Singapore to this day.
- b. Bambang Sutrisno
Bambang Sutrisno is a former commissioner of Bank Surya. He was sentenced to life imprisonment by the Central Jakarta District Court for the misappropriation of BLBI funds in 2003.
As a result of his actions, the state suffered losses of at least IDR 1.5 trillion. To this day, Bambang remains at large.

- c. **Andrian Kiki Ariawan**
Adrian Kiki Irawan is a convict in the BLBI corruption case. The former President Director of Bank Surya was sentenced to life imprisonment by the Jakarta High Court in June 2003. As a result of his actions, the state suffered losses of IDR 1.5 trillion. Having fled to several countries, he has been serving time in Cipinang Class 1A Penitentiary since 2014.
- d. **Eko Adi Putranto**
Eko Adri Putranto is a convict in the BHS Bank BLBI corruption case. He was sentenced by the Central Jakarta District Court to 20 years in prison. As a result of his actions, the state suffered losses of up to IDR 1.95 trillion. He remains at large.
- e. **Sherny Konjongian**
Sherny Konjongian is a convict in the BHS Bank Indonesia Liquidity Credit (KLBI) corruption case. She was sentenced to 20 years in prison by the Central Jakarta District Court, along with Eko Adi Putranto. As a result of her actions, the state suffered losses of up to IDR 1.95 trillion. Sherny is currently in prison after being arrested in 2012.
- f. **David Nusa Wijaya**
David Nusa Wijaya, the owner of Bank Servitia, was sentenced to 4 years in prison in the IDR 1.9 trillion BLBI corruption case. Since 2008, David has been declared parole.
- g. **Samadikun Hartono**
Samadikun Hartono was convicted in the BLBI corruption case, which resulted in state losses of Rp 169.4 billion. After being on the run for 13 years, he was finally arrested in 2016.
- h. **Agus Anwar**
Agus Anwar was involved in the BLBI corruption case at Bank Pelita, which resulted in state losses of Rp 1.9 trillion. Upon fleeing to Singapore, he reportedly changed his citizenship.
- i. **Sujiono Timan**
Sujiono Timan was convicted in the BLBI case, which resulted in state losses of US\$126 million. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison by the Supreme Court in 2004.
- j. **Maria Pauline**
Maria Pauline is the main suspect in the Rp 1.7 trillion embezzlement case at Bank BNI. She fled to Singapore before settling in the Netherlands.
- k. **Djoko S Tjandra**
Djoko S Tjandra is the former President Director of PT Era Giat Prima. He was sentenced to two years in prison by the Supreme Court after being found guilty of corruption in the transfer of receivables collection rights, or cession, of Bank Bali. As a result, the state suffered losses of Rp 546 billion.
- l. **Gayus Tambunan**
Gayus Tambunan is a former tax official implicated in a bribery case involving losses of Rp 24 billion. After fleeing to Singapore, he is currently serving a seven-year sentence in Sukamiskin Prison.
- m. **Nunun Nurbaeti**
Nunun Nurbaeti is the wife of former Deputy Chief of Police, Commissioner General (Ret.) Adang Darajatun. She was found guilty of bribing several members of the House of Representatives (DPR) from 1999 to 2004 in connection with Miranda S. Goeltom's victory as Senior Governor of Indonesia in 2004. After being sentenced to two years in prison by the Corruption Court in 2012 and briefly on the run, Nunun was released in 2014.
- n. **Nader Thaher**
Nader Thaher, the President Director of PT Siak Zamrud Pusako, was sentenced to 14 years in prison by the Pekanbaru District Court. He was found guilty of embezzling loans from Bank Mandiri, causing state losses of up to IDR 24.8 billion.
- o. **Lesmana Basuki**
Lesmana Basuki was convicted of corruption for selling commercial paper, causing state losses of up to IDR 209 billion. Lesmana was sentenced by the Supreme Court to 14 years in prison in 2000. However, the Supreme Court, through a PK decision, acquitted him in 2007.

