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**HUMAN SECURITY IN EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA**

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# Human Security in East and Southeast Asia

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## ABSTRACT

Human security is an emerging paradigm highlighted in the 1994 Human Development Report as an alternative to traditional security concepts, which usually focus on territorial and national security issues. Two major components of human security are "freedom from want" and "freedom from fear". "Freedom from want" refers to the ability of citizens to have access to sufficient incomes and basic services such as health and education. "Freedom from fear" involves the psychological well-being and protection of the citizenry from vulnerabilities which cause fear such as climate and environmental risks, risks of displacements and crime, and lack of trust in governments.

This paper aims to assess the current state of human security in the Philippines and selected countries in the East and Southeast Asian Regions. Using descriptive statistics compiled from the 2015 Human Development Report and 2015 Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific, the paper examines various indicators related to "freedom from want" and "freedom from fear", the two components of human security. The paper then synthesizes its findings by looking at common characteristics and variations across the different countries. Attempts to integrate these indicators into human security indices are also briefly discussed.

In terms of "freedom from want", we find that there is still a development divide between countries in the region, but poorer countries such as Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and the Philippines are catching up as their economic growth have been at high levels the past few years. In terms of "freedom from fear", we find that factors such as psychological well-being, life satisfaction, and trust in the government are not always correlated to economic growth. These factors are not just a simple function of growth but possibly of the experience of the people in engaging with the government or being a recipient of its services.

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# Human Security in East and Southeast Asia

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## I. Introduction

The 1994 Human Development Report highlighted two major components of human security: 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom from want' which were derived from the preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDP, 1994). The report identified various types of human security threats:

a) Economic security: Persistent poverty, unemployment, underemployment
b) Food security: Hunger, famine
c) Health security: Deadly infectious diseases, unsafe food, malnutrition, lack of access to basic health care
d) Environmental security: Environmental degradation, resource depletion, natural disasters, pollution
e) Personal security: Physical violence, crime, terrorism, domestic violence, child labor
f) Community security: Inter-ethnic, religious and other identity based tensions
g) Political security: Political repression, human rights abuses

The Commission on Human Security (CHS) argued the necessity of a new paradigm and definition of security as a response to all kinds of security threats – "from chronic and persistent poverty to ethnic violence, human trafficking, climate change, health pandemics, international terrorism, and sudden economic and financial downturns." It added that such threats have a transnational nature and transcends traditional notions of security focusing on military threats and aggressions. It also emphasized that human security needs a comprehensive and integrated approach that recognizes the linkages and the interdependencies between development, human rights, and national security.

In essence, the CHS defines human security as: "… to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms – freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical and pervasive threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people's strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity."[3] The new paradigm stresses the need for cooperative and multi-sectoral responses that unify the agendas of those dealing with security, development, and human rights.

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[3] Taken from "Human Security in Theory and Practice: An Overview of the Human Security Concept and the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security" published by the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security

The paper uses this new paradigm to examine the current situation of human security in the East and Southeast Asian Regions. It will embark on this by reviewing various indicators as culled from the 2015 Human Development Report (UNDP, 2015) and 2015 Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific (ADB, 2015). The paper then synthesizes its findings by looking at some common characteristics and variations of human security across the various countries covered in the study.

## II. Freedom from Want

This section explores various indicators that describe the performance of various countries in terms of providing the environment for their citizens to have "freedom from want". The authors of this paper define "freedom from want" as the fulfillment of the basic needs of the citizenry especially in terms of adequate incomes and access to basic services such as health and education.  In simple terms, it is freedom from poverty.

### A.  Economic Growth

It has been frequently argued that economic growth is necessary for human development in a country. Although this is not sufficient, many countries in the world still look at Gross Domestic Product and GDP growth as important indicators of a country's development and GDP per capita growth as a measure of well-being or standard of living. Other indicators have been utilized for these but will be discussed later in this section.

From Table 1 below, we see that China, Japan, and Indonesia have the largest economies when we examine GDP or total output. GDP was measured through the Purchasing Power Parity index to facilitate comparability among countries in the region. It is known that China and Indonesia are the two biggest countries in terms of population with the former having around 1.3 billion people while the latter has 232 million. However, in terms of GDP per capita, it is Singapore and Brunei which register the highest values with Singapore at US$ PPP 76,237 and Brunei at US$ PPP 69,474. The other East Asian countries – Hong Kong, South Korea, and Japan also have relatively high levels of GDP per capita at more than US$ PPP 30,000.

In Table 2, we see that Southeast and East Asian economies have also been growing relatively high for the past five years, most especially China, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Singapore, and the Philippines. Their economies have been growing at an average of more than 6% annually from 2010-2014.  This is also the reason why the region is one of the most dynamic areas in terms of economic activity.  For this reason, both portfolio and foreign direct investments have been pouring into the region although the magnitude varies from country to country.

**Table 1**
**GDP levels and GDP per capita levels**

| Country | Gross Domestic Product | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | Total (2011 PPP $ billions) | Per capita (2011 PPP $) |
| | 2013 | 2013 |
| **Very High Human Development** | | |
| Singapore | 411.6 | 76,237 |
| Hong Kong, China | 370.2 | 51,509 |
| South Korea | 1,642.6 | 32,708 |
| Japan | 4,535.1 | 35,614 |
| Brunei | 29.0 | 69,474 |
| **High Human Development** | | |
| Malaysia | 671.3 | 22,589 |
| China | 15,643.2 | 11,525 |
| Thailand | 933.6 | 13,932 |
| **Medium Human Development** | | |
| Indonesia | 2,312.4 | 9,254 |
| Philippines | 622.5 | 6,326 |
| Vietnam | 459.7 | 5,125 |
| Timor Leste | 2.3 | 2,040 |
| Laos | 31.6 | 4,667 |
| Cambodia | 44.6 | 2,944 |

