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### **Abstract**

Stability is a condition of a system whose components tend to fall into, or return to, an established relationship. Stability is the same as the absence of fundamental or chaotic changes in a political system, or changes that occur within agreed or predetermined boundaries. Development requires security and stability. The development itself must also include security and stability, even the development of security and stability is carried out together with development in other fields. This study uses descriptive qualitative methods, with data collection techniques in the form of literature studies by looking at previous studies, as well as online news as a supporting source. From the data obtained, it will be processed by linking it with the theories that have been previously designed. The approach to political stability as a form of government resilience can be seen from the government management system related to the economy, social, and state security, thus creating political stability in it. Singapore's government tends to have good governance so that it affects the level of the economy and the stability of the country itself, in contrast to Thailand and Myanmar which have a fluctuating index. Especially Myanmar, which has the smallest index for 10 years below the index of 20. This is influenced by the leadership of the warring parties so that it has an impact on coups that often occur.

Keywords: Political Stability; Southeast Asia; Thailand; Singapore; Myanmar

#### INTRODUCTION

The study of political stability in a country is undoubtedly essential, considering that it will be concerned with various other things ranging from its society to the foreign affairs of a government (Baik et al., 2015; Baklouti & Boujelbene, 2019; Griffin, 2014). This paper looks at how the implementation of political stability in a country, especially in the Southeast Asian region, is unique when viewed through geographical location, the nature of society, and cultural differences from other areas. The most common and straightforward interpretation of political stability is associating the idea with a lack of domestic civil unrest and violent behaviour. Stable governments are seen as peaceful and law-abiding societies in which decision-making and political-social change are the result of institutionalized and functional procedures rather than the outcome of interest group processes that resolve problems through conflict and aggression, as is the case in many developing countries (Bašić, 2020). This approach argues, for example, that the rapid turnover of system governors by violent processes indicates system instability and should be avoided.

Although the consent of the governed is required in a democracy, and using this consent will require reforms, the consent of the governed should be offered civilly and cooperatively (D Kaufmann et al., 2011). This means that choosing to replace elites with assassinations rather than through an electoral process is a denial of democratic change. As a result of such actions, many have concluded that the potential of such institutions to bring about stable adaptive change has not been realized (Kriyantono, 2015; Manea, 2021). According to Bruce M. Russett (Rapoport, 2020), the number of people killed in all forms of intergroup domestic violence, excluding homicides and executions, was measured in 74 independent countries between 1950 and 1962. Despite some difficulties in data accessibility and reliability, this is a sufficient, if not fundamental, picture of civil violence. However, if one uses this measure as a stability/instability continuum, one will face two criticisms, one of which Russett acknowledges. First, Russett offers an argument, claiming that "stability" is too complex to be defined and measured by just one partial violence test. Secondly, the actual ranking provided by Russett does not allow for sufficient variation between the countries Eliza Meiyani et al

considered: Only 16, or 21.6 per cent, obtained a score of 0, indicating that there were no deaths and that the environment was very stable. In contrast to advanced statistical analysis, which tries to uncover what variables can help explain or account for differences in the degree of stability, there is a dearth of disagreements in this case (Muslija et al., 2018). This political stabilization is a growing issue within the country and has even become an international issue. This is because the situation affects various fields ranging from the economy, state security, and the level of violence to terrorism that threatens the safety of all its people (Abdulrahman et al., 2020; Alfani, 2015; WIJAYA, 2019), including in the Southeast Asia region. The level of political stability and the absence of violence/terrorism in the Southeast Asian region can be seen figure 1.



Figure 1. Political Stability and Absence of Violence/ Terrorism Source. Database World Bank, 2021

From the data above (figure 1), it can be seen that the level of political stability of Myanmar, Thailand, and the Philippines are the three lowest in the last 3 periods. One of the real threats that occurs and is very prominent at this time is terrorism, which has torn the integrity of the nation and state and damaged the values of tolerance that characterize the nation. The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) noted that in 2020, the Philippines occupied the country with the highest level of terrorism with an index of 7.099, followed by Thailand at 5.783 and Myanmar at 5.543. The emergence of terrorism in various countries has had a significant impact; globally, in 2016, the economic impact caused by acts of terrorism reached 84 billion US dollars (worth Rp 1.13 trillion). The estimated value of this loss is based on calculating the value of direct losses, such as death, injury, property damage, and infrastructure damage by terrorist attacks. In addition, this method also calculates indirect economic impacts, such as government health expenditure, decreased economic productivity, decreased income, and psychological trauma suffered by victims.

