

## Geopolitical Analysis of the Relocation of Indonesia's Capital City to the Archipelago's Capital City, East Kalimantan

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### Abstract

This research aims to analyse the geopolitical arguments for the policy of relocating Indonesia's capital city to the Ibu Kota Nusantara (IKN) located in East Kalimantan. IKN is located in the central region of Indonesia, allowing development policies to reduce the burden on Jakarta and Java Island and equalising development in central and eastern Indonesia. Geopolitical analysis is needed to thoroughly observe the reasons and policies the Indonesian government must carry out to be relevant to the contemporary geopolitical situation. This research uses a qualitative research method using literature study as a secondary source. The results show that Indonesia needs to make five changes to utilise the potential of IKN and its strategic location. In terms of changes in priority setting, Indonesia needs to emphasise equitable development. Second, regarding security and defence policy, Indonesia must build maritime resilience for shipping and trade. Third, regarding economic and trade policies, Indonesia must direct economic and trade connectivity related to natural resource exports. Fourth, regarding environmental and maritime policies, Indonesia needs to ensure that development and environmental conditions can go hand in hand to attract foreign investors. Fifth, Indonesia's regional and global diplomacy priorities lead to an Indo-Pacific stability and security strategy to make the region a global growth epicentrum.

Keywords: Connectivity; Geopolitics; Ibu Kota Negara; Indonesia; Indo-Pacific

### Introduction

In foreign policy, geopolitical theory influences how states develop strategies to secure their position in the world. The US, for example, uses this theory to strengthen its military presence in the Indo-Pacific and build alliances to counter China's dominance. The United States views Indo-Pacific geopolitics as key in maintaining and strengthening its hegemony in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean region. The US sees this region as a strategic area that must be secured to prevent Chinese dominance and ensure freedom of navigation and maritime security stability. Through the Indo-Pacific concept, the US seeks to expand its alliances, such as with India, Japan and Australia, to build an inclusive security structure and maintain an international order favourable to its national interests.<sup>1</sup>

The relocation of the capital city from Jakarta to East Kalimantan is based on several key factors: reducing the burden on the already overcrowded Jakarta, encouraging equitable economic development to areas outside Java, and creating a more modern and efficient centre of government.<sup>2</sup> In addition, East Kalimantan was chosen due to its strategic location in the middle of Indonesia, relative safety from natural disasters such as earthquakes, and having ample land for development.<sup>3</sup>

The House of Representatives (DPR) supported the move, although there were differences of opinion among its members. Most factions supported the RUU IKN (National Capital) Bill, which was later passed as UU No. 3 of 2022. However, there was also rejection from the PKS faction, which was concerned about the transfer's legitimacy, legality, and substantial impact. In addition, several state institutions and the public also gave various responses, including concerns about the readiness and potential negative impacts of the move. Some parties even filed a lawsuit to the Constitutional Court, but generally, the government is moving ahead with the move. Relocating the capital has legal implications. This process requires a strong legal basis, which is realised in the form of Law Number 3 Year 2022 on the Ibu Kota Negara (IKN). This law serves as the foundation for various regulations governing all aspects related to the move, including the planning, financing, and management of the new capital city area.<sup>4</sup>

With the above background, this research article will discuss four things, namely the history of the relocation of the capital city from the Soekarno administration to Joko Widodo, the chronology of efforts taken by the Indonesian government under Jokowi, the pros and cons related to the relocation of the capital city to East Kalimantan, and the geopolitical analysis underlying the placement of the national capital.

### **Previous Research and Conceptual Framework**

Previous researchers have analysed the issue of relocating the national capital from various perspectives, such as politics, economics and defence. From the political perspective, Perwira et al. discuss how the democratic process occurs in Jokowi's political decision.<sup>5</sup> According to Perwira et al., the rapid decision-making process in relocating the capital city can bring certain potentials. Reflecting on the processes in the United States, Canada, and Australia, the relocation of the capital city brings its own advantages in terms of democratic processes. Meanwhile, looking at Nigeria's experience, we see that an undemocratic process carries great risks. Ikfina's paper attempts to highlight the capital move in terms of political support in parliament and public response on platform X. Despite initially receiving little support in parliament, the DPR eventually approved the capital move. The same thing happened on social media. The government must continue to run policy and public communication hand in hand.<sup>6</sup>

From an economic perspective, Saputra, Gabriel J, and Halkis argue that the urgency of relocating the capital city needs to reconsider the impact on economic development and equitable development.<sup>7</sup> For all of this to be realised, the government needs to support alternative financing and financing schemes so as not to burden the state budget. Another researcher, Farida, asserts that economic equality in eastern Indonesia, which is also one of the objectives of relocating the capital city, requires careful regional planning in order to produce a high quality of life for the people.<sup>8</sup> For example, an international standard airport and port must be available in IKN instead of continuing to rely on Balikpapan, which is 70 km away from the two districts that will become IKN areas.