**Source: 2015 HDR**

**Table 2**
**Real GDP growth rates for East Asia and Southeast Asia**

| Country | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | Five Year Average |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **East Asia** | | | | | | |
| China | 10.4 | 9.5 | 7.7 | 7.7 | 7.4 | **8.5** |
| Hong Kong, China | 6.8 | 4.8 | 1.7 | 3.1 | 2.5 | **3.8** |
| Japan | 4.7 | -0.5 | 1.7 | 1.6 | -0.1 | **1.5** |
| South Korea | 6.5 | 3.7 | 2.3 | 2.9 | 3.3 | **3.7** |
| **Southeast Asia** | | | | | | |
| Brunei | 2.6 | 3.7 | 0.9 | -2.1 | -2.3 | **0.6** |
| Cambodia | 6.0 | 7.1 | 7.3 | 7.4 | 7.1 | **7.0** |
| Indonesia | 6.2 | 6.2 | 6.0 | 5.6 | 5.0 | **5.8** |
| Laos | 8.1 | 8.0 | 7.9 | 8.0 | 7.6 | **7.9** |
| Malaysia | 7.4 | 5.3 | 5.5 | 4.7 | 6.0 | **5.8** |
| Myanmar | 9.6 | 5.6 | 7.3 | 8.4 | 8.7 | **7.9** |
| Philippines | 7.6 | 3.7 | 6.7 | 7.1 | 6.1 | **6.2** |
| Singapore | 15.2 | 6.2 | 3.4 | 4.4 | 2.9 | **6.4** |
| Thailand | 7.5 | 0.8 | 7.3 | 2.8 | 0.9 | **3.9** |
| Vietnam | 6.4 | 6.2 | 5.2 | 5.4 | 6.0 | **5.9** |

**Source: 2015 ADB Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific**

### B. Poverty in the Region

*Poverty Incidence*

Despite robust economic growth in the region, poverty incidence remains high in some Southeast Asian countries such as Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, Indonesia, and the Philippines, which all have double digit rates. This means that these countries have not yet achieved inclusive growth whereby the majority of their citizenry enjoy the benefits of growth. East Asian countries covered in this paper except for China do not have poverty incidence data in the 2015 Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific.

**Table 3**
**Proportion of East and Southeast Asian Population below the Poverty Line**

| Country | $1.25 a Day (PPP) | | | | National | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Earliest Year | | Latest Year | | Earliest Year | | Latest Year | |
| **East Asia** | | | | | | | | |
| China | 60.7 | (1990) | 6.3 | (2011) | 6.0 | (1996) | 8.5 | (2013) |
| **Southeast Asia** | | | | | | | | |
| Cambodia | 44.5 | (1994) | 10.1 | (2011) | 50.2 | (2004) | 18.9 | (2012) |
| Indonesia | 54.3 | (1990) | 16.2 | (2011) | 17.6 | (1996) | 11.3 | (2014) |
| Laos | 55.7 | (1992) | 30.3 | (2012) | 46.0 | (1992) | 23.2 | (2012) |
| Malaysia | 1.6 | (1992) | 0.0 | (2009) | 12.4 | (1992) | 1.7 | (2012) |
| Myanmar | ... | | ... | | 32.1 | (2005) | 25.6 | (2010) |
| Philippines | 33.2 | (1991) | 19.0 | (2012) | 34.4 | (1991) | 25.2 | (2012) |
| Thailand | 11.6 | (1990) | 0.3 | (2010) | 58.1 | (1990) | 12.6 | (2012) |
| Vietnam | 63.8 | (1993) | 2.4 | (2012) | 20.7 | (2010) | 9.8 | (2013) |

**Source: 2015 ADB Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific**

*Multi-dimensional Poverty Index*

The global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is an international measure of acute poverty that is complementary to traditional income-based poverty measures by capturing the severe deprivations that each person faces at the same time with respect to education, health and living standards. The MPI assesses poverty at the individual level. If a person is deprived in a third or more of ten (weighted) indicators, the global index identifies them as 'MPI poor', and the extent – or intensity – of their poverty is measured by the number of deprivations they are experiencing. The MPI also allows comparisons across countries, regions and the world and within countries by ethnic group, urban/rural location, as well as other key household and community characteristics.  The MPI can also be used as an analytical tool to identify the most vulnerable people - the chronic poor. Table 4 below implies that the chronic poor live in countries such as Cambodia, Laos, and Timor Leste.

**Table 4**
**Multidimensional Poverty index**

| Country | Year and survey | HDRO specifications | | 2010 specifications | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Index | Headcount | Index | Headcount |
| | 2005–2014 | Value | (%) | Value | (%) |
| Cambodia | 2010 D | 0.211 | 46.8 | 0.212 | 45.9 |
| China | 2012 N | 0.023 | 5.2 | 0.023 | 5.2 |
| Indonesia | 2012 D | 0.024 | 5.9 | 0.066 | 15.5 |
| Laos | 2011/2012 M | 0.186 | 36.8 | 0.174 | 34.1 |
| Philippines | 2013 D | 0.033 | 6.3 | 0.052 | 11.0 |
| Thailand | 2005/2006 M | 0.004 | 1.0 | 0.006 | 1.6 |
| Timor Leste | 2009/2010 D | 0.322 | 64.3 | 0.360 | 68.1 |
| Vietnam | 2010/2011 M | 0.026 | 6.4 | 0.017 | 4.2 |

**Source: 2015 HDR**

## C. *Human Development Index*

It was in 1990 when the United Nations Development Programme launched the first Human Development Report, with the contention that people should be the focus of development and that development should be measured by the holistic progress of an individual and of human beings. Until that time, development thinking had been dominated by the idea that the economic prosperity came first, and people second. Supporting this perspective with empirical data and analysis, the Human Development Report transformed how countries formulate development policies. The chief architects of the HDR were the prominent Pakistani economist Mahbub Ul Haq and Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen. The Human Development Index is the concrete measure used in the various reports.  It is a summary measure for assessing long-term progress in three basic dimensions of human development:

- *Health* (life expectancy at birth)
- *Knowledge* (mean years and expected years of schooling)
- *Income* (Gross National Income per capita in PPP$)

Table 5 below shows that almost all East Asian countries have very high human development i.e. Hong Kong, South Korea, and Japan while two Southeast Asian countries are at par i.e. Singapore and Brunei.  The rest of the countries in the two regions are grouped under high and medium human development except Myanmar, which is in the low human development category.

