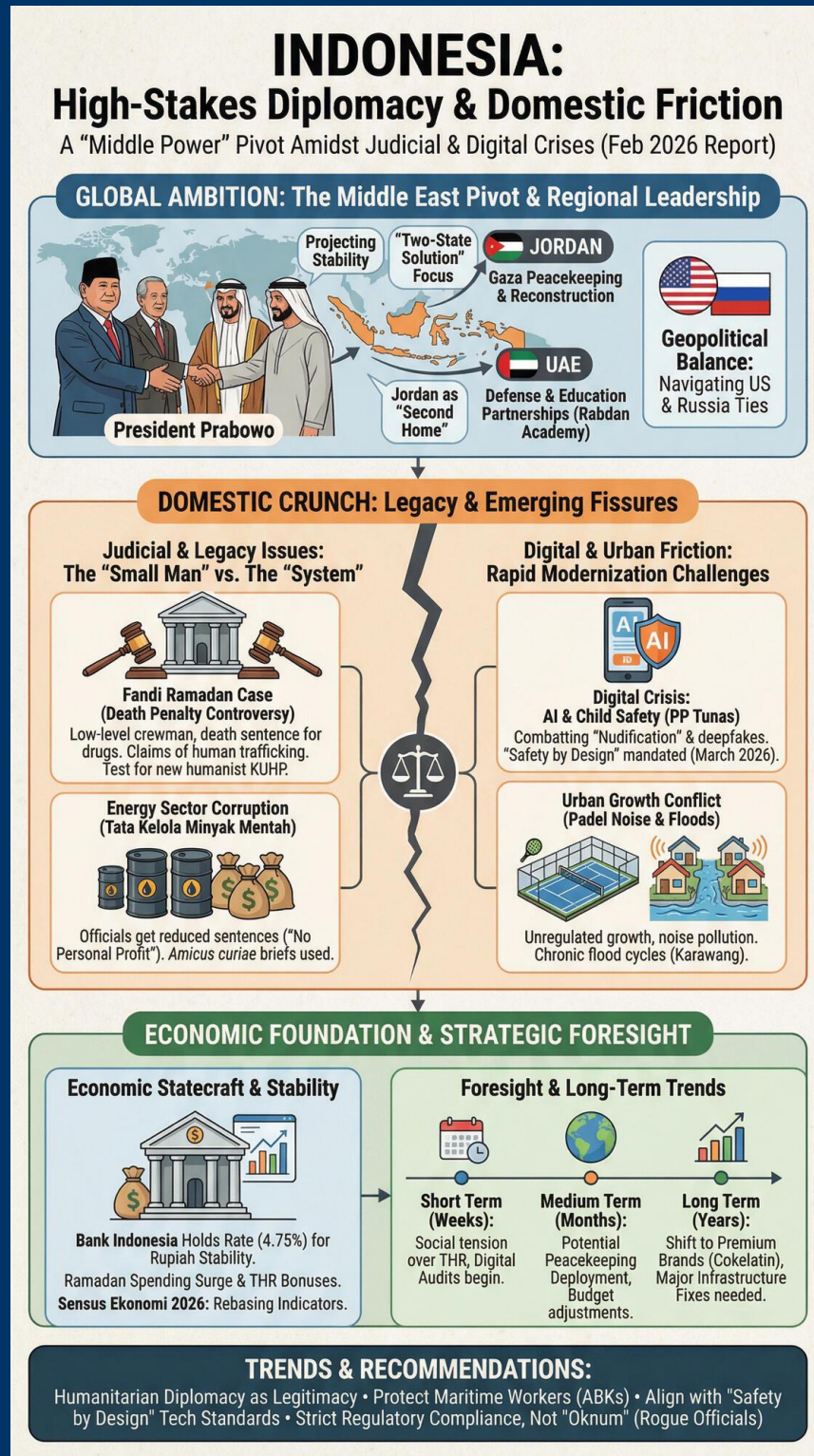


TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

METROTV

FEBRUARY 26, 2026

THE G D E L T P R O J E C T



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INDONESIA NAVIGATES HIGH-STAKES MIDDLE EAST DIPLOMACY AMIDST DOMESTIC JUDICIAL FRICTION AND EMERGING DIGITAL CRISES

