

'People power' threat slammed

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THE JAKARTA POST/JAKARTA



Election organizers and observers have roundly criticized statements made by Prabowo Subianto campaign officials suggesting that the mechanisms to address election fraud are insufficient and that they will resort to international organizations and even "people power" to resolve any disputes.

Elections Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) member Fritz Edward Siregar said he saw no reason for mistrust of existing electoral institutions, adding that Bawaslu itself had already processed hundreds of violations related to the 2019 general election, ranging from administrative infractions to criminal acts.

"This is proof that we are supervising the elections," he told *The Jakarta Post* on Wednesday.

He added that there was very little room for election fraud given the presence of officials, observers, and witnesses from every party and presidential campaign in every polling station.

"Where will the cheating occur? This is one of the most transparent elections in the world," he said. "People power is something that was used to fight against tyranny, but now we already have mechanisms enshrined in our laws."

National Mandate Party (PAN) cofounder and patron Amien Rais, who serves as the advisor to the Prabowo campaign, recently claimed that his camp would no longer use the existing mechanisms to settle election disputes.

Amien, who was at the forefront of the Reform movement that led to former president Soeharto's fall from power in 1998, said he would lead massive protests if he found systematic election fraud.

"The DPT [final voters list] is not effective because there are a lot of ghost voters. If we find any evidence of election fraud after voting day, I will gather a massive number of people at Monas [the National Monument], [I will] use people power," Amien said on Monday.

He said that he no longer trusted the Constitutional Court to settle election disputes. "Therefore, we have to solve them on our own," he said.

Prabowo-Sandiaga Uno campaign team official Hashim Djohadikusumo, who is also Prabowo's younger brother, said the team would file a report on any election fraud to the United Nations and Interpol, the world's largest international police organization.

The General Elections Commission (KPU) was quick to condemn the statements.

"I want to reiterate that election disputes should no longer be taken to the streets because our laws have already created the space to address them," KPU chairman Arief Budiman said on Tuesday.

"If anyone objects to the election results, they can file a petition to the Constitutional Court to settle the issue. Or if they find

Prabowo campaign to report election fraud to international bodies

Amien calls for 'people power' to address disputed elections

KPU, Bawaslu give assurances on election integrity

something irregular about the election process, they can report it to Bawaslu," he added.

Jentera School of Law constitutional law expert Bivitri Susanti described Amien and Hashim's statements as "absurd" and said that existing processes and institutions were strong enough to ensure free and fair elections.

"For example, the Constitutional Court already has experience in handling election disputes from the 2014 presidential election and hundreds of disputes from regional elections in 2013," she told the *Post*. "All parties have been satisfied with the rulings."

She added that the court had also issued eight regulations on how to handle disputes regarding the upcoming elections and had also prepared the necessary technical resources, such as for teleconferencing.

"Our legal institutions are already well-prepared to handle election disputes."

Ferry Kurnia Rizkiyansyah, a former KPU commissioner and cofounder of election watchdog Netgrit, echoed Bivitri's comments, saying that all parties involved in the election should focus on safeguarding the process to ensure "election results that are trusted and legitimate". "I don't think that methods such as taking to the streets are appropriate," he said.

Association for Elections and Democracy (Perludem) executive director Titi Anggraini said that Indonesia was a constitutional democracy and that the Constitution set out procedures on how to conduct elections and settle disputes.

"If anyone has suspicions about the independence of institutions such as the Constitutional Court they should prove it to the public," she said. "Otherwise such baseless accusations only amount to slander and could be seen as attempts to delegitimize the election."

Jokowi campaign team deputy chairman and NasDem Party secretary-general Johnny G. Plate called on all election stakeholders, particularly political parties, to help to maintain the legitimacy of election institutions and results.

"Questioning the legitimacy of the elections through provocative methods is antidemocratic and damaging to democracy," he said.

Prabowo campaign team official Ahmad Riza Patria, meanwhile, defended Amien's comments as "understandable".

"A number of election frauds have been found and reported. And if they can be proven, then we should not remain silent," he said. "Amien just wanted to warn and advise us all that we should be careful and watch over the election process."

POLITICAL PARTY

Gerindra: Increasingly popular opposition party

The Jakarta Post
JAKARTA

The Gerindra Party became the leading opposition party after the 2014 general election. The April 17 elections will be the third time the nationalist party has taken part in national elections.

Cofounded in 2008 by former commander of the Army's Special Forces (Kopassus) Prabowo Subianto along with his younger brother, businessman Hashim Djojohadikusumo, politician Fadli Zon and former deputy spy chief Muchdi Purwopranjono, the Pancasila-based political party ran for elections for the first time in 2009.