**Table 5**
**Human Development Index**

| Country | Human Development Index (HDI) Value 2014 | Life expectancy at birth (years) 2014 | Expected years of schooling (years) 2014 | Mean years of schooling (years) 2014 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Very High Human Development** | | | | |
| Singapore | 0.912 | 83.0 | 15.4 | 10.6 |
| Hong Kong, China | 0.910 | 84.0 | 15.6 | 11.2 |
| South Korea | 0.898 | 81.9 | 16.9 | 11.9 |
| Japan | 0.891 | 83.5 | 15.3 | 11.5 |
| Brunei | 0.856 | 78.8 | 14.5 | 8.8 |
| **High Human Development** | | | | |
| Malaysia | 0.779 | 74.7 | 12.7 | 10.0 |
| China | 0.727 | 75.8 | 13.1 | 7.5 |
| Thailand | 0.726 | 74.4 | 13.5 | 7.3 |
| **Medium Human Development** | | | | |
| Indonesia | 0.684 | 68.9 | 13.0 | 7.6 |
| Philippines | 0.668 | 68.2 | 11.3 | 8.9 |
| Vietnam | 0.666 | 75.8 | 11.9 | 7.5 |
| Timor Leste | 0.595 | 68.2 | 11.7 | 4.4 |
| Laos | 0.575 | 66.2 | 10.6 | 5.0 |
| Cambodia | 0.555 | 68.4 | 10.9 | 4.4 |
| **Low Human Development** | | | | |
| Myanmar | 0.536 | 65.9 | 8.6 | 4.1 |

**Source: 2015 HDR**

Table 6 below shows that all countries in the region have improved greatly the value of their HDIs from 1990 to 2014. Even Myanmar, the only country in the low human development bracket, increased its HDI value from .352 to .536. Singapore which started in 1990 with a high HDI of .718 still increased its value to .912 in 2014.

**Table 6**
**Trends in HDI Growth**

| Country | Human Development Index (HDI) Value | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
| **Very High Human Development** | | | | | | | |
| Singapore | 0.718 | 0.819 | 0.897 | 0.903 | 0.905 | 0.909 | 0.912 |
| Hong Kong, China | 0.781 | 0.825 | 0.898 | 0.902 | 0.906 | 0.908 | 0.910 |
| South Korea | 0.731 | 0.821 | 0.886 | 0.891 | 0.893 | 0.895 | 0.898 |
| Japan | 0.814 | 0.857 | 0.884 | 0.886 | 0.888 | 0.890 | 0.891 |
| Brunei | 0.782 | 0.819 | 0.843 | 0.847 | 0.852 | 0.852 | 0.856 |
| **High Human Development** | | | | | | | |
| Malaysia | 0.641 | 0.723 | 0.769 | 0.772 | 0.774 | 0.777 | 0.779 |
| China | 0.501 | 0.588 | 0.699 | 0.707 | 0.718 | 0.723 | 0.727 |
| Thailand | 0.572 | 0.648 | 0.716 | 0.721 | 0.723 | 0.724 | 0.726 |
| **Medium Human Development** | | | | | | | |
| Indonesia | 0.531 | 0.606 | 0.665 | 0.671 | 0.678 | 0.681 | 0.684 |
| Philippines | 0.586 | 0.623 | 0.654 | 0.653 | 0.657 | 0.664 | 0.668 |
| Vietnam | 0.475 | 0.575 | 0.653 | 0.657 | 0.660 | 0.663 | 0.666 |
| Timor Leste | .. | 0.468 | 0.600 | 0.611 | 0.604 | 0.601 | 0.595 |
| Laos | 0.397 | 0.462 | 0.539 | 0.552 | 0.562 | 0.570 | 0.575 |
| Cambodia | 0.364 | 0.419 | 0.536 | 0.541 | 0.546 | 0.550 | 0.555 |
| **Low Human Development** | | | | | | | |
| Myanmar | 0.352 | 0.425 | 0.520 | 0.524 | 0.528 | 0.531 | 0.536 |

**Source: 2015 HDR**

### D. Gender Development Index (GDI) and Gender Inequality Index (GII)

The new GDI measures gender gaps in human development achievements by accounting for disparities between women and men in three basic dimensions of human development - health, knowledge, and living standards using the same component indicators in the HDI. The GDI is the ratio of the HDIs calculated separately for females and males using the same methodology as in the HDI. It is a direct measure of gender gap showing the female HDI as a percentage of the male HDI. Table 7 below shows that almost every country in East and Southeast Asia have minimal gender gaps in terms of the GDI. Except for Cambodia, Laos, and Timor Leste, all other countries have a GDI of at least .920.

The GII is an inequality index. It measures gender inequalities in three important aspects of human development—reproductive health, measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rates; empowerment, measured by proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by females and proportion of adult females and males aged 25 years and older with at least some secondary education; and economic status, expressed as labor market participation and measured by labour force participation rate of female and male populations aged 15 years and older.

The GII is built on the same framework as the IHDI — to better expose differences in the distribution of achievements between women and men. It measures the human development costs of gender inequality, thus the higher the GII value the more disparities between females and males and the more loss to human development. Table 7 implies that this measure of gender inequality is more closely related to whether the countries are classified as belong to a very high, high, medium or low level of human development. For example, Singapore, South Korea, and Japan have the lowest values of GII.