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

On February 26, 2026, the Indonesian administration under President Prabowo Subianto aggressively pursued a "Middle Power" diplomatic strategy, transitioning from high-level state visits in Jordan to the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The administration is positioning Indonesia as a pivotal [political weight in Middle Eastern diplomacy](#), specifically regarding the "Two-State Solution" for Palestine and post-conflict reconstruction in Gaza. This diplomatic offensive serves to project stability and regional leadership while the domestic landscape is cluttered with complex legal and social challenges, including a massive corruption trial in the energy sector and a controversial death penalty case involving a low-level maritime worker.

Internally, the government is facing a crisis of "state capacity" regarding digital governance and social order. The day's coverage highlighted a burgeoning [crisis in the digital space](#)

[for children](#), with the impending implementation of Government Regulation (PP) Tunas in March 2026 intended to combat AI-driven sexual exploitation and "nudification." Concurrently, economic regulators are attempting to maintain stability; Bank Indonesia held its benchmark rate steady to [stabilize the Rupiah](#) amidst global uncertainty, even as the government prepares for a massive seasonal spending surge associated with Ramadan and the mandatory payment of holiday bonuses (THR).

The convergence of these events suggests an administration attempting to leapfrog into "Indonesia Gold 2045" through international prestige and modernization (AI regulation, defense tech) while still being dragged back by legacy issues: systemic corruption in state-owned enterprises (Pertamina/PTN), [chronic infrastructure failure](#) (20-year flood cycles in Karawang), and a judicial system struggling to reconcile the "certainty" of harsh drug laws with the "justice" of the new, more humanist Criminal Code (KUHP).

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

Prabowo's Strategic Pivot to the Middle East

- President Prabowo completed a visit to Jordan where he secured a commitment from King Abdullah II for [Indonesian participation in Gaza peacekeeping](#) and reconstruction efforts.
- Indonesia and Jordan marked 75 years of diplomatic ties, with Prabowo labeling Jordan a "second home," signaling a deeper [strategic alignment in the Levant](#) than previous administrations.

- The President arrived in Abu Dhabi to meet Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, focusing on [strategic partnerships in defense and education](#), specifically through the Rabdan Academy exchange program for Indonesian cadets.

The Fandi Ramadan Death Penalty Controversy

- The House of Representatives (DPR) Commission 3 held an urgent hearing with the family of Fandi Ramadan, a crew member [sentenced to death for 2 tons of crystal meth](#) despite claims he was a low-level worker who had only been on the job for three days.
- The case has become a focal point for judicial reform, with lawmakers and legal experts arguing that the prosecution is ignoring the [humanist provisions of the new KUHP](#) by failing to distinguish roles within criminal conspiracies.
- Public outcry is high, with high-profile lawyer Hotman Paris claiming [significant irregularities in the trial](#), alleging Fandi was a victim of maritime human trafficking rather than a drug kingpin.

Digital Protection and the "PP Tunas" Rollout

- The government announced the March 2026 effective date for [PP Number 17 of 2025 \(PP Tunas\)](#), which mandates "safety by design" for tech companies to protect children from AI deepfakes and perisakan (cyberbullying).
- UNICEF reports indicate 1.2 million children in 11 countries (including Indonesia) have faced [identity manipulation via "nudification" technology](#), prompting Indonesian authorities to seek stricter age verification standards.

Corruption Verdicts in Energy Sector (Tata Kelola Minyak Mentah)

- The Tipikor Court sentenced high-ranking officials from PTPPN and PT KPI to [9 years in prison](#), significantly lower than the 14 years requested by prosecutors, for roles in a 285 trillion IDR corruption scandal.
- The court recognized that defendants like Riva Siahaan [did not personally profit](#) but were responsible for state losses due to preferential treatment given to foreign companies in fuel import tenders.
- In a rare move, 12 experts filed [amicus curiae briefs](#) to assist judges in navigating the complex energy procurement regulations.