Other researchers try to look at it from a defence perspective. Pambudhi revealed the security dilemma of relocating the capital city. The large IKN development budget triggers new items of state budget expenditure while sacrificing several other budgets, including the budget for the Ministry of Defence.<sup>9</sup> In fact, building a strong national defence posture requires a large budget. Hasan & Haeran try to highlight the maritime defence side.<sup>10</sup> With the relocation of the capital city, a coastal defence system in East Kalimantan must be prepared immediately. In addition, maritime governance in the IKN area must be done as well as possible in order to maintain the security and safety of shipping traffic and sea route trade.

From some of the previous studies above, there have not been many analyses that link the relocation of the capital city with a geopolitical perspective or concept. Therefore, the author attempts to analyse the relocation of IKN through the concept of geopolitics. Geopolitical analysis is important to see the relocation of the capital city from a more comprehensive perspective.

Geopolitical analysis in international relations refers to the importance of geographical factors, natural resources, demographics, military power, and foreign policy, which then interact to shape global dynamics. According to Thuathail & Agnew, geopolitics often 'examines the strategic actions of states or entities as they seek to secure or expand influence, control resources, and navigate conflicts or alliances on the global stage.'<sup>11</sup>

Some figures in geopolitics emphasise the importance of location in the analysis of a state. For example, Sir Halford Mackinder's 'Heartland' theory emphasised the importance of the Eurasian centre as the key for superpowers to dominate global politics. Another example is Nicholas Spykman, who contributed to the 'Rimland' concept. The Rimland concept emphasises the importance of coastal areas in geopolitics. Ramadhan defines geopolitics as the study of the relationship between a country's geography, economic power, politics, and security in an international context.<sup>12</sup> Geopolitics influences countries' development strategies and policies to maintain or increase their global influence. Meanwhile, Suradinata highlighted the importance of understanding geopolitics and geostrategy in maintaining the integrity of the state."<sup>13</sup>

According to Suradinata, understanding geopolitics has significant implications for foreign policy, which, in this case, is Indonesia's foreign policy. Some of the implications that may arise from an understanding of geopolitics are, firstly, prioritisation. The government can prioritise bilateral and multilateral relations by understanding Indonesia's geography and position in Southeast Asia. For example, prioritising cooperation with neighbouring countries or strategic partners. Second, security and defence. Geopolitics influences security and defence policies. Understanding potential threats from neighbouring territories, maritime routes, and regional conflicts shapes national defence strategies.

Third, economy and trade. Indonesia's geographical location as an archipelago affects connectivity and trade. Foreign policy should take into account economic potential and opportunities for cooperation in the region. Fourth, environmental and maritime issues. Geopolitics plays a role in environmental and maritime issues, such as border disputes, exploitation of marine resources, and climate change. Foreign policy should take into account environmental impacts and sustainability. Fifth, regional and global diplomacy. Understanding geopolitics helps Indonesia actively participate in regional organisations and global forums. Diplomacy must take into account national interests and global geopolitical dynamics.

In recent research, the use of classic geopolitical concepts such as the Heartland concept proposed by McKinder is still relevant. McKinder argues that whoever controls the Heartland, which includes the regions of Siberia, Central Asia and Eastern Europe, will have a huge advantage in terms of political and economic power. This region is considered a global centre of power because of its position protected from sea attacks, allowing the country that controls it to dominate the world.<sup>14</sup> In the context of China's *Belt and Road Initiative* (BRI), this Heartland is very important because the land route initiated by China through Eurasia provides great strategic advantages, both in terms of economics and politics. This initiative allows China to secure energy resources and expand its influence in areas that are difficult for other countries to reach, strengthening its position as a dominant global power.