**Table 7**
**Gender Development Index (GDI) and Gender Inequality Index (GII)**

| Country | GDI | | GII | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Value 2014 | GDI group 2014 | Value 2014 | Rank 2014 |
| **Very High Human Development** | | | | |
| Singapore | 0.985 | 1 | 0.088 | 13 |
| Hong Kong, China | 0.958 | 2 | .. | .. |
| South Korea | 0.930 | 3 | 0.125 | 23 |
| Japan | 0.961 | 2 | 0.133 | 26 |
| Brunei | 0.977 | 1 | .. | .. |
| **High Human Development** | | | | |
| Malaysia | 0.947 | 3 | 0.209 | 42 |
| China | 0.943 | 3 | 0.191 | 40 |
| Thailand | 1.000 | 1 | 0.380 | 76 |
| **Medium Human Development** | | | | |
| Indonesia | 0.927 | 3 | 0.494 | 110 |
| Philippines | 0.977 | 1 | 0.420 | 89 |
| Vietnam | .. | .. | 0.308 | 60 |
| Timor Leste | 0.868 | 5 | .. | .. |
| Laos | 0.896 | 5 | .. | .. |
| Cambodia | 0.890 | 5 | 0.477 | 104 |
| **Low Human Development** | | | | |
| Myanmar | .. | .. | 0.413 | 85 |

**Source: 2015 HDR**

## E. Dependency Ratios

The dependency ratio is a measure showing the number of dependents, aged zero to 14 and over the age of 65, to the total population, aged 15 to 64. It is also referred to as the "total dependency ratio." This indicator is very interesting as there is much variation. Most of the Southeast Asian countries have relatively high dependency ratios for the young age while many East Asian countries have high rates for old age. Almost all countries were able to reduce or maintain the growth rates of their population. Only two countries increased their growth rates and these are Myanmar and Laos.

**Table 8**
**Dependency Ratios and Population Growth Rates**

| Country | Population | | | | Dependency ratio | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | | Average annual growth | | (per 100 people ages 15–64) | |
| | (millions) | | (%) | | Young age (0–14) | Old age (65 and older) |
| | 2014 | 2030 | 2000/2005 | 2010/2015 | 2015 | 2015 |
| **Very High Human Development** | | | | | | |
| Singapore | 5.5 | 6.6 | 2.7 | 2.0 | 20.8 | 15.2 |
| Hong Kong, China | 7.3 | 7.9 | 0.2 | 0.7 | 16.0 | 20.5 |
| South Korea | 49.5 | 52.2 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 19.5 | 17.9 |
| Japan | 127.0 | 120.6 | 0.2 | -0.1 | 21.2 | 43.6 |
| Brunei | 0.4 | 0.5 | 2.1 | 1.4 | 34.6 | 6.9 |
| **High Human Development** | | | | | | |
| Malaysia | 30.2 | 36.8 | 2.0 | 1.6 | 36.6 | 8.3 |
| China | 1,393.8 | 1,453.3 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 25.1 | 13.1 |
| Thailand | 67.2 | 67.6 | 1.0 | 0.3 | 24.2 | 14.5 |
| **Medium Human Development** | | | | | | |
| Indonesia | 252.8 | 293.5 | 1.4 | 1.2 | 42.2 | 8.2 |
| Philippines | 100.1 | 127.8 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 53.4 | 6.5 |
| Vietnam | 92.5 | 101.8 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 31.7 | 9.6 |
| Timor Leste | 1.2 | 1.6 | 3.1 | 1.7 | 86.5 | 6.6 |
| Laos | 6.9 | 8.8 | 1.4 | 1.9 | 55.6 | 6.2 |
| Cambodia | 15.4 | 19.1 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 49.0 | 8.9 |
| **Low Human Development** | | | | | | |
| Myanmar | 53.7 | 58.7 | 0.7 | 0.8 | 34.4 | 7.7 |

**Source: 2015 HDR**

### F. Child Health and Well-Being

The health of children is important because any negative effect occurring in the early ages will impact on a person's future overall well-being. The key indicators include mortality rates of infants and children under five and malnutrition rates (stunting) of those under 5 years old. Countries categorized in the Human Development Report with very high human development have very low mortality and stunting rates. Only Malaysia performed as well in terms of mortality rates and China in terms of stunting. Countries bracketed under low and medium human development have very high mortality and stunting rates.

Aside from health-related indicators, table 10 below also gives a preview of the situation of child labor in the region. Higher incidences of child labor imply that a person may grow up to be less educated, for example. Among the countries with

available data, Cambodia, Laos, and the Philippines have the highest incidences of child labor.

**Table 9**
**Mortality Rates and Child Malnutrition Rates**

| Country | Mortality rates (per 1,000 live births) | | Child malnutrition (% under age 5) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Infant | Under-Five | Stunting (moderate or severe) |
| | 2013 | 2013 | 2008–2013* |
| **Very High Human Development** | | | |
| Singapore | 2.2 | 2.8 | 4.4 |
| South Korea | 3.2 | 3.7 | 2.5 |
| Japan | 2.1 | 2.9 | .. |
| Brunei Darussalam | 8.4 | 9.9 | .. |
| **High Human Development** | | | |
| Malaysia | 7.2 | 8.5 | 17.2 |
| China | 10.9 | 12.7 | 9.4 |
| Thailand | 11.3 | 13.1 | 16.3 |
| **Medium Human Development** | | | |
| Indonesia | 24.5 | 29.3 | 36.4 |
| Philippines | 23.5 | 29.9 | 30.3 |
| Vietnam | 19.0 | 23.8 | 23.3 |
| Timor Leste | 46.2 | 54.6 | 57.7 |
| Laos | 53.8 | 71.4 | 43.8 |
| Cambodia | 32.5 | 37.9 | 40.9 |
| **Low Human Development** | | | |
| Myanmar | 39.8 | 50.5 | 35.1 |

**\* data refer to most recent available between the period indicated**
**Source: 2015 HDR**

**Table 10**
**Child Labor\***

| Country | % of ages 5–14 |
|---|---|
| Cambodia | 18.3 |
| Indonesia | 6.9 |
| Laos | 10.1 |
| Thailand | 8.3 |
| Timor Leste | 4.2 |
| Philippines | 11.1 |
| Vietnam | 6.9 |

**\*data refer to most recent available between 2005-2013**
**Source: 2015 HDR**

### G. Freedom from Hunger

Another relevant risk for the citizenry is the fear of being hungry and being malnourished. Many Southeast Asian countries still have a large proportion of the population who consume less than the minimum level of dietary energy consumption. These include Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, and the Philippines.

