

May 3, 201  
J. Post

# RI to focus on peacekeeping as UN Security Council chair

Dian Septiari and Agnes Anya  
THE JAKARTA POST/JAKARTA

Indonesia is set to take advantage of its one-month-long presidency of the United Nations Security Council this month to inch closer to achieving its target of sending 4,000 peacekeepers this year, while also highlighting its non-financial contributions to peacekeeping missions.

After being elected as a non-permanent member last year, Indonesia assumed its first rotating presidency on Wednesday. Throughout May, Indonesia is to lead meetings and sessions, as well as facilitate reports and information exchanges on behalf of the Security Council.

Council member states hold the rotating position following the English alphabetical order of their names.

Foreign Ministry Director General for Multilateral Cooperation Febrian A. Ruddyard said Indonesia would now have better access to information about UN peacekeeping missions.

"With our presidency, at least we have access to the latest information about new missions or vacancies for UN peacekeeping missions," Febrian told reporters in a briefing on Thursday.

In March, Indonesia was the eighth-largest contributor to UN peacekeeping missions, out of 124 sending countries, with 3,080 Indonesian personnel currently deployed on eight UN peacekeeping missions the world, according to recent UN figures.

Indonesia faces a number of challenges, however, in achieving its deployment target of 4,000 personnel, particularly the structural trend within the UN to downsize the missions, including those in which Indonesian personnel are already deployed, Febrian said.

"This does not mean we are not trusted to send more personnel, but there are efforts to reduce the contingent size because of budgetary issues [...] but we are still aiming to achieve our target," he said.

Indonesia plans to hold an open debate about "investing in peace" next Tuesday to highlight the contribution countries have made in sending capable personnel to various peacekeeping operations.

"When we talk about contributions, we should not just consider

Throughout May, Indonesia to lead meetings and sessions

In March, Indonesia eighth-largest contributor to UN peacekeeping missions

the number and the operational funding reimbursed by the UN. We should also see that getting 3,080 qualified people is not easy. [...] It is not only about statistics, there is a large investment behind it," he said.

Developing countries make up the largest contributors to the UN peacekeeping missions, with Ethiopia, Bangladesh and Rwanda in the top three, with contributions of 7,519, 6,614 and 6,546, respectively.

Advanced economies, while being large donors toward peacekeeping financing, rarely send personnel. China, for instance, ranks 11<sup>th</sup> with a contribution of 2,513 personnel, while the United States ranks 78<sup>th</sup> with only 40 personnel.

In Indonesia, personnel interested in joining peacekeeping missions must undergo a series of training programs at the Indonesian Military's (TNI) Peacekeeping Mission Center in Sentul, West Java, for more than one year to meet UN requirements.

"We want to remind donor countries not to see [the peacekeeping missions] in terms of budget use [during operations] only, but really from the beginning when we train people who have never been on a mission to be ready to work according to UN standards — this all costs money too," Foreign Ministry director for international security and disarmament Grata Endah Werdaningtyas said.

She said the capacity-building responsibility should no longer be dependent on each sending country but rather shared together.

"There must be collaboration between the UN and the UN Security Council on how other countries also provide assistance in order to increase this effort," she said.

One form of the possible cooperation was a triangular partnership among a sending country, the UN and a donor country on how to prepare potential personnel, she said.

# Businesses funded Jokowi campaign

Ghina Ghaliya

THE JAKARTA POST/JAKARTA

Incumbent presidential ticket Joko "Jokowi" Widodo-Ma'ruf Amin made no contribution to their election campaign as they received a massive flow of public funding, mainly from the business community.

In a final report submitted to the General Elections Commission (KPU) on Thursday, the campaign recorded that it had collected a total of Rp 606 billion (US\$42.5 million) in campaign funding, 45 percent of which came from community groups and individuals, mostly businesspeople.

The campaign said that on top of that 40 companies donated a total of Rp 254 billion to fund the incumbent's reelection bid.

Jokowi-Ma'ruf campaign treasurer Wahyu Sakti Trenggono said Jokowi and Ma'ruf did not have to spend their own money because of the large volume of public donations.

"The donors are all mainly businesspeople [...] They were very satisfied with Jokowi's policy [in the past four years], and they are looking forward to Jokowi continuing [in office]," Wahyu said.

He said the donors were in a variety of business sectors, such as property, fisheries and food and beverages, and from many different

Businessmen, firms provided most of Jokowi's campaign funding

Prabowo-Sandiaga paid for most of their campaign

provinces, although mainly they were from Jakarta and East Java.