### **Capital Relocation Plan: From Soekarno to Jokowi**

Before Jokowi's administration, the relocation of the capital city was not a new discourse. This issue has been a discourse since the Dutch colonial era.<sup>15</sup> The plan to relocate the national capital at that time was motivated by the geographical factor of Jakarta, which is located in a coastal suburb with low elevation, also exacerbated by various infectious disease outbreaks such as malaria and diarrhea, making this city not ideal to be the center of government in the long-term. The catalyst behind this plan was Governor-General J.P. Graaf van Limburg Stirum (1916-1921), a Dutch East Indies governor-general whose idea was to relocate the capital from Batavia to Bandung. During this time, Limburg gradually relocated several government offices from Batavia to Bandung. The offices that had been successfully moved at that time were the Perum Bio Farma (1923), the Mining and Energy Office, the Geologisch Laboratorium building, the Large Post Office, the Railway Headquarters, and the Pension Building. However, the plan to relocate the capital did not receive support from the Volksraad (people's council) due to economic recession and corruption.<sup>16</sup>

After Indonesia's independence, to be precise in 1957, the plan to move the capital city of Indonesia was again proposed by President Soekarno. Unlike the era before independence, at this time the plan to move the state capital focused on outside Java. At that time, Soekarno had inaugurated Palangka Raya as the capital of Central Kalimantan, then conveyed his plan to move the state capital to the city. According to Soekarno, in the future Jakarta was predicted to grow uncontrollably. In addition, there are at least three other considerations that make this idea appear. First, Kalimantan is the largest island in Indonesia and is strategically located because it is in the middle of the Indonesian archipelago. Second, moving the capital city to Kalimantan can reduce the centralization of Java. Third, the development of Jakarta and Java was a Dutch concept and Sukarno wanted to build something original.<sup>17</sup> However, the plan to move the capital city ultimately failed to be realized, because the political dynamics at that time forced Sukarno to resign as president.

The plan to move the capital city resurfaced in the 1970s during the Soeharto administration. At that time, Soeharto proposed moving the capital from Jakarta to Jonggol, West Java. During Soeharto's leadership, the main factor in moving the capital came from the internal factors of Jakarta, which was no longer considered representative as the capital, thus requiring a new city that was able to accommodate government activities without eliminating Jakarta as the center of the national economy.<sup>18</sup>

Meanwhile, the proposal for Jonggol as the new capital came from several strategic reasons considered by the Soeharto administration. The first is its strategic location, as Jonggol is located in a hill area that is relatively safe from the risk of floods and tectonic earthquakes. Its distance from Jakarta (about 60 km) was also considered ideal for the transition of government. With a large area, Jonggol also offers enough space to build government infrastructure, housing, and other supporting facilities. The land availability allows for integrated planning of a modern city. Jonggol is also surrounded by green areas and has abundant water resources. This supports the concept of environmentally friendly development.<sup>19</sup> This plan was then reinforced by the issuance of Presidential Decree Number 1 of 1997 concerning the development of the Jonggol area, West Java, as an independent city oriented to become the new capital.<sup>20</sup> However, this plan encountered difficulties that the Soeharto administration could not overcome, such as financial constraints. In addition, this plan also became unlikely to be realized with the fall of the Soeharto government.

During the reformation period, the issue of relocating the capital city surfaced during the Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) administration. In September 2010, SBY formed a small team to study the idea of relocating the national capital. From this team, three options emerged, namely (1) keeping the capital in Jakarta, (2) moving the capital outside Java, and (3) moving the capital from