**Table 11**
**Proportion of Population Below Calorie Requirement**

| Country | Proportion of Population below Minimum Level of Dietary Energy Consumption (%) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1991 | 2000 | 2014 |
| **East Asia** | | | |
| China | 24 | 16 | 9 |
| Japan | <5 | <5 | <5 |
| South Korea | <5 | <5 | <5 |
| Mongolia | 30 | 38 | 21 |
| **Southeast Asia** | | | |
| Brunei Darussalam | <5 | <5 | <5 |
| Cambodia | 32 | 32 | 14 |
| Indonesia | 20 | 17 | 8 |
| Laos | 43 | 39 | 19 |
| Malaysia | <5 | <5 | <5 |
| Myanmar | 63 | 52 | 14 |
| Philippines | 26 | 21 | 14 |
| Thailand | 35 | 19 | 7 |
| Vietnam | 46 | 28 | 11 |

**Source: 2015 ADB Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific**

Another important indicator for freedom from hunger is the depth of food deficit as measured by kilocalories per person. The poorer countries Timor Leste, Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar have more than 100 kilocalories deficit per person (See Table 12 below).

Affordability of food is also an important indicator for freedom from hunger. A key measure is food inflation. Fortunately, most countries in the region have very low food inflation. Only Indonesia and Laos have price inflation greater than 8%. All the rest have food inflation less than 5.2% (See Table 13).

**Table 12**
**Depth of Food Deficit**

| Country | (kilocalories per person per day) 2012/2014 |
|---|---|
| **Very High Human Development** | |
| Singapore | .. |
| Hong Kong, China | .. |
| South Korea | 5 |
| Japan | .. |
| Brunei Darussalam | 15 |
| **High Human Development** | |
| Malaysia | 20 |
| China | 83 |
| Thailand | 60 |
| **Medium Human Development** | |
| Indonesia | 55 |
| Philippines | 97 |
| Vietnam | 95 |
| Timor Leste | 198 |
| Laos | 134 |
| Cambodia | 108 |
| **Low Human Development** | |
| Myanmar | 113 |

**Source: 2015 HDR**

**Table 13**
**Food Price Inflation: Food CPI Growth Rate**

| Country | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | AVERAGE(5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **East Asia** | | | | | | |
| China | 6.5 | 4.3 | -6.2 | -0.2 | -1.5 | 0.6 |
| Hong Kong, China | 2.3 | 7.0 | 5.7 | 4.5 | 4.1 | 4.7 |
| Japan | -0.3 | -0.4 | 0.1 | -0.1 | 3.8 | 0.6 |
| South Korea | 6.6 | 8.1 | 4.0 | 0.9 | 0.3 | 4.0 |
| Taipei, China | 0.6 | 2.3 | 4.2 | 1.3 | 3.7 | 2.4 |
| **Southeast Asia** | | | | | | |
| Brunei Darussalam | 1.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.1 | -0.3 | 0.2 |
| Cambodia | 4.4 | 6.6 | 3.2 | 3.0 | 4.9 | 4.4 |
| Indonesia | 9.4 | 8.5 | 5.9 | 12.0 | ... | 9.0 |
| Laos | 7.7 | 10.2 | 5.5 | 12.0 | 6.9 | 8.5 |
| Malaysia | 2.5 | 4.8 | 2.7 | 3.6 | 3.3 | 3.4 |
| Myanmar | 7.2 | 3.9 | -1.5 | 6.0 | 5.9 | 4.3 |
| Philippines | 4.1 | 5.7 | 2.4 | 2.8 | 7.0 | 4.4 |
| Singapore | 1.4 | 3.0 | 2.3 | 2.1 | 2.9 | 2.3 |
| Thailand | 5.3 | 8.0 | 4.9 | 3.4 | 3.9 | 5.1 |

**Source: 2015 ADB Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific**

### III. Freedom from Fear

This section discusses indicators of various risks, vulnerabilities, and insecurities that may affect citizens of a country.  These are factors that cause "fear" among the population.

#### A. *Losing Livelihood (Unemployment)*

The Human Development Report of 2015 reported statistics on people having an ideal job based on a survey done by Gallup. Countries from medium human development category scored highly (over 80%) i.e. Philippines, Laos, and Cambodia.  Only Thailand from the high human development grouping got 80%.  It is also notable that countries in the very high development group had relatively lower scores from 51-71%.

**Table 14**
**Having Ideal Job**

| Country | Ideal Job* |
|---|---|
| **Very High Human Development** | |
| Singapore | 71 |
| Hong Kong, China | 60 |
| South Korea | 51 |
| Japan | 69 |
| **High Human Development** | |
| Malaysia | 76 |
| China | 51 |
| Thailand | 80 |
| **Medium Human Development** | |
| Indonesia | 76 |
| Philippines | 87 |
| Vietnam | 65 |
| Laos | 80 |
| Cambodia | 80 |
| **Low Human Development** | |
| Myanmar | 52 |

**\* % answering yes (2013)**
**Source: 2015 HDR**

Having a stable job and not merely an ideal job is a major factor for human security. A major indicator that is utilized by many countries for this is the unemployment rate.  Unemployment rates have been relatively low (0.3-4.3%) from 2008-2013 in many countries in the region except for Indonesia (6.2%) and the Philippines (7.1%).  The rates are low despite the occurrence of the Global Financial Crisis in 2008 as its impact on the region was not as severe as compared to the other regions of the world.