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Geopolitics & International Relations

- Indonesia is navigating a delicate balance between the US-led "Board of Peace" and its [relationship with Russia](#), with the Russian Ambassador expressing respect for Indonesia's involvement in peace initiatives despite Russia's exclusion.
- The German Ambassador visited Metro TV to discuss [media cooperation and political debates](#), highlighting Western interest in Indonesia's domestic policy trajectory.

Economic Statecraft & Investment Climate

- Bank Indonesia (BI) maintained the [BI Rate at 4.75%](#), noting that while the rate has dropped 125 basis points since 2025, bank credit rates have only decreased by 40 basis points, indicating a "transmission lag" in the banking sector.

- The launch of [Sensus Ekonomi 2026](#) aims to rebase national economic indicators, acknowledging structural changes in the post-pandemic business landscape.
- Finance Minister Purbaya Yudi Sadewa used TikTok Live to [reassure retail investors](#) about stock market volatility (IHSG), signaling a shift toward direct, digital communication with the public during financial stress.

Corruption & Governance

- The KPK arrested a Customs (Bea Cukai) intelligence official, Budiman Bayu Prasajo, after [finding five suitcases containing 5 billion IDR](#) in cash, linked to import gratification.
- A massive human trafficking ring was dismantled, involving [12 suspects selling infants via TikTok and Facebook](#) across multiple provinces, exposing gaps in social media monitoring.

Legislation

- **PP No. 17 of 2025 (PP Tunas):** Regulates electronic systems for child protection; mandates age verification and rapid content removal ([Safety by Design](#)).
- **UU No. 12 of 2022 (TPKS):** The Sexual Violence Law is being invoked to cover [AI-generated sexual content](#).
- **New KUHP (Criminal Code):** Specifically the transition of the [death penalty from a primary to an alternative punishment](#) (Article 98/Article 53), which is being tested in the Fandi Ramadan case.
- **THR Regulation:** Mandatory holiday bonus payments required [at least 7 days before Eid \(H-7\)](#).

LEGISLATION/POLICY

The primary legislative focus is the implementation of the new Criminal Code (KUHP) and digital safety regulations. Policy debates centered on the conflict between legal certainty (prosecuting drug crimes) and judicial fairness. The government is also tightening labor policies regarding Ramadan benefits.

BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED

- **Sensus Ekonomi 2026:** A data-gathering policy targeting all business scales to update national indicators [starting May 2026](#).
- **PP Tunas:** A regulatory framework for digital child protection that [requires tech firms to incorporate safety](#) into their initial system designs.

HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS

- **Commission 3 RDPU:** A highly emotional hearing regarding the [death penalty for ABK workers](#), highlighting potential systemic abuse of poor laborers by drug syndicates.
- **Kemenaker Press Briefing:** Clarification on the [H-7 deadline for THR payments](#) and upcoming sanctions for non-compliant companies.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The "Small Man" vs. The "System" A recurring theme across multiple segments is the vulnerability of the common citizen within the legal and economic system. The [Fandi Ramadan case](#) presents a stark contrast to the energy sector corruption trial. While corporate executives received reduced sentences for crimes involving trillions of Rupiah because they "did not personally benefit," a 25-

year-old sailor faces the gallows for a crime he claims he was tricked into. This disparity is fueling a populist narrative that [law is "sharp downward and blunt upward,"](#) forcing the DPR to intervene to maintain social order.

Urban Friction and Rapid Modernization

The "Padel Tennis" saga in Jakarta represents a broader trend of rapid, unregulated urban growth. Over [185 of 400 padel courts in Jakarta are illegal](#), leading to noise pollution and social conflict in residential zones. This mirrors the "digital noise" discussed in child protection segments—modern lifestyle and technology are advancing faster than the government's ability to [zone or regulate them](#), resulting in reactionary policies (like the ban on new courts in residential areas).