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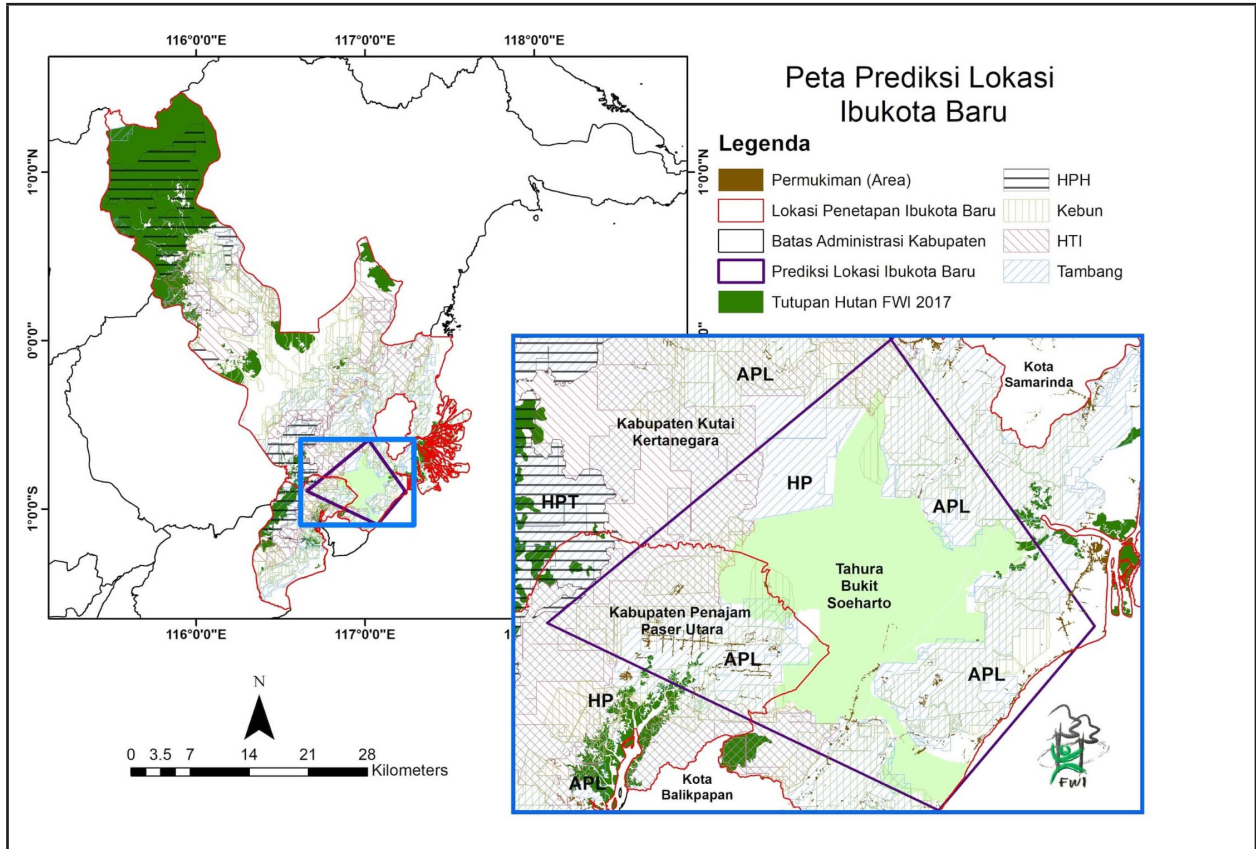
Jakarta to a new area still on the island of Java. At that time, several candidates for the new capital city emerged, namely Jonggol. Jonggol was chosen because it is still close to Jakarta and has been connected by a toll road. This will prevent the relocation of the capital city from being an obstacle to economic growth and disrupting national development. Actually, apart from Jonggol, there are also several names of cities that are alternative to the new capital city, such as Lampung and Palembang.

President Jokowi announced plans to relocate the capital city in 2019. At that time, Jokowi considered environmental and infrastructure issues in Jakarta, which he said were no longer feasible. To overcome these problems, Jokowi proposed moving the capital to the province of East Kalimantan.<sup>21</sup> President of the Republic of Indonesia (RI) Joko Widodo delivered a press release on relocating the country's capital during his National Speech at the Plenary Meeting Room, Nusantara Building, Jakarta.<sup>22</sup> Journalists then questioned why the plan was to move the country's capital. Jokowi stated that Jakarta is too heavy to be the centre of business and the hub of various activities in Indonesia. In addition, Java Island is already too heavy to bear the increasing population and the source of food security.

The plan to relocate the capital city to IKN was not previously mentioned during the presidential campaigns in the 2019 general election process. During the campaign, Jokowi was more focused on introducing his three flagship cards, namely the Smart Indonesia Card to make it easier for children to go to college, the Cheap Sembako Card so that people can buy staples more cheaply, and the Pre-Employment Card so that people can receive training and job opportunities.<sup>23</sup> Jokowi promised that the three 'Sakti' cards would be released in 2020 if he was re-elected as president.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, many parties consider the plan to move the capital city to contradict Jokowi's statement regarding a three-year study on the National Capital Region.

According to Jokowi, the ideal location for the new capital city is North Penajam Paser Regency and parts of Kutai Kartanegara Regency, located on the island of Kalimantan. In Law No. 3 of 2022 on the National Capital City, the Third Section on Regional Coverage includes 256 hectares of land and 68 hectares of water. The land area is further broken down into 56 hectares for the IKN area and 200 hectares for the IKN development area.<sup>25</sup> The following is a map of the location of the new national capital:





Map 1: Map of the Location of the New Capital City to Penajam Paser Utara and Kutai Kertanegara Regency, East Kalimantan  
 Source: Forest Watch Indonesia, 2019.