The danger of terrorism is not a physical attack but a psychological attack in the form of ideological influence. Geopolitical changes and increasingly dynamic globalization have made the threat more complex, namely military, non-military, and hybrid threats. Currently, military threats are almost impossible to occur because of the establishment of good military diplomacy. So, according to the Minister of Defense, there are presently only real threats and unreal threats; unreal threats can become real when the nation's sovereignty and national ideology have begun to be disrupted and affect the country's political stability. The development of violence and terrorism in the Southeast Asian region that threatens the security and political stability of the country has a significant and long-term impact. Therefore, this study will look at the dynamics of political stability and the absence of violence/terrorism in Singapore, Myanmar, and Thailand as countries with the best (SNG) and lowest (THN, MYN) political stability indices in the Southeast Asian region.

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### LITERATURE REVIEW/ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Stability is a system condition whose components tend towards or return to an established relationship. Stability is the same as the absence of fundamental or chaotic changes in a political system or within agreed or predetermined limits (Anugerah, 2020; Hastuti, 2018). Political stability can be understood as a condition where there is no fundamental or revolutionary change in the political system (government) or changes that occur within predetermined limits (Anugerah, 2018). In the realm of government itself, the level of stability can be seen from the emergence of conflicts in society or government that affect defence in the country. These conflicts arise on different scales, such as conflicts between individuals (interpersonal conflict), conflicts between groups (intergroup conflict), conflicts between groups and the state (vertical conflict) and conflicts between countries (interstate conflict). Each scale has its background and development direction (Irwandi & Chotim, 2017). Conflict itself is present as a manifestation of social, political, economic and cultural tensions or can also be caused by feelings of general dissatisfaction, dissatisfaction with communication, dissatisfaction with social symbols and dissatisfaction with the possibility of resolution and the existence of mobilization resources (Rosikin & Muchlas, 2018). The study of political stability, according to (Hurwitz, 1973), can be seen as a remarkable illustration of the vagueness and confusion that characterizes political science research in terms of concept creation, operationalization, and measurement. When various people attempt to measure the level or amount of "political stability" occurring in their particular world, "stability" can mean anything. Most political scientists approach the idea of stability from a behavioural perspective because it can be defined and measured using reliable and verifiable methodologies.

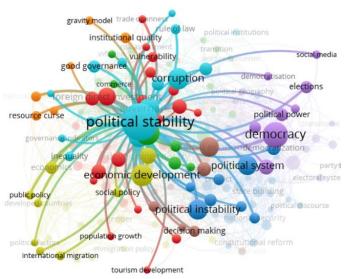


Figure 2. Political Stability Network Source. Process by author, 2024

Development requires security and stability. The development must also include security and stability, and even the development of security and stability is carried out together with the development of other fields (Setiono, 2017). The success of national development is difficult to imagine being achieved if the security and stability of the country do not support it. Security and stability increase public trust in the leaders and government of a nation, and this trust even increases the authority of the leaders and government (Baik et al., 2015). Political stability and security are absolute and necessary conditions for economic development, and no country can develop without political stability and security (Griffin, 2014). Political and security instability reduces economic growth, increases unemployment and waves of layoffs, uncontrolled inflation, and increases poverty.

Based on this, it can be stated how important stability and security are in developing a country (Baklouti & Boujelbene, 2019). Economic growth in a country is supported by political stability, which is one of the critical points in the context of foreign policy development (Kennedy, 2017). In the context of rising inequality and economic vulnerability in the United States, we explore the relationship between class identity, urban place-making, and the politics of poverty. These middle-class politics of difference and exclusion reveal the existence and possibilities of other types of middle-class agency (Elwood et al., 2015). Middle-class residents do not always agree on normative middle-class place-making priorities and practices. People experience and engage in place-making through complex layers of class or racial privilege and marginalization that are shaped through their current circumstances, throughout their life histories, and about imagined other places with which they identify or differentiate. For some middle-class

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residents, the process of place-making, especially when it involves struggles against difference, prompts questions about previously unexamined norms and new insights into class and racial privilege (Baklouti & Boujelbene, 2019; Putri et al., 2021). The security and stability of a country must be guaranteed so that it is truly experienced by the government and the people, individually, in groups, and as a whole. Security and stability guarantees should be based on law, knowledge and technology (Basrija, 2018). Law-based security and stability guarantees are formulated in the legal system that applies in the country or internationally, such as in the form of laws, government regulations, and other legal systems (Ramadhan, 2020). Knowledge-based security and stability guarantees mean dynamic efforts to build stability and security are based on scientific principles.