Humanitarian Diplomacy as Legitimacy

Prabowo's focus on the ["Two-State Solution" and Gaza reconstruction](#) serves a dual purpose. It aligns Indonesia with the global Islamic community during Ramadan and builds "political weight" that can be used to [negotiate better terms](#) in trade and defense with both the West and the Middle East. By positioning Jordan as a "second home," Indonesia is signaling its intent to be more than just a distant supporter, but an active participant in Levantine security.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks)

- Expect high social tension as the [THR payment deadline approaches](#); labor unions will likely monitor the "H-7" rule closely.
- The March 2026 effective date for PP Tunas will trigger a [regulatory audit of social media platforms](#) like TikTok and Facebook regarding child safety features.

- The Fandi Ramadan verdict will serve as a bellwether for how the judiciary intends to apply the [new humanist KUHP](#) in drug cases.

Medium Term (1-6 Months)

- Indonesia's [peacekeeping forces may be deployed](#) or formally committed to Gaza under Jordan's logistical support framework.
- Economic data from the [Sensus Ekonomi 2026](#) will begin to influence budget adjustments for the 2027 fiscal year, potentially identifying new sectors for growth beyond traditional commodities.

Long Term (1-5 Years)

- The investment in ["Grand Hied" and signature brands](#) like Cokelatin suggests a concerted effort to shift Indonesia from a commodity exporter (cacao) to a premium brand exporter, potentially stabilizing the "middle-income trap."
- Ongoing [infrastructure failures in Karawang](#) and other flood zones will likely force a massive relocation or centralized engineering project (tanggul) to prevent permanent loss of agricultural land.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For International Policy

- **Maritime Security:** Indonesia must formalize protections for maritime workers (ABKs) to prevent them from being [unwittingly used by international drug syndicates](#), which currently threatens the credibility of Indonesian labor exports.

- **Regional Peacekeeping:** Partners should prepare for an Indonesian military role in the Middle East that is [less neutral and more proactive](#) than in previous decades.
- **Tech Standards:** International tech firms operating in ASEAN must align with Indonesia's new ["Safety by Design" requirements](#), as Indonesian regulators are increasingly looking to China and Singapore for strict enforcement models.

For Private Sector/Investors

- **Compliance Risk:** The [crackdown on illegal Padel courts](#) and the arrest of the Customs intelligence official signal a "regulatory cleaning" phase; investors must ensure all permits (PBG) are verified through formal channels, not "oknum" (rogue officials).
- **Consumer Trends:** The rise of [Padel tennis and premium chocolate \(Cokelatin\)](#) indicates a growing urban professional class with disposable income, but one that is highly sensitive to noise, environmental, and social externalities.
- **Banking Transmission:** Despite BI holding rates, the [lack of credit rate reduction](#) suggests that borrowing costs for expansion remain high, which may dampen the projected "festive spending" boost for small-to-medium enterprises (UMKMs).

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Today's Media Trends is a public interest experiment in applying deep thematic trend analysis to television news coverage from around the world to explore how responsibly

applied advanced AI can help journalists and scholars better understand the overarching trends, themes and patterns of our global world.

No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

Each morning, in collaboration with the Internet Archive's TV News Archive, we apply Google's Gemini 3 to deeply examine yesterday's coverage from each television news channel to tease out the overarching themes and trends of its news coverage into a richly annotated thematic analysis. Each high-level insight is connected back to the original broadcast, allowing journalists and scholars to understand the dominate themes and trends and instantly click out to the underlying sources for details.

By helping journalists and scholars see the broader trends and patterns of global news coverage, this analysis helps them identify relevant stories and coverage they might not otherwise have encountered and uncover connections, emphases and narrative shifts that enable more comprehensive reporting and deeper, evidence-based research.

This report is entirely machine generated using Gemini 3 and may include errors and omissions. Please verify all findings. No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

For questions or suggestions, please contact kalev.leetaru5@gmail.com. You can also learn more about the GDELT Project at <https://blog.gdeltproject.org/> and the Internet Archive's TV News Archive at <https://archive.org/details/tv>.