Gerindra is closely associated with Prabowo in the same way that the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) is with former president Megawati Soekarnoputri and the Democratic Party is with former president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.


Prabowo, who is challenging President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo in the presidential election for the second time, is linked to the New Order regime. He is the former husband of Siti Hediati Hariyadi, the daughter of Soeharto, the country's second president and founder of the Golkar Party.

On its website, Gerindra says it aims to create prosperity, social justice and a nation based on nationalistic and religious values according to Pancasila and the Constitution, and which is politically, culturally and economically independent.

In 2009, Prabowo ran for vice president as running mate of then presidential candidate Megawati. The pair lost to the incumbent, Yudhoyono. In 2012, Gerindra and the PDI-P again collaborated to endorse Jokowi, then mayor of Surakarta, for the post of Jakarta governor. Jokowi won against his rival, Fauzi Bowo, who was backed by major parties, including Golkar and the Democrats.

In 2014, Gerindra parted ways with the PDI-P by nominating Prabowo to challenge the PDI-P's Jokowi in the presidential election. Prabowo lost to Jokowi by a wide margin even though the latter was then a novice in national politics.

In 2017, Prabowo picked former Jokowi minister, Anies Baswedan, to contest the Jakarta gubernatorial election. Anies won the election, beating the incumbent, Basuki "Ahok" Tjahaja



The Gerindra Party

Established Feb. 6, 2008

Central board
 Chairman : Prabowo Subianto
 Secretary-general : Ahmad Muzani
 Trasurer : Thomas M. Djwandono

Number of votes	
2009	4.6 million (4.5 percent)
2014	14.8 million (11.8 percent)

Purnama, Jokowi's former deputy and a loyal ally. Anies' victory boosted the morale of the Prabowo-led opposition camp.

Despite Prabowo's election defeat in 2014, the party has benefited from Prabowo's rising popularity, particularly among those opposed to the incumbent. The former general has become the face of the opposition.

Analysts have said that Gerindra might have enjoyed what is called a coat-tail effect in which a popular political leader — in this case, Prabowo — attracts votes to political candidates within his own party.

Gerindra's popularity has only grown since its establishment. In 2009, it gained 4.5 percent of the vote. This rose to 11.8 percent in 2014. A number of political surveys have predicted that it will get around 13 to 14 percent of the vote, second only to the PDI-P, which is forecast to get more than 20 percent.

Gerindra currently has 73 seats at the House of Representatives.

Apart from donations, the party's 2014 campaign was funded by Hashim, who controls the Nusantara Group business empire, which has a total of 27 companies engaged in the plantation, forestry, mining and energy sectors. This has allowed Gerindra to run a well-designed public relations campaign to boost its profile.

Hashim and Prabowo have recently reiterated their loyalty to Pancasila and dismissed rumors that they support Islamic groups campaigning for the establishment of a transnational Islamic caliphate.

Gerindra politicians, including Prabowo, were recently involved in an Islamist rally organized by the 212 movement that was set up to push for the prosecution of Ahok for blasphemy in 2016. (das)

Is Indonesia prepared to defend its palm oil sector?

Stefanno Reinard Sulaiman

THE JAKARTA POST/JAKARTA

The government has shown its commitment to defending the palm oil sector from a negative campaign waged by the European Union (EU), which has been resilient in its stance against the commodity in recent years. However, it has neglected several internal issues that may contribute to the EU's anti-palm oil policy.

The absence of accurate data on oil palm plantations and low engagement with political EU figures may hamper the government's efforts, according to Indonesia's palm oil stakeholders.

Indonesian Oil Palm Estate Fund (BPDP-KS) president director Dono Boestami revealed recently that the organization had only three sets of data on the palm oil sector's total land use in Indonesia, all of which come from state agencies.

"How can we get a valid figure of our palm oil total production when we still don't know the exact total area of our plantations? [...] It's unsurprising if we get criticized for our lack of valid data," he said at a palm oil seminar in Jakarta.

The three agencies that were able to provide palm oil data are the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), Statistic Indonesia (BPS) and the Agriculture Ministry, who recorded 20 million hectares, 12-30 million ha and 14 million ha in oil palm plantations, respectively.

Deforestation is one of the issues that the government has been trying to tackle as environmental groups and the EU have used it to criticize Indonesia's palm oil products.

Lack of accurate data on deforestation hamper government efforts to defend palm oil

EU has used deforestation issue in campaign against Indonesia's palm oil products

Dono said the discrepancy of data provided by the state agencies was due to their different definitions of plantation areas. The KPK, for example, based its figure on oil palm permits while other methods exist using satellite imagery.