- p. Hartawan Aluwi
Hartawan Aluwi was convicted in the Bank Century embezzlement case which caused state losses of IDR 3.11 trillion and was sentenced to 14 years in prison by the Central Jakarta District Court in 2015. He is known to have been domiciled in Singapore since 2008. In 2016, Hartawan was arrested after his residence permit was revoked by Singapore.
- q. Hendro Wiyanto
Hendro Wiyanto is the President Director of PT Anta Boga Delta Securities Indonesia. Together with Hartawan Aluwi, he embezzled Bank Century funds, causing a state loss of Rp 3.11 trillion. Hendro is known to be hiding in Singapore and remains at large.
- r. Anton Tantular
Anton Tantular is a shareholder of PT Anta Boga Delta Securities Indonesia. Together with Hartawan and Hendro, he embezzled Bank Century funds, causing a state loss of Rp 3.11 trillion. Although he reportedly fled to Singapore, he remains at large to this day.
- s. Hesham al-Waraq
Hesham al-Waraq is a convict in the Bank Century corruption case, which caused a state loss of Rp 3.1 trillion. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison by the Central Jakarta District Court. As a fugitive, Hasyem reportedly fled to Singapore and England.
- t. Rasat Ali Rizfi
Rasat Ali Rizfi was convicted in the Century Bank corruption case, along with Hasyem, which caused state losses of Rp 3.1 trillion. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison by the Central Jakarta District Court. As a fugitive, Rasat reportedly fled to Singapore and England.
- u. Hari Matalata
Hari Matalata was involved in a textile export case worth Rp 1.6 billion. He fled to Singapore and is on the wanted list.
- v. Muhammad Nazaruddin
Muhammad Nazaruddin is the former General Treasurer of the Democratic Party. He was sentenced to 13 years in prison after being found guilty of corruption, including accepting gratuities from PT Duta Graha Indah and PT Nindya Karya, as well as corruption in the athlete's village.
- w. Lidya Muchtar
Lidya Muchtar is the owner of Bank Tamara. She was implicated in the BLBI corruption case, which caused state losses of Rp 189 billion. Reportedly fleeing to Singapore, Lidya remains at large. (Kompas.com, January 16, 2020).

K. Solution

To address the issue of Indonesian corrupt fugitives fleeing to Singapore, President Prabowo Subianto's government has taken the following measures:

- a. Implementing the Indonesia-Singapore agreement, particularly in the political and security fields. Both countries affirmed their commitment to fully implementing the defense cooperation agreement and accelerating the technical finalization of military training areas.
- b. Implementing the extradition agreement mechanism, including updating the memorandum of understanding between the Attorneys General of both countries.
 - a) In this agenda, the two countries agreed to 19 strategic partnerships in various fields, ranging from politics and security, economics, health, and connectivity.
 - b) The agreement covers 31 types of crimes, including corruption, money laundering, bribery, banking, narcotics, terrorism, and the financing of terrorism-related activities. Furthermore, the agreement stipulates that the nationality of the perpetrator of a crime is determined at the time the crime is committed. Both countries also agreed to extradite any person found in the country's territory, requested and sought by the requesting country, for prosecution or trial or execution of sentences for extraditable crimes.

4. Conclusions

Indonesia and Singapore established diplomatic relations on September 7, 1967, a month after the formation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on August 8, 1967. Indonesia and Singapore are two of the five founding members of ASEAN (including Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines). Both countries are also members of the Non-Aligned Movement and APEC.

The relationship between Indonesia and Singapore dates back to the ancient kingdoms, when the strait was part of the Srivijaya empire in the 7th century. The Nagarakretagama, a Javanese hymn written in 1365 during the Majapahit era, also refers to a settlement on the island called Temasek ('Sea City' in Old Javanese, spelled Tumasik).

The 100th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Singapore was marked by a series of events in August: a one-on-one meeting between the two leaders, the launch of the book *RISING50*, the issuance of a joint commemorative stamp, and a tree planting at the Singapore Botanic Gardens. The first joint flight involving 20 fighter jets from the Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) and the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI-AU) was also held, in the number "50" formation. In the economic sphere, an investment forum was held and nine memoranda of understanding (MOUs) were signed, including cooperation in education and research, student exchanges, the environment, and energy.

Indonesia-Singapore trade volume reached S\$36 billion (US\$29.32 billion). Singapore is the largest foreign investor in Indonesia, with a cumulative total of US\$1.14 billion across 142 projects. Trade between the two countries also reached approximately \$68 billion in 2010. At the same time, Indonesia's non-oil and gas exports to Singapore were the highest in the region.