Technology-based security and stability guarantees mean that dynamic efforts to build stability and security utilize technology and all its advances (Ibad & Muta'ali, 2021). AA country's technology and security journey can be done through spreading news or the press in the country (Park, 2017). In (Muhazir, 2021), press freedom is one of the essential pillars of democracy. Freedom of the press is also crucial in supporting and strengthening state security, foreign relations, and the law enforcement process to maintain state stability. Several factors, including corruption, can influence a country's political stability. Economic freedom, socio-political stability, law enforcement traditions and national culture are the main variables that determine the level of corruption (Park, 2017). Political stability in several Southeast Asian regions mainly occurs due to power struggles between parties (Rosikin & Muchlas, 2018). This leads to oppression or the level of security of the people, resulting in significant conflicts that affect the economy, law enforcement and the implementation of culture (customs according to religion) there. Strong political influence from one of the parties in the government, such as Defense, Internal Affairs, and Borders, which is usually stated or legalized in the constitution (Rosikin & Muchlas, 2018; Ulima, 2019).

In contrast to various Muslim countries, one of the most important and influential points in the policy-making process is the identity factor, namely Islamic identity or Arab state identity. However, the influence depends on whether the identity is strong or not in the state structure; if the identity is strong, then the ruling regime in the country will always keep its policies in line with this identity. Indirectly, the identity politics that occur in Islamic countries will one day become a threat to the political stability of the country (Hasbi Aswar, 2015). In (Kesuma, 2017), three essential mechanisms become instruments of senior clerics in maintaining political stability in the Saudi kingdom, namely, the use of the concepts of hijrah (migration), takfir (excommunication) and Jihad.

The downward trend in defence spending worldwide indirectly increases regional security escalation (Weingast, 2020). The Asian region itself has several important issues that affect the political stability of the country, which are many emerging, such as socioeconomic disparities, threats to energy availability, secure sea line communication, a possible decline in tourism due to terror threats, and others (Nazeer & Masih, 2017). Asia is also prone to instability, such as the existence of war conflicts between citizens, insecurity, ethnic conflicts, wars that appear temporarily, and terrorism has damaged relations between countries with others (Avdeeva & Kovriga, 2018; Weingast, 2020).

### RESEARCH METHOD

The research method for the study of political stability in Southeast Asia employs a descriptive qualitative approach, primarily using literature studies for data collection. This method involves the systematic review of previous studies and online news sources to support the analysis. The key data for the study is drawn from the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), particularly focusing on the Political Stability Index, which tracks the stability and absence of violence or terrorism in various countries. The WGI data provides a comprehensive measure of political stability by assessing governance indicators, rule of law, and the quality of institutions that influence the stability of a nation (Ramadhan, 2020). To analyze the political stability of countries in Southeast Asia, the study compares Singapore, Myanmar, and Thailand, utilizing the WGI data to illustrate variations in governance and the impact of political stability on economic development and security. The research framework links the data to theoretical models of governance, resilience, and institutional trust. The methodology involves cross-referencing the WGI data with other scholarly theories and frameworks on political stability to evaluate the relationship between governance, economic performance, and security (Muslija et al., 2018)...

The collected data will be processed through a theoretical framework that connects governance quality with political stability (Ramadhan, 2020). This framework is based on the assumption that effective governance, including law enforcement and institutional trust, is essential for fostering stability. The research focuses on the resilience of governments in handling social, economic, and security challenges to maintain political stability. This method allows for a thorough examination of how political stability influences national development, especially in terms of foreign investment, economic growth, and societal welfare. The results of this research will provide insights into how political stability is implemented in Southeast Asia, with a particular emphasis on how countries like Singapore have managed to maintain stability, in contrast to the challenges faced by Myanmar and Thailand. By evaluating the WGI

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data and integrating it with theories on governance and stability, the study offers a nuanced understanding of political stability's role in shaping the socio-economic dynamics of Southeast Asia. Secondary data, particularly from reliable sources like the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), is considered sufficient for this research for several reasons. First, secondary data offers a broad, consistent, and comparative overview of political stability across different countries and regions, which is essential for this study's comparative analysis. The WGI provides a standardized measure of political stability, governance, rule of law, and institutional effectiveness, making it highly relevant for evaluating political stability in Southeast Asia. Additionally, secondary data is readily available and allows for a more efficient and cost-effective research process (Muslija et al., 2018). It also enables the study to access large volumes of data across different time periods, which would be difficult or time-consuming to collect through primary research methods.