**Table 15**
**Unemployment**

| Country | Total | Long term | Youth | Youth not in school or employment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (% of labour force) | | (% of youth labour force) | (% ages 15–24) |
| | **2008-2013*** | **2008-2013*** | **2008-2014*** | **2008-2013*** |
| **Very High Human Development** | | | | |
| Singapore | 2.8 | 0.6 | 7.0 | .. |
| Hong Kong, China | 3.4 | .. | 9.4 | 6.6 |
| South Korea | 3.2 | 0.0 | 9.3 | .. |
| Japan | 4.3 | 1.6 | 6.9 | 3.9 |
| Brunei Darussalam | 1.7 | .. | .. | .. |
| **High Human Development** | | | | |
| Malaysia | 3.0 | .. | 10.4 | .. |
| China | 2.9 | .. | .. | .. |
| Thailand | 0.8 | 0.1 | 3.4 | .. |
| **Medium Human Development** | | | | |
| Indonesia | 6.2 | .. | 31.3 | .. |
| Philippines | 7.1 | 0.1 | 15.7 | 24.8 |
| Vietnam | 2.0 | 0.3 | 6.0 | 9.3 |
| Timor Leste | 3.9 | 0.4 | 14.8 | .. |
| Laos | 1.4 | .. | .. | .. |
| Cambodia | 0.3 | .. | 0.5 | 79.2 |

**\*data refer to most recent available between the indicated years**
**Source: 2015 HDR**

However, it is also noteworthy that very few countries of the region are able to grant unemployment benefits to its workers and for those giving, the number of beneficiaries is not even 50% of the total unemployed (see Table 16 below). Old age pension is available in most countries of the region.

**Table 16**
**Unemployment Benefits and Old Age Pension Recipients**

| Country | Unemployment benefits recipients<br><br>(% of unemployed ages 15–64)<br>2008–2013* | Old age pension recipients<br>(% of statutory pension age population)<br>2004–2012* |
|---|---|---|
| **Very High Human Development** | | |
| Singapore | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Hong Kong, China | 16.9 | 72.9 |
| South Korea | 45.5 | 77.6 |
| Japan | 19.6 | 80.3 |
| Brunei Darussalam | 0.0 | 81.7 |
| **High Human Development** | | |
| Malaysia | 0.0 | 19.8 |
| China | 14.0 | 74.4 |
| Thailand | 28.5 | 81.7 |
| **Medium Human Development** | | |
| Indonesia | 0.0 | 8.1 |
| Philippines | 0.0 | 28.5 |
| Vietnam | 8.4 | 34.5 |
| Timor Leste | .. | 100.0 |
| Laos | 0.0 | 5.6 |
| Cambodia | 0.0 | 5.0 |
| **Low Human Development** | | |
| Myanmar | 0.0 | .. |

**\*data refer to most recent available between the indicated years**
**Source: 2015 HDR**


## B. *Climate and Environment Risks*

Major risks confronting many economies are related to the environment and these include pollution, natural resource depletion and natural disasters. Carbon dioxide emissions per capita are relatively large in wealthier countries like Brunei, South Korea, Japan, and Malaysia. Natural resource depletion affects both the rich and poorer countries. Brunei has the highest at 29.9% of GNI followed by Laos at 8.3% and Malaysia at 8.1%. Land degradation meanwhile has affected greatly the Mekong countries Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar, and Cambodia. In terms of annual average number of people affected by natural disasters, the Philippines has the highest followed by China and Thailand.

**Table 17**
**Climate and Environment Risks**

| Country | Carbon dioxide emissions per capita | | Natural resource depletion | Population living on degraded land | Population affected by Natural Disasters |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (tonnes) | Average annual growth (%) | (% of GNI) | (%) | (average annual per million people) |
| | 2011 | 1970/2011 | 2008–2013* | 2010 | 2005/2014 |
| **Very High Human Development** | | | | | |
| Singapore | 4.3 | -2.3 | .. | .. | 0 |
| Hong Kong, China | 5.7 | 3.2 | .. | .. | 221 |
| South Korea | 11.8 | 6.5 | 0.0 | 2.9 | 206 |
| Japan | 9.3 | 0.8 | 0.0 | 0.3 | 921 |
| Brunei Darussalam | 24.0 | -3.1 | 29.8 | .. | 0 |
| **High Human Development** | | | | | |
| Malaysia | 7.8 | 5.9 | 8.1 | 1.2 | 10,160 |
| China | 6.7 | 6.5 | 4.2 | 8.6 | 73,314 |
| Thailand | 4.6 | 8.0 | 4.7 | 17.0 | 70,701 |
| **Medium Human Development** | | | | | |
| Indonesia | 2.3 | 6.7 | 4.8 | 3.1 | 4,292 |
| Philippines | 0.9 | 0.7 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 105,941 |
| Vietnam | 2.0 | 3.6 | 6.7 | 8.0 | 20,060 |
| Timor Leste | 0.2 | .. | .. | .. | 951 |
| Laos | 0.2 | -0.5 | 8.3 | 4.1 | 22,280 |
| Cambodia | 0.3 | 2.0 | 2.5 | 39.3 | 28,828 |
| **Low Human Development** | | | | | |
| Myanmar | 0.2 | 0.5 | .. | 19.2 | 6,406 |

**\*data refer to most recent available between the indicated years**
**Source: 2015 HDR**

## C. *Fear of Displacements*

Another kind of fear is being displaced in your place of abode and becoming refugees in another place or region within the country (IDP).  In terms of the former, China, Vietnam, and Myanmar have the highest statistics while countries which have been experiencing internal conflicts have also a high number of IDPs – Indonesia, Philippines, Myanmar, and Thailand.