"When we have valid data [on oil palm plantations], nobody could challenge it. Once the data is valid, we could know what kind of policy [on controlling expansion] to issue," he said.

He added that the BPDP-KS recently collaborated with the BPS to "fix" the data on national palm oil production, which he expected could be endorsed by the government as the only valid data on production once it is completed.

It has been several years for palm oil, one of Indonesia's most valuable commodities, to face a series of "negative campaigns" from the EU over sustainability issues. Indonesia believes the campaign is simply an attempt by the EU to protect its trade deficit.

According to European Commission data, Indonesian exports to the EU stood at US\$17.1 billion in 2018, while imports were at \$14.1 billion. The trade surplus with the EU has occurred for at least the past four years.

Knowing the importance of Indonesia's export value to EU, it

is necessary for the government to retaliate against the EU's anti-palm oil stance, according to Peter F. Gontha, a former ambassador and special staff at the Foreign Ministry.

However, Indonesia has been lacking diplomatic effort, especially in communicating with EU parliament members about the facts of Indonesia's palm oil sector.

"For example, we don't have an office [for palm oil issues in Europe] like Malaysia does in Brussels [the Malaysia Palm Oil Council regional office]. We have to engage them from the top down, playing golf and drinking wine with them. We don't do that," he said.

Peter further said the country should have pushed the Business Competition Supervisory Commission (KPPU) to investigate British-Dutch consumer goods manufacturer PT Unilever Indonesia, which was accused of still using Indonesian palm oil.

"The KPPU should investigate Unilever. Its country of origin says no to palm oil, but the company has been using [Indonesia's palm oil]. That is a double standard," he said, adding the government could also ask for Europe's antimonopoly body to also investigate the case.

The statement came after the European Parliament kicked off a session to deliberate the EU Renewable Energy Directive (RED) II, submitted by the European Commission on March 13.

If RED II is approved, the EU, which is Indonesia's second-biggest palm oil customer, will categorize palm oil as an unsustainable product and phase out its use in biofuels by 2030.

As a response, Indonesia has said it would take firm actions against the EU by, for example, challenging the EU's anti-palm oil policy with the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Indonesia has also threatened to withdraw its commitment on climate change, Coordinating Maritime Affairs Minister Luhut Pandjaitan said recently.

One of the recent agreements on climate change that Indonesia signed was the 2015 Paris Agreement with other 195 nations, a deal to cap global warming under 2 degrees Celsius.

"If we're talking about the environmental issues [in the palm oil sector], the United States was able to exit the climate change [deal in Paris] and Brazil could potentially do so as well. So, we could consider withdrawing from the deal also. Why not?" the retired army general said.

Indonesia, which owns 54 percent of the crude palm oil (CPO) market share, is the world's largest CPO-producing country with an average production of 40 million tons, while Malaysia is the second.

Responding to the issue, EU Ambassador for Indonesia and Brunei Vincent Guérend said recently that the EU had no problems with Indonesia's plan to challenge its policy at the WTO, adding it was the right way to settle a dispute.

"We believe the trade dispute could be settled in a right way in WTO. [...] We also deny we are discriminating palm oil given the fact our import duty on Indonesian palm oil to the EU is only 5 percent, whilst India's duty reached 40 percent," he said as quoted by *kontan.co.id*.

Military violating human rights in Nduga: Report

Ivany Atina Arbi

THE JAKARTA POST/JAKARTA

Military operations conducted by the Indonesian Military (TNI) in Nduga regency, Papua, in the past few months have led to various human rights violations, a recent investigation initiated by the Nduga administration has alleged, allegations that the TNI has denied.

According to the investigation report, TNI personnel have allegedly destroyed and burned down residents' houses — forcing thousands of people to leave their homes for safety. The personnel are in Nduga in search of the West Papua Liberation Army (TPNPB) fighters who killed 19 workers of state-owned construction firm PT Istaka Karya in December.

Thousands of the fleeing residents currently live in neighboring districts without access to sufficient food, education or health services. Around 4,238 residents have fled to Kagayem district, 5,021 people to Yal district, 5,056 to Jigi district and 4,001 to Inikgal

TNI personnel allegedly destroying homes in Papua

Thousands of residents have fled to neighboring districts

TNI denies allegations

district.

Hundreds of others have decided to take refuge in the forests, spending nights “between life and death”, the report claims.

“At least nine mothers have given birth in the forests without proper medical treatment, risking their lives,” it says.

TNI personnel have also reportedly shut down and destroyed at least 34 churches during their operations in the conflict-ridden regency. Sion GKI Mapenduma church has even been used by the TNI as a headquarters.

Residents allege the TNI has killed at least 25 people, including two students, who were not connected to separatist rebels.