However, there are limitations in using secondary data. One limitation is the potential for a lack of context or specific details that could be relevant to understanding the nuances of political stability in each country. Secondary data from sources like the WGI provides general indicators, but it does not always capture local, cultural, or sociopolitical dynamics that could affect political stability in a more detailed or context-specific manner. Additionally, the WGI's methodology may not always align with the researcher's focus, such as specific events or issues that are significant in particular countries but not fully reflected in the indicators. In conclusion, while secondary data from reputable sources like the WGI is valuable for providing a broad and comparative understanding of political stability, it is important to recognize the limitations of this methodology, particularly in terms of the lack of contextual depth, potential for outdated data, and the reliance on subjective perceptions.

### **ANALYSIS**

Political stability is essential in a country's implementation, especially regarding economic growth. Political stability and security are essential to increase investment, foster community competitiveness and improve economic growth and equity. A comparative analysis of political stability implementation in Southeast Asia reveals several interconnected factors. The Political Stability Index serves as a crucial framework for assessing the likelihood of instability across the region, highlighting the need for effective strategies to maintain stability (Rosikin & Muchlas, 2018; Ulima, 2019). Additionally, ASEAN Community Building initiatives emphasize regional cooperation, which is vital for fostering economic growth and social progress, thereby contributing to political stability (Park, 2017). Conflict Resolution Mechanisms are also essential, as they provide strategies to prevent violence and manage disputes, further supporting stability (Avdeeva & Kovriga, 2018; Weingast, 2020).

Moreover, the process of Democratization in Southeast Asia underscores the importance of establishing democratic institutions, which can enhance political stability (Irwandi & Chotim, 2017). Lastly, the relationship between Economic Development and Political Stability indicates that economic growth is often a key driver of stability, suggesting that successful economic strategies are integral to maintaining a stable political environment. However, political stability and security should not be implemented in authoritarian ways. Political stability must be performance-based and based on democracy so that the country becomes healthy. Political stability is not only done for economic growth; according to (Hurwitz, 1973), there are several approaches to political stability. This is further explained below.

### Political Stability as Government Resilience (GE)

The political stability approach as a form of government resilience can be seen from the government management system related to the economy, social, and state security, thus creating political stability. In addition, social resilience occurs when the government forms good management regarding civil services or policies and their impact. According to (Daniel Kaufmann et al., 2011), the resilience of a country is derived from the level of success of its governance. It captures perceptions of the quality of public and civil services and their degree of independence from political pressure, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to these policies. Singapore, Thailand and Myanmar have different levels of governance effectiveness, as can be seen below;

**Table 1. Governance Effectiveness Index** 

Tuble 1. Governance Effectiveness mack									
Country	Year	Number of Source	Governance (-2.5 to +2.5)	Percentile Rank	Standard Error				
Singapore	2010	8	2.24	100.0	0.2				
	2015	8	2.24	100.0	0.2				
	2020	7	2.24	100.0	0.2				

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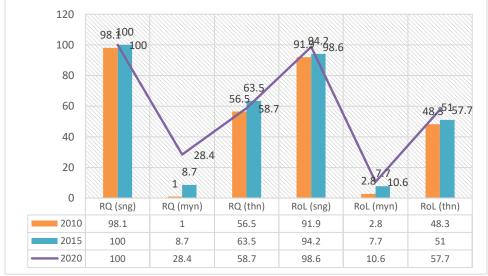
Myanmar	2010	6	-1.62	2.9	0.2
	2015	10	-1.24	10.1	0.2
	2020	8	-1.00	14.4	0.2
Thailand	2010	10	0.19	61.7	0.2
	2015	10	0.35	65.9	0.2
	2020	8	0.30	63.5	0.2