**Table 18**
**Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP)**

| Country | Refugees by country of origin | Internally displaced persons |
|---|---|---|
| | (thousands) 2014 | (thousands) 2014 |
| **Very High Human Development** | | |
| Singapore | 0.1 | .. |
| Hong Kong, China | 0.0 | .. |
| South Korea | 0.5 | .. |
| Japan | 0.3 | .. |
| Brunei Darussalam | 0.0 | .. |
| **High Human Development** | | |
| Malaysia | 0.5 | .. |
| China | 205.0 | .. |
| Thailand | 0.2 | 35.0 |
| **Medium Human Development** | | |
| Indonesia | 9.8 | 84.0 |
| Philippines | 0.7 | 77.7 |
| Vietnam | 314.1 | .. |
| Timor Leste | 0.0 | 0.9 |
| Laos | 7.7 | 4.5 |
| Cambodia | 13.6 | .. |
| **Low Human Development** | | |
| Myanmar | 223.7 | 645.3 |

**Source: 2015 HDR**

### D. Fear of Crime

Another source of fear is crime and the absence of peace and order. Some important indicators include the number of people jailed, homicide rate, violence against women, and the % of citizens surveyed who feel safe in their countries. Thailand and Singapore have the highest number of prisoners per 100,000 people at 398 and 230. However, these data are difficult to interpret as these may also mean that their police forces are more efficient in catching criminals and thereby people may feel safer. Myanmar and the Philippines meanwhile have the highest homicide rates at 15.2 and 8.8 respectively per 100,000 people. Thailand, Vietnam, and Timor Leste have the highest percentage of women who encountered violence against them. A big percentage of the people in Singapore and Hong Kong feel the safest at 91%.

**Table 19**
**Fear of Crime**

| Country | Prison population (per 100,000 people) 2002–2013* | Homicide rate (per 100,000 people) 2008–2012* | Violence against women (%) Intimate or nonintimate partner violence ever experienced 2001–2011* | Feeling Safe % answering yes 2014 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Very High Human Development** | | | | |
| Singapore | 230 | 0.2 | 9.2 | 91 |
| Hong Kong, China | 128 | 0.4 | 21.0 | 91 |
| South Korea | 99 | 0.9 | .. | 61 |
| Japan | 51 | 0.3 | 18.5 | 68 |
| Brunei Darussalam | 122 | 2.0 | .. | .. |
| **High Human Development** | | | | |
| Malaysia | 132 | 2.3 | .. | 48 |
| China | 121 | 1.0 | .. | 75 |
| Thailand | 398 | 5.0 | 43.8 | 72 |
| **Medium Human Development** | | | | |
| Indonesia | 59 | 0.6 | 3.1 | 85 |
| Philippines | 111 | 8.8 | 23.6 | 62 |
| Vietnam | 145 | 3.3 | 38.5 | 61 |
| Timor Leste | 25 | 3.6 | 39.2 | .. |
| Laos | 69 | 5.9 | .. | 75 |
| Cambodia | 106 | 6.5 | 22.3 | 42 |
| **Low Human Development** | | | | |
| Myanmar | 120 | 15.2 | .. | 81 |

**\*data refer to most recent available between the indicated years**
**Source: 2015 HDR**

### E. Psychological well-being

One of the best gauges of freedom from fear is the psychological well-being of the citizenry. The first measure for this is satisfaction in having the freedom of choice. Medium development countries Cambodia and the Philippines scored the highest. Suicide rates meanwhile are highest in very high development countries South Korea and Japan. Singapore and Thailand have the highest ratings for overall life satisfaction at 7.1 and 7.0.

**Table 20**
**Psychological Well-Being**

| Country | Freedom of Choice | | Overall life satisfaction index | Suicide rate (per 100,000 people) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % satisfied | | 0, least satisfied to 10, most satisfied | | |
| | Female | Male | | Female | Male |
| | 2014 | 2014 | 2014 | 2012 | 2012 |
| **Very High Human Development** | | | | | |
| Singapore | 83 | 76 | 7.1 | 5.3 | 9.8 |
| Hong Kong, China | 84 | 83 | 5.5 | .. | .. |
| South Korea | 55 | 61 | 5.8 | 18.0 | 41.7 |
| Japan | 79 | 75 | 5.9 | 10.1 | 26.9 |
| Brunei Darussalam | .. | .. | .. | 5.2 | 7.7 |
| **High Human Development** | | | | | |
| Malaysia | 77 | 79 | 6.0 | 1.5 | 4.7 |
| China | 76 | 77 | 5.2 | 8.7 | 7.1 |
| Thailand | 88 | 91 | 7.0 | 4.5 | 19.1 |
| **Medium Human Development** | | | | | |
| Indonesia | 68 | 70 | 5.6 | 4.9 | 3.7 |
| Philippines | 89 | 91 | 5.3 | 1.2 | 4.8 |
| Vietnam | 80 | 82 | 5.1 | 2.4 | 8.0 |
| Timor Leste | .. | .. | .. | 5.8 | 10.2 |
| Laos | 87 | .. | 4.9 | 6.6 | 11.2 |
| Cambodia | 94 | 92 | 3.9 | 6.5 | 12.6 |
| **Low Human Development** | | | | | |
| Myanmar | 73 | 74 | 4.8 | 10.3 | 16.5 |

**Source: 2015 HDR**

## F. *Access to Communication*

Another type of fear is being isolated because one does not have access to communication and information. In terms of internet users, countries grouped under very high human development such as Singapore, South Korea, and Japan have more than 80% of their population having access. Mobile phone subscription is high in many countries. Only Timor Leste, Myanmar, and Laos have less than 70 per 100 people having subscription.

**Table 21**
**Access to Communication**

| Country | Internet users | Mobile phone subscriptions | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | (% of population) 2014 | (per 100 people) 2014 | (% change) 2009–2014 |
| **Very High Human Development** | | | |
| Singapore | 82.0 | 158.1 | 14.0 |
| Hong Kong, China | 74.6 | 239.3 | 33.1 |
| South Korea | 84.3 | 115.5 | 16.1 |
| Japan | 90.6 | 120.2 | 31.7 |
| Brunei Darussalam | 68.8 | 110.1 | 5.1 |
| **High Human Development** | | | |
| Malaysia | 67.5 | 148.8 | 37.2 |
| China | 49.3 | 92.3 | 66.9 |
| Thailand | 34.9 | 144.4 | 45.2 |
| **Medium Human Development** | | | |
| Indonesia | 17.1 | 126.2 | 83.1 |
| Philippines | 39.7 | 111.2 | 35.2 |
| Vietnam | 48.3 | 147.1 | 32.1 |
| Timor Leste | 1.1 | 58.7 | 78.1 |
| Laos | 14.3 | 67.0 | 29.8 |
| Cambodia | 9.0 | 155.1 | 250.0 |
| **Low Human Development** | | | |
| Myanmar | 2.1 | 49.5 | .. |

**Source: 2015 HDR**

## G. Trusting Government

Trust in a government that promotes human security is significant in having lives without fear among citizens of a country. Singaporeans and Vietnamese have the highest trust ratings for their government. Most Singaporeans and Thais (more than 80%) trust their judicial system. Despite being in the very high human development category, South Korea scored very low in terms of trust in the judicial system at only 19%. Cambodia, Myanmar, and Laos ranked very low in terms of the Corruption Perception Index of Transparency International.