**Chronology and Process of the Government’s Efforts to Relocate the Capital City**

Unfortunately, Jokowi’s plan to move IKN as soon as possible was constrained by the Covid-19 pandemic. In March 2020, Jokowi announced that two Indonesian citizens had contracted Covid-19.<sup>26</sup> After that, Indonesia was hit by a COVID-19 outbreak that reached 6,811,330 cases since March 2020 and left 161,484 people dead. Jokowi declared that the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia ended on 21 June 2023.<sup>27</sup>

Under the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Jokowi administration continues to try to attract investors who are willing to invest in IKN. On 10 January 2020, for example, Jokowi hosted a SoftBank delegation from Japan led by CEO Masayoshi Son and a US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) delegation led by CEO Adam S. Bohler at the Merdeka Palace.<sup>28</sup> In February 2020, the Indonesian government also met with a delegation from the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change led by Tony Blair at the Merdeka Palace.<sup>29</sup> Besides Tony Blair, Director of the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change Catherine Rimmer, Grab CEO Anthony Tan, Grab Indonesia President Ridzki Kramadibrata, and Greensil CEO Lex Greensil were also present.

In early 2022, when the Indonesian government was relatively able to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic, the discussion process for the IKN resumed quite quickly. In January 2022, all factions in the Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (DPR RI) agreed to move the nation’s capital to the IKN. Although there was an interruption at that time, Puan Maharani, as the head of DPR, ignored the interruption and banged the gavel on the capital city transfer. After that, the government only needed 22 days to

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pass the IKN law, which would become the legal basis for the development of the IKN. On March 10, 2022, Jokowi inaugurated Bambang Susantono and Dhany Rahajoe as Head and Deputy Head of the IKN Authority at the State Palace in Jakarta.<sup>30</sup> The day after, SoftBank announced its withdrawal from investing in the IKN project. However, SoftBank was previously reported to be investing \$100 billion or 1.4 trillion rupiah from the \$25 billion request submitted by the government.<sup>31</sup>

Due to the fact that foreign investment has not yet entered the IKN, in October 2023, Jokowi revised the IKN Law and extended land use rights to 190 years for investors. Observers widely criticised this regulation. However, in November 2023, Jokowi stated that no foreign investment had entered the IKN.<sup>32</sup> This situation will further burden the APBN. The IKN Authority itself claims it has achieved the realisation of investment interest commitments of 41.4 trillion during 2023.<sup>33</sup> In early 2024, Jokowi again sought the presence of foreign investment through a meeting with a number of Brunei Darussalam entrepreneurs who joined a consortium at the Assarraa Guest House, Bandar Seri Begawan.<sup>34</sup>

Not long after that, in April 2024, President Jokowi formed the IKN Investment Acceleration Team.<sup>35</sup> The decision was stated in Presidential Decree No. 25 of 2024, which is tasked with accelerating the development and relocation of the capital city.<sup>36</sup> In June 2024, the Head and Deputy Head of the IKN Authority announced their resignation from their positions. Jokowi stated that the reason for their resignation was personal.<sup>37</sup> However, other sources said that Bambang Susantono and Dhany Rahajoe were asked to resign because they were considered incapable of resolving land disputes with local communities and failing to attract foreign investors.<sup>38</sup> As replacements, the government appointed Minister of PUPR Basuki Hadimuljono and Deputy Minister of ATR/BPN Raja Juli Antoni.<sup>39</sup> Jokowi's optimism to move to the IKN in July 2024 was not achieved. Jokowi stated that the IKN was not ready to provide clean water, electricity, and infrastructure.<sup>40</sup>

### **Pros and Cons of the Capital Relocation Policy**

Although it was only in 2019 that Jokowi made a statement about moving to the capital city, he stated that a study had been conducted in the last three years to ascertain the ideal location of the capital city. However, despite previous studies, the public and academics have criticised Jokowi's plan to move the capital city, at least from the environmental and democratic aspects.