**Source:** (Worldwide Governance Indicators, 2021)

The table above shows that of these three countries, Singapore has had a stable index in the past 10 years and has perfect results (100.0) with a standard error of 0.2. This can be seen from the quality of public services in the country, which is adequate compared to other countries. It impacts the quality of the economy and ADB in the country. The Asian Development Bank recorded gross actor product (GDP) growth of 2.6%, close to the upper limit of government estimates of 1%-3% and 3.7% in 2014 (Maskur, 2017). Singapore's Ministry of Industry and Trade said the strong economic growth was mainly due to a low base in the second quarter of 2020. The government implemented lockdowns at that time, so the economy contracted by 13.3% annually (Lidwina, 2021). With good economic growth, a good level of living comes with good governance from the government. This is different from Myanmar and Thailand, which have fluctuating indices. Especially Myanmar, which has the smallest index for 10 years below the index of 20. This is influenced by the leadership or hostile parties, resulting in frequent coups (Sorongan, 2021; Wandansari, 2015).

# Political Stability is Determined by The Existence of a Legitimate Constitutional Order (RL&RQ)

Contemporary analysis assumes a causal relationship between diminishing regime legitimacy and political instability. However, current findings suggest that a legitimacy crisis will only lead to political rebellion under certain conditions, one of which is the existence of viable protests. This is determined by the quality of law and law enforcement in a country. It is generally assumed that broad sector trust in government is essential for political stability and the government's ability to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations that enable and encourage private development (Useem & Useem, 2019). Captures perceptions of the extent to which agents have trust and abide by the rules of society, particularly the quality of enforcement of contracts, property rights, police, and courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence (Daniel Kaufmann et al., 2011). Singapore, Thailand, and Myanmar have different levels of law enforcement and quality of laws in place, as can be seen below;



**Figure 3.** Rule of Law and Rule Quality Indeks **Source.** (*Worldwide Governance Indicators*, 2021)

The table above shows that of these three countries, Singapore has had a stable index in the past 10 years and has perfect results, reaching 100. This is in contrast to Myanmar, which has a rule quality that is arguably lower than the others. The law in Myanmar is influenced by the military, which often intersects with the opposition to the community. One of them is the amendments to the Criminal Code and the new Criminal Procedure Code, which contains those found waging war against the Union of Myanmar, including those who incite, assist, or conspire with others to overthrow the state established by the Constitution, will be sentenced to high treason (Arbar, 2021).

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Thailand's laws emphasize the combination of courts with the idea of separating judicial power from administrative power; the Ministry of Justice also provides justice to the people. The laws of these three countries are primarily composed of significant influences from the outstanding legal traditions inspired by the practice of governmental blackboards in the world, in addition to a country's customary and common law.

# Stability in Politics is defined as the absence of structural change (VA&CC)

Stability in this discussion is more about the level of political security so as not to cause conflict between the upper elite or officials and the community, which has a significant impact, including economic activity and foreign investment. This can be seen from the freedom of speech by the people and the level of corruption that exists. It captures perceptions of the extent to which citizens of a country can participate in electing their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and freedom of the media and the extent to which public power is used for private gain, including petty and grand corruption, and elite "capture" of state and private interests. Singapore, Thailand and Myanmar have different levels of freedom of expression and corruption, as can be seen below;



**Figure4.** Voice, Accountability, and Control Corruption Indeks **Source.** (*Worldwide Governance Indicators*, 2021)

The implementation of freedom of speech can be seen in two parts: the press and the causes of society. Thailand's freedom of the media adheres to the Libertarian theory of the broadcasting system. The emphasis is on media freedom, which the government always controls. Although freedom is in the media, there are also some regulations, restrictions, and government actions in publishing information, so journalists and the public do not have freedom of opinion and criticism of the government (Tepo.co, 2017). The explanation is in line with Thailand's VA index, which is not classified as high because it has an index below 50, which indicates that there is freedom, but it is still not appropriately implemented. This is in line with Myanmar, which has a history of almost prolonged conflict with the military (Sekarwati, 2018). Myanmar's military junta tried to control the flow of information by suppressing journalists, imposing stricter censorship laws, and blocking internet access. The military junta accused the media of fueling protests and making the government's work more difficult (Winahyu, 2021). According to the Association for the Assistance of Political Prisoners (AAPP), nearly 1,800 people have been arrested in a day, including 34 journalists (Deutsche Welle (DW), 2021).