**Table 22**
**Trusting Government**

| Country | Trust in national government<br>% answering yes | Confidence in judicial system<br>% answering yes |
|---|---|---|
| **Very High Human Development** | | |
| Singapore | 84 | 85 |
| Hong Kong, China | 46 | 76 |
| South Korea | 28 | 19 |
| Japan | 38 | 64 |
| **High Human Development** | | |
| Malaysia | 63 | 57 |
| Thailand | 72 | 81 |
| **Medium Human Development** | | |
| Indonesia | 65 | 54 |
| Philippines | 69 | 63 |
| Vietnam | 81 | 66 |

**Source: 2015 HDR**

**Table 23**
**Corruption Perception Index**

| Country | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | Rank in 2013 | Rank in 2014 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **East Asia** | | | | | |
| China | 39 | 40 | 36 | 80 | 100 |
| Hong Kong, China | 77 | 75 | 74 | 15 | 17 |
| Japan | 74 | 74 | 76 | 18 | 15 |
| South Korea | 56 | 55 | 55 | 46 | 43 |
| **Southeast Asia** | | | | | |
| Brunei Darussalam | 55 | 60 | ... | 38 | ... |
| Cambodia | 22 | 20 | 21 | 160 | 156 |
| Indonesia | 32 | 32 | 34 | 114 | 107 |
| Laos | 21 | 26 | 25 | 140 | 145 |
| Malaysia | 49 | 50 | 52 | 53 | 50 |
| Myanmar | 15 | 21 | 21 | 157 | 156 |
| Philippines | 34 | 36 | 38 | 94 | 85 |
| Singapore | 87 | 86 | 84 | 5 | 7 |
| Thailand | 37 | 35 | 38 | 102 | 85 |
| Vietnam | 31 | 31 | 31 | 116 | 119 |

**Source: 2015 ADB Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific**

### IV. Formulating a Human Security Index

Due to the large number of indicators and measures corresponding to human security, there were a couple of attempts to formulate a single index that ranked many countries in the world. A food and human security index (FHSI) was introduced by Carolan (2012). A FHSI score is calculated for 126 countries by looking at indicators of objective and subjective well-being, nutrition, ecological sustainability, food dependency, and food-system market concentration. These scores were arrived at by adding the five aforementioned indicators and calculating their average. Topping the list (see Table 24) in terms of FHSI is Malaysia and Indonesia, two medium human development countries. Despite being in the very high human development category, Japan and South Korea only ranked 33 and 78, respectively.

**Table 24**
**Food and Human Security Index**

| Country | Rank | Index |
|---|---|---|
| Malaysia | 19 | 72.93 |
| Indonesia | 31 | 70.28 |
| Japan | 33 | 69.96 |
| Philippines | 43 | 66.18 |
| Thailand | 44 | 65.59 |
| China | 52 | 62.03 |
| Vietnam | 59 | 60.62 |
| South Korea | 78 | 53.19 |
| Cambodia | 81 | 52.81 |

**Source: Carolan (2012)**

Another attempt at formulating just one index is that of David Hastings, who has been ranking countries through various indicators merged into one value, the Human Security Index (HSI). The HSI is formulated around three component indices - Economic, Environmental, and Social Fabric Indices. The most recent rankings were released in 2011. Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Japan are in the top 3 among East and Southeast Asian countries but surprisingly, some medium human development countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines scored low. The CLMV countries which are relatively poor are also relatively low in terms of human security. Many of these countries have also experienced internal conflicts during the past decades.

**Table 25**
**Human Security Index (version 2)**

| Country | Rank | Index |
|---|---|---|
| Taiwan | 20 | .772 |
| Hong Kong, China | 28 | .753 |
| Japan | 34 | .739 |
| Singapore | 47 | .726 |
| South Korea | 63 | .712 |
| Brunei | 91 | .671 |
| Malaysia | 96 | .660 |
| Thailand | 103 | .648 |
| China | 120 | .626 |
| Vietnam | 152 | .586 |
| Indonesia | 159 | .584 |
| Laos | 166 | .562 |
| Timor Leste | 176 | .545 |
| Philippines | 179 | .535 |
| Myanmar | 181 | .512 |
| Cambodia | 195 | .488 |

**Source: Hastings (2013)**


## V. Summary and Conclusions

From all the table of statistics we have discussed, we can observe many insights regarding the current situation of human security in East and Southeast Asia.

There is still a development divide both in terms of economic growth and human development. For example, hunger affects mostly the relatively poorer countries. A mitigating factor is the low food inflation experienced in the region in recent years. Furthermore, poorer countries such as Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar are catching up as their economic growth have been at high levels the past few years. All of the countries discussed in this paper have also improved their levels of human development indices from 1990 to 2014.

Freedom from fear is not always correlated to economic growth and development. Some highly developed countries such as South Korea have high suicide rates while less developed countries like the Philippines and Cambodia scored highly in the freedom of choice. High human development countries are not necessarily the leaders in overall life satisfaction with some of medium human development countries even faring better. Trust in government is also not a simple

function of high and medium human development but possibly of the political system and people's experience in engaging with it or in being a recipient of its services.

As Human Security has many indicators, there were attempts (Carolan, 2012 and Hastings, 2013) at formulating a single index but because the process was data intensive and much resources were required, these efforts were not sustained.  It will be interesting for the United Nations Development Programme to include the Human Security Index in its annual Human Development Report.   It is an even more comprehensive indicator than the Human Development Index.

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