From an environmental perspective, moving the capital will destroy forest habitats for wildlife. In addition, moving the capital can potentially cause pollution problems in Kalimantan.<sup>41</sup> However, as if ignoring the criticism, the Indonesian government immediately conducted an environmental study through the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK). In just three months, in November 2019, KLHK completed the Strategic Environmental Assessment (KLHS).<sup>42</sup> KLHS is a document that provides "protection directions and environmental safety criteria in completing the national capital master plan". Ministry of PPN/BAPPENAS then made a more complete and comprehensive SEA related to policies, plans, and programs for the IKN master plan in 2020 entitled "Preparation of Strategic Environmental Assessment for the National Capital City Master Plan for Fiscal Year 2020".<sup>43</sup>

In the Ministry of PPN/BAPPENAS document, the government actually recognises that the IKN area has high ecological challenges. First, most of the IKN area is a forest area. Secondly, the IKN region has a lack of raw and clean water sources. Thus, the population's access to clean water is inadequate. Third, the IKN area is likely to experience various types of disasters, such as hydrometeorology, land movement, and coal combustion. Fourth, environmental pollution and damage are high due to mining activities. Data in 2020 stated that there were 2385 mining pits inside and outside the concession area. The pollution also includes pollution in rivers around IKN. Fifth,

the use of new renewable energy is still very low. Energy around the IKN area and East Kalimantan Province is still dominated by fossil fuels.

From a democratic perspective, moving the capital city could be a problem in the future, considering the possibility of Indonesia being led in the new capital city without the support of local leaders.<sup>44</sup> In addition, several articles in the IKN Law have loopholes that are not in accordance with democracy. For example, in Chapter III on the Form of Structure, Authority, and Government Affairs, Article 9 states that “The Head of the Nusantara Capital Authority and assisted by a Deputy Head of the Nusantara Capital Authority who is appointed, appointed, and dismissed directly by the President after consulting with the DPR”. Article 10 even states that the appointment can be extended by the President.<sup>45</sup> According to the IKN Law, there will only be a presidential election. Aryo Wasisto’s study attempts to understand this in the context that accelerated development is prioritised over democracy.<sup>46</sup> The aspect of community participation is minimised so that development and communication run more effectively.

However, the Jokowi government considers the urgency of moving the capital city to overcome problems in Jakarta, such as flooding, traffic jams and pollution.<sup>47</sup> In addition, the relocation of the capital city can also be an alternative development strategy to reduce the economic imbalance between Java and other regions in Indonesia. At the same time, relocating the capital city also opens up opportunities to create a modern, green, and technology-friendly city.

The Jokowi government understands that the public is divided over the plan to move the nation’s capital city. Based on a national survey conducted in February 2022, the opinions of the Indonesian people about moving the capital city to East Kalimantan are divided. Around 48.5% of respondents support this plan, while 44% disagree. Jokowi’s supporters in the 2019 presidential election supported the IKN plan, while Prabowo’s supporters tended to disagree. Higher support was also seen among those who understood the technocratic reasons behind the relocation of the capital city, such as the water crisis and density in Jakarta and more balanced economic development between Java and outside provinces.<sup>48</sup>

Kalimantan was chosen as the location for the new capital city for several strategic reasons. First, its geographical location in the middle of Indonesia makes it more easily accessible from various regions in the archipelago, thus facilitating better national integration. Second, Kalimantan is relatively safe from natural disasters such as earthquakes and tsunamis, making it a more stable and safe location for a government centre. Third, the region has extensive land available for the construction of the infrastructure needed for the new capital. In addition, the move to Kalimantan is also expected to stimulate economic growth in the region which has so far been relatively lagging behind compared to Java.<sup>49</sup>

### **Geopolitical Analysis of the Plan to Move the Indonesian Capital City**

Through geopolitical analysis, the plan to move the capital city to the IKN will change several important Indonesian policies. First, changes in priority determination. By understanding the geographical factors and Indonesia’s position in the Southeast Asia region, the position of the IKN in Kalimantan will change Indonesia’s priorities to develop further development in the central and eastern parts of Indonesia. The strategic position of the IKN in Kalimantan allows Indonesia to strengthen its role in the Southeast Asia region while reducing the development gap between the western and eastern regions.<sup>50</sup> Previously, less-noticed regions, such as Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Papua, will receive greater attention regarding infrastructure, economy, and society.