Unlike Singapore, several policies restrict people from having opinions or gathering peacefully (SBMI, 2020). The Singapore government has passed a controversial bill to eliminate 'fake news' and disinformation, giving local authorities broad powers to monitor online postings, including those in encrypted messaging apps. The law applies to online forums and private messages sent through encrypted messaging platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram (ABC Australia, 2019). This affects the level of corruption; this is associated with less control by the community, so it is more likely that the level of corruption is high ((DW), 2019).

# Political Stability as a Characteristic of Societies (PS, V&T)

The most common and straightforward view of political stability is to equate the concept with the absence of domestic civil conflict and violent behaviour. It also captures the perception of the likelihood that the government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means, including politically motivated violence and terrorism. Singapore, Thailand, and Myanmar have different levels of existing violence and terrorism, as can be seen below;

Year Number of Governance Percentile **Country** Standard Source (-2.5 toRank Error +2.5) 90.52 0.27 **Singapore** 2010 5 1.17 96.19 0.20 2015 8 1.31 2020 6 1.47 97.17 0.24 2010 5 -1.29 10.90 0.24 Myanmar 2015 8 -1.17 10.48 0.20 2020 -1.51 9.91 6 0.23 Thailand 2010 8 -1.44 9.48 0.24 2015 9 -0.9914.76 0.20 2020 -0.6224.53 0.23

Table 2. Violence and Terrorism Index

**Source.** (Worldwide Governance Indicators, 2021)

From the data above, it can be seen that Myanmar has the smallest index compared to the other two countries in terms of the level of violence and terrorism that exists. (Ferida, 2018) said Myanmar is facing the threat of attacks from ISIS supporters recruited by Southeast Asian networks. The issue of military violence against Rohingya Muslims triggered this. The problem of terrorism is pervasive in this country, causing a high level of violence against its people (Alunaza & Toy, 2019; Hidriyah, 2021). Apart from this, violence against ethnic groups also occurs in this country. The Myanmar military committed human rights violations in the form of rape and murder, prompting the exodus of 34,000 Rohingya to Bangladesh (Alunaza & Toy, 2019). Regional conflicts are inevitable in this region, such as the Rakhine region. The conflict in Rakhine is considered a risk for ISIS sympathizers to come to Myanmar, given that the terrorist group's shadow network stretches from the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia with direct links to the Middle East. Many people from those three countries have travelled to the Middle East to join IS. In 2016, IS claimed to have masterminded several attacks or been involved with foiled plots in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines (Ferida, 2018).

Many terrorism cases in Thailand are related to religious sentiment issues, so the government seeks to make various preventive and repressive efforts, including through attacks (Sumarwoto et al., 2020). The case of handling terrorism in Thailand has caused a lot of controversy among the local community. According to Human Rights Watch, a leading international NGO (Non-Governmental Organization), revealed that Prime Minister Thaksin Sinawatra's government has contradicted human rights values. There are even signals that some of Thaksin's policies have caused friction between Thai Buddhists and Muslims (Yunu & Santosa, 2021). In the case of Singapore's terrorism development from 2005 to 2013, during the leadership of Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, he managed to find some raw materials for making TNT (Tri Nitrotuluen) bombs, which were suspected to be used to blow up several vital installations in Singapore (Faure Walker, 2021). The country has declared war on terrorism by strengthening the defence pattern system, including through legislative support. Still, some of them have legislative rules that have caused controversy, including the ban on the wearing of headscarves by Muslim women due to the impact of excessive fear (paranoid) of the extreme hardline community (Putri et al., 2021).

#### **CONCLUSION**

Stability is a system condition whose components tend towards or return to an established relationship. Stability is the absence of fundamental or chaotic change within a political system or within agreed or predetermined

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boundaries. Development requires security and stability. Development must also include security and stability, and the development of security and stability is carried out together with the development of other fields. The approach to political stability as a form of government resilience can be seen from the government management system related to the economy, social, and state security to create political stability. Singapore's government tends to have good governance, which affects the economic level and stability of the country itself, in contrast to Thailand and Myanmar, which have fluctuating indices. Especially Myanmar, which has the smallest index for 10 years below the index of 20. This is influenced by the leadership or hostile parties, resulting in frequent coups.

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