“Nduga residents now live in

fear and trauma. They have lost everything during the military operations,” said an investigator, Theo Hese gem. He urged the government to withdraw the TNI from Nduga and instead adopt a soft approach through dialogue.

Similar opinions were expressed by local pastors Erson Wenda and Esmond Walilo, and Catholic priest John Jonga. The three clergymen expressed hopes that residents could go back to their villages and rebuild their homes and other public facilities soon.

“We have seen numerous military operations and human rights violations since 1969, and it seems that we are far from the finish line,” John said, adding that the key to stopping the clashes was the government’s willingness to arrange a sincere dialogue with the Free Papua Movement.

“Since the leadership of former president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, we have been fed with false promises of a peaceful dialogue, but this never comes true,” Erson said.

They were addressing a press

conference facilitated by Amnesty International Indonesia in Jakarta recently.

Usman Hamid, director of Amnesty International Indonesia, urged the government to immediately address the problem in Nduga, especially survivors struggling in evacuation sites.

“The government must take necessary action immediately,” he insisted, adding that the government should also ensure punishment of any military personnel proven to be involved in human rights violations in the region.

Papua military spokesman Col. Muhammad Aidi told *The Jakarta Post* that the report alleging that military personnel had destroyed houses and churches was a “hoax”.

“We in the TNI are committed to the Geneva Convention [against torture, other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment]. So, it is inconceivable that we would destroy a place of worship,” Aidi said, adding that the investigation was carried out by groups who sided with the Free Papua Movement.

Bayer Indonesia wants to export more this year

Rachmadea Aisyah

THE JAKARTA POST/DEPOK, WEST JAVA

The Germany-based Bayer pharmaceutical company is optimistic it would be able to boost its exports this year given the achievements it has recorded in the last few years.

Bayer Indonesia president director Angel-Michael Evangelista said the company aimed to boost its monthly exports to 65 containers on average, a 30 percent increase from the current 50 containers per month.

The health products are manufactured at Bayer's Cimanggis plant in Depok, West Java, the company's only health product factory in the Asia-Pacific re-

gion and one of its 12 production plants worldwide.

"Our international-standard plant in Cimanggis produces 80 percent of our [health product] exports to more than 32 countries worldwide," Evangelista said at a press conference recently.

Aside from the Cimanggis plant, Bayer operates two agrochemical plants in Tangerang, Banten, and Surabaya, East Java. Both plants also export their products to several countries, he said.

Bayer recently celebrated the shipment of its 3,000th export container of health products to Europe. That rounds up the Rp 3.9 trillion (US\$273.9 million) in export revenues the company had earned in the past four years.

Evangelista said products from Bayer's Cimanggis plant had managed to penetrate markets with strict pharmaceutical standards, such as Sweden, Australia and New Zealand.

Its exports also grew exponentially from the past decade when it exported to fewer than 10 countries, which was made possible through a Rp 1.6 trillion investment the company had disbursed between 2017 and 2019, he said.

However, Bayer is not planning to invest more in the near future. "Where we want to focus right now is to celebrate the several years' [worth of] investments we have made in Indonesia that allows us to export to these 32 companies," Evangelista said.

Senior Bayer representative at the ASEAN region, Ernst Coppens, said Bayer's export and investment achievements were testaments to the company's steadfast commitment to Indonesia, a country whose president has said that exports and investments are keys to economic growth.

"Indonesia is the largest economy in the region and that makes it very attractive to us to invest in," Coppens said during the export launch. "We believe our investment can affirm Indonesia as a leading pharmaceutical producing country in the world."

He acknowledged the local pharmaceutical industry still relied heavily on imported materials because of a lack of upstream and

intermediary industries that could provide domestic ingredients.

According to the Industry Ministry, Indonesia's trade balance involving pharmaceuticals showed a deficit of \$1.13 billion in 2018. Its imports of drug ingredients were worth \$4 billion, whereas imports of finished products were worth \$800 million.

"It is not [the regulations or incentives] in Indonesia that determine our investments but rather the markets in Indonesia and surrounding countries," Coppens said. "Our growth and investments will follow the demands and the market."

Industry Minister Airlangga Hartarto said the government sought to encourage the upstream

sector to develop, including those much needed in the pharmaceutical sector, through a super deductible tax policy for up to 200 percent for vocational programs and up to 300 percent for research and innovation development.

The pharmaceutical sector, he said, is one of the prime movers of Indonesia's manufacturing, which contributed 2.78 percent to gross domestic product and had grown by 4.46 percent last year.

"We have 217 million subscribers on our National Health Insurance [JKN] and this is a great opportunity for pharmaceutical companies to develop their industries in addition to boosting their production for export purposes," Airlangga said.