In addition, the relocation of the capital city is also expected to accelerate national economic integration, encourage local industrial growth, and strengthen connectivity between cities and islands. For example, major infrastructure projects such as the construction of the Balikpapan-Samarinda Toll Road and the new airport at IKN are expected to be the driving force of the local economy and improving connectivity. Thus, national policies will focus more on equitable development and strengthening Indonesia's position in the international arena, which is in line with the vision to make Indonesia a developed country by 2045.<sup>51</sup>

Second, changes in security and defence policies. The geopolitical analysis provides an important portion of security and defence policies. From the position of the IKN, Indonesia needs to change its perception of potential threats from neighbouring regions, maritime routes, and regional conflicts to form a national defence strategy. The presence of the IKN in East Kalimantan must be accompanied by a security strategy for shipping and trade routes in the Makassar Strait waters. Based on the International Law of the Sea, the Makassar Strait which near IKN is located in ALKI II. This area is open water, which means that all foreign ships have the right to cross the Indonesian sea area. Freedom of navigation in the ALKI region is a threat in itself. This becomes crucial when looking at IKN's position in the region. This is because all foreign vessels have navigation rights in the ALKI lane, be it sea vessels, submarines, or military vessels.<sup>52</sup>

On the north side, the capital relocation brings Indonesia's Center of Gravity (CoG) closer to various projected threats in the north, such as the South China Sea conflict, US military bases in the Philippines, and tensions in Taiwan.<sup>53</sup> In addition, the Indonesian government also needs to create a strategy to carry out maritime and defence cooperation with Malaysia and the Philippines. Current defense and security threats have also shifted to fifth-generation warfare. This fifth-generation warfare emphasizes non-kinetic military actions, one of which is cyberattacks. Therefore, the Indonesian government must also consider the increasing cyber threats to the digital-based government center in IKN, so a modern cyber security system is needed.

The relocation of the nation's capital to the Nusantara Capital (IKN) in East Kalimantan not only has an impact on development policies but also requires significant changes in national security and defence policies. By utilising geopolitical analysis, the Indonesian government needs to reformulate a more comprehensive defence strategy, considering the strategic position of the IKN, which is in the middle of Indonesia's territory, close to busy waters and directly borders several neighbouring countries.

One crucial aspect is the change in perception of potential threats. With the location of the IKN closer to the northern Southeast Asian region, Indonesia needs to consider threats that may arise from this region, both from maritime routes, regional conflicts, and other security issues. These changes will affect how Indonesia allocates defence resources and places strategic military facilities around the new capital city area. In addition, the security of shipping and trade routes in the Makassar Strait waters is a top priority.<sup>54</sup> This strait is one of the busiest maritime routes in the world, and threats to security in this area can have a direct impact on national stability. Therefore, the government needs to strengthen the presence of the navy and increase maritime surveillance around the Makassar Strait to ensure the security of shipping routes and protect national interests.

On the other hand, maritime and defence cooperation with neighbouring countries such as Malaysia and the Philippines is becoming increasingly important. East Kalimantan's strategic position requires Indonesia to be more active in defence diplomacy and strengthen bilateral relations with both countries to manage potential common threats, such as cross-border crime, terrorism, and maritime disputes.

Thus, the relocation of the capital city requires adaptation and reformulation of security and defence policies that are more responsive to the geopolitical dynamics of the region, while strengthening Indonesia's position as a regional power in Southeast Asia.

Third, changes in economic and trade policies. Indonesia's geographical location as an archipelagic country affects connectivity and trade. Indonesia's foreign policy must take into account the economic potential and opportunities for cooperation in the Makassar Strait region and its surroundings, including approaching the economic and trade potential in eastern Indonesia. With the presence of various new nickel factories in South Sulawesi, Central Sulawesi, Southeast Sulawesi, North Maluku, and West Papua, the government needs to maintain trade route connectivity.<sup>55</sup>

The relocation of the nation's capital to the Indonesian Capital City (IKN) in East Kalimantan has had a significant impact on Indonesia's economic and trade policies. As an archipelagic country, Indonesia's geographical location affects connectivity and trade patterns between regions. This relocation provides an opportunity for the government to strengthen connectivity in eastern Indonesia, especially around the Makassar Strait, which is a strategic maritime route. So far, the Indonesian government has begun building the IKN airport.<sup>56</sup> Meanwhile, facilities and infrastructure for sea connectivity need to be accelerated.<sup>57</sup> This year, Jokowi has just inaugurated two ports in Central Sulawesi to support the IKN.<sup>58</sup>

Indonesia's foreign policy needs to consider the economic potential in this region, especially in developing trade cooperation with neighbouring countries that directly border the Makassar Strait. In addition, special attention must be given to areas that are now becoming new industrial centres, such as nickel factories in South Sulawesi, Central Sulawesi, Southeast Sulawesi, North Maluku, and West Papua. Industrial development in these areas must be supported by policies that ensure smooth trade and distribution routes.