Indonesian poultry exports to Singapore increased significantly following Malaysia's chicken export ban. An agreement was reached on June 30, 2022, when Singapore approved Indonesia as a new source of frozen and chilled chicken. On July 21, 2022, a second Indonesian company began supplying chicken to Singapore. Indonesia-Singapore cooperation includes:

- a. Tourism
- b. Security, counter-terrorism, and border issues
- c. Territorial and environmental issues
- d. Indonesia-Singapore Sign 19 Agreements, Including an Extradition Treaty
- e. Other Sector Agreements
 - a) Enhanced Cooperation in Green Energy and Energy Transition
 - b) Indonesia-Singapore Trade Value (2017-2021)
 - c) Singapore Leads Foreign Investment in Indonesia in Q1 2020
 - d) Indonesia Holds Highest Diplomatic Influence Score in Southeast Asia 2023
 - e) Indonesia's Economic Freedom Index Ranks 4th Highest in Southeast Asia

Problems in Indonesia-Singapore Relations include:

- a. Singapore, a Haven for Indonesian Corruptors
- b. Singapore a Refuge for Corruption Fugitives Who Have Escaped

A. Solution

To address the problem of Indonesian corrupt fugitives fleeing to Singapore, the government of President Prabowo Subianto has taken the following measures:

- a. Implementing existing agreements between Indonesia and Singapore, particularly in the political and security fields. Both countries affirmed their commitment to fully implementing the defense cooperation agreement and accelerating the technical finalization of military training areas.
- b. Executing an extradition agreement, including renewing the memorandum of understanding between the Attorneys General of both countries.

References

1. "A Very Strange and Amazing Oddity - Kompas.com". (2016, March 14). *Kompas Siber*. Retrieved June 12, 2018.
2. "Analysis of the Need for Canva-Based Electronic Modules to Improve Vocational Learning Outcomes". (2023). *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan IPA*, 9(9), 6772-6779. <https://doi.org/10.29303/jppipa.v9i9.4514>
3. Aruan, L., Sari, R., & Harahap, A. B. (2020). Using Prezi online software to improve teaching listening skill. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, 8(1), 104. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijels.v.8n.1p.104>
4. "Indonesia-Singapore Cooperation Agreement". (2025, July 20). *ANTARA News*. Retrieved from <https://ramadhan.antaranews.com>
5. Aliyah, A., Qomaruzzaman, B., & Yuliaty Zaqiah, Q. (2023). Inovasi pembelajaran dengan media berbasis Prezi untuk meningkatkan minat siswa pada mata pelajaran sejarah kebudayaan Islam. *Jurnal Educatio FKIP UNMA*, 9(4), 1899-1904. <https://doi.org/10.31949/educatio.v9i4.6223>
6. "Singapore Responds to Former Indonesian Air Force Officer's Comments on Flight Information Region". (2017, December 12). *The Straits Times*. Retrieved June 12, 2018.
7. "Singapore Hit by Highest Haze Levels in 16 Years". (2013, June 18). *BBC*. Retrieved June 20, 2013.
8. "Yudhoyono Wants More Singapore Investors". (2011, July 22). *Jakarta Globe*. Archived from the original on February 16, 2013. Retrieved January 23, 2013.
9. "RISING50: Celebrating 50 Years of Bilateral Relations Between Indonesia and Singapore". (2017, September 7). *The Straits Times*.
10. "Singapore - History". (2006, June 18). *US Library of Congress*. Accessed June 18, 2006.
11. "MacDonald's House Attack Still Makes Headlines in Singapore".
12. "Number of Foreign Tourist Arrivals to Indonesia by Country of Residence 2002-2010". (2011, November 6). *Statistics Indonesia (BPS)*. Archived from the original on 23-09-2013.
13. "Singapore and Indonesia Have Signed a Series of 'Balanced' Agreements Addressing Three Long-Term Issues: PM Lee". (2022, January 26). *CNA*.
14. "Singapore Leads Foreign Investment in Indonesia in Q1-2020". (2025, July 19). *Katadata*. Retrieved at 11:51 PM WIB.
15. "Singapore Responds to Former Indonesian Air Force Officer's Comments on Flight Information Region". *The Straits Times*, December 12, 2017. Retrieved June 12, 2018.
16. "Singapore and Indonesia Sign 19 Agreements, Including an Extradition Treaty". *Kompas*. Retrieved July 19, 2025, at 11:27 PM WIB.
17. "Tourism Statistics Publication". (2012, April 29). *Singapore Tourism Board*. Retrieved from <https://www.visitsingapore.com>

18. "Second Indonesian Company to Ship Frozen Chicken to Singapore". (2022, July 21). *The Straits Times*. Retrieved July 24, 2022.
19. "Singapore - History". *US Library of Congress*. Accessed June 18, 2006.
20. "Yudhoyono Wants More Singapore Investors". (2011, July 22). *Jakarta Globe*. Retrieved January 23, 2013.