Fourth, changes in environmental and maritime policies. Geopolitics play a role in environmental and maritime issues, such as border disputes, exploitation of marine resources, and climate change. Here, the Indonesian government needs to ensure that the environmental impacts of the development of the capital city do not worsen the situation for indigenous peoples or communities in the capital city area. In addition, environmental issues can also have a negative impact on investors' interest in investing in the capital city. Sustainable development, which is a principle in the capital city, must ensure that progress can go hand in hand with the environment and maritime.

The relocation of the nation's capital to the Indonesian Capital City (IKN) in East Kalimantan not only has economic and political impacts but also requires significant adjustments in environmental and maritime policies. As an archipelagic country rich in natural resources, Indonesia is at the forefront of various complex environmental and maritime issues, including border disputes, exploitation of marine resources, and the impacts of climate change. In the context of the development of the capital city, the Indonesian government needs to take steps to ensure that this development does not worsen environmental conditions, especially for indigenous peoples and local communities in the capital city area. Indigenous communities have a close relationship with their surrounding environment, and uncontrolled development can damage the natural ecosystem that has been their life support. Therefore, development policies must pay attention to environmental sustainability and involve local community participation in the decision-making process. In addition, environmental issues also have a direct impact on investors' interest in investing in the IKN. In an era that increasingly prioritises sustainability, many global investors are more careful in choosing projects that can affect the environment.<sup>59</sup> If the development of the IKN does not comply with high sustainability standards, this could be a factor that inhibits the entry of foreign investment, which is urgently needed to support the development of this new capital city.

Therefore, the principle of sustainable development must be the main foundation in the development of the IKN. The government must ensure that the economic progress expected from the relocation of the capital city can go hand in hand with environmental conservation efforts and wise management of maritime resources. This strategy includes effective waste management, protection of marine ecosystems, and efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change. With this approach, the IKN can be a real example of how progress and environmental sustainability can go hand in hand, providing long-term benefits for all Indonesians.

Fifth, changes in regional and global diplomatic priorities. Understanding geopolitics helps Indonesia actively participate in regional organisations and global forums. The position of the capital city located in the central region of Indonesia has the potential to make Indonesia's idea of the Indo-Pacific more relevant. The relocation of the nation's capital to the Nusantara Capital City (IKN) in East Kalimantan has significant implications for Indonesia's regional and global diplomacy. By understanding geopolitical dynamics, Indonesia can strengthen its participation in regional organisations such as ASEAN and other global forums. The position of the IKN in the central region of Indonesia is not only geographically strategic but also strengthens Indonesia's position in advocating the Indo-Pacific concept in the international arena. So far, Indonesia has seen the Indo-Pacific as a region that determines regional stability and peace in order to become the centre of world growth.<sup>60</sup>

As a country that plays an important role in the Southeast Asian region, Indonesia has a responsibility to contribute to maintaining regional stability and security. The relocation of the capital city to East Kalimantan allows Indonesia to focus more on issues related to the Indo-Pacific, a region that includes the Indian Ocean and the Pacific. This position allows Indonesia to be more active in maritime diplomacy and economic cooperation in the region. In addition, the IKN also has the potential to become a new centre of diplomacy that is closer to countries in the East Asia and Pacific region. By strengthening its position in this region, Indonesia can be more effective in promoting the values of peace, security, and mutually beneficial cooperation, both regionally and globally. This is in line with Indonesia's vision to become a major power in the Indo-Pacific region and increase its role and influence in the international world.<sup>61</sup>

## Conclusion

Since 2019, Jokowi has remained firm in his policy of moving the nation's capital from Jakarta on Java Island to the IKN located in East Kalimantan. Although the idea of moving the capital city is not new, the Jokowi administration has at least been able to implement the move in real terms. Until the end of Jokowi's administration, the relocation of the capital city in the Jokowi era has continued in the field. Over the past five years, the pros and cons have continued to colour the government's policies and strategies in building the IKN. Unresolved problems include attracting foreign investors, land disputes with local communities, and obstacles in meeting basic needs such as the availability of clean water, electricity, and infrastructure. However, in the process of building the IKN, the Indonesian government has not simply stopped this policy.

After conducting a geopolitical analysis study, the relocation of the Indonesian capital city to the IKN is a decision that cannot be said to be entirely negative. In fact, if the Indonesian government can conduct a strategic study and implement the right domestic and foreign policies, the relocation of the nation's capital city to the IKN has the potential to be beneficial for Indonesia. These policies will be interrelated and mutually supportive, be it changes in determining priorities, security and defense policies, economic and trade policies, environmental and maritime policies, as well as regional and global diplomatic priorities.

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