"We held fundraising events in Jakarta and Surabaya. One donor paid Rp 2 billion for a painting at auction, while the actual price was only Rp 500 million. That's how we worked," he said.

Wahyu said Jokowi's family, which has run the President's furniture business since he took up his administrative posts, also contributed to the team through their company, PT Rakabu Sejahtera, but the amount was not significant.






The report from challenger ticket Prabowo Subianto-Sandiaga Uno shows a different type of campaign financing.

As the campaign received fewer public donations, Prabowo and Sandiaga shouldered the major part of the funding themselves.

The Prabowo-Sandiaga team reported that it had collected Rp 213.2 billion for the campaign, 91 percent of which came from Prabowo and Sandiaga themselves with a total of Rp 192.6 billion.

Prabowo-Sandiaga campaign treasurer Thomas Djiwando-

## Top-five political parties with largest spending (in billion rupiah)

	PDI-P	345
	Golkar Party	307
	Democratic Party	190
	PKS	150
	Gerindra Party	135

Source: KPU

no said nearly 60 percent of the funding came from Sandiaga as the team did not get as much funding from the business community as Jokowi-Ma'ruf.

"Sandiaga spent more [than Prabowo]. Previously the composition was 80:20, but in the end it almost balanced because Prabowo increased his contribution," Thomas said.

The team recorded Rp 9.2 billion in revenue from individual donors, Rp 1 billion from community groups and Rp. 2.9 billion from private companies. "Maybe there were one or two individual business donors but it didn't mean much to revenue. We included them in our revenue from community groups," Thomas said.

The former Jakarta deputy governor amassed the funding for the ticket's campaign by selling his

shares in PT Saratoga Investama Sedaya (Saratoga), an investment firm that controls major publicly listed companies in mining — coal miner PT Adaro Energy and gold and copper miner PT Merdeka Copper Gold, as well as a coal-fired power plant in Gorontalo, and the Awal Bros hospital chain.

Jokowi and Prabowo, who also ran against each other in the 2014 presidential race, spent more this year than five years ago.

Back in 2014, Jokowi who ran with Golkar Party politician Jusuf Kalla spent Rp 312.4 billion, about a half of his spending this year.

Prabowo, who was running with National Mandate Party (PAN) politician Hatta Rajasa spent Rp 166.6 billion, also less than what he spent this year.

Two of Jokowi's supporting parties — the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) and the Golkar Party — collected the largest campaign funding among all the political parties in the 2019 general election, with total spending of Rp 345 billion and Rp 307 billion, respectively.

Prabowo's supporting parties—the Democratic Party, the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) and Gerindra Party, were the third, fourth and fifth biggest-spending parties, with a total campaign funding reported of Rp 190 billion Rp 150 billion and Rp 135 billion respectively.

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POST-ELECTION

# President mends ties with SBY's son

Karina M. Tehusijarana and Marguerite Afra Sapiie

THE JAKARTA POST/JAKARTA

Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono, the son of Democratic Party chairman and former president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), met with incumbent President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo at the Presidential Palace in Central Jakarta on Thursday, in another move toward reconciliation following the hard-fought general election.

Agus, who is also head of the Democratic Party's joint election command (Kogasma) that supported the incumbent's challenger Prabowo Subianto, said he had been invited by the President through State Secretary Pratikno.

The former soldier, who is said to have ambitions for the presidency himself, arrived at the palace in a car with license plate number B 2024 AHY, in an apparent reference to the next presidential election.

"I conveyed respectful greetings from Pak SBY and [SBY's wife] Ibu Ani and of course I am also very glad and feel very honored as a citizen to have the opportunity to be invited by the President to meet face-to-face amid his busy schedule," Agus told reporters after the meeting.

He claims that the meeting was to strengthen *silaturahmi* (the bonds of friendship) and had no particular political significance.

"This type of communication is also important. Not all communication has to be about pragmatic politics. There are also other big things [to discuss]," he said. "We have to always be passionate about being a big part of creating a better Indonesia in the future."

Agus acknowledged, however, that he and Jokowi had discussed the post-election situation and were in agreement that all parties should wait for the General Elections Commission's (KPU) announcement of the official results before taking any action.

"We must respect [the process] and show appreciation for it by waiting patiently," he said. "Hopefully at the end [of the process] on May 22, we can accept whatever result the KPU announces."

Agus' remarks are in sharp contrast to the words and actions of Prabowo, the presidential candidate and Gerindra Party chairman who the Democrats backed

in the 2019 race.

Since polls closed on April 17, Prabowo has declared victory multiple times, despite quick counts from established pollsters projecting that Jokowi had won the election with 54 to 55 percent of the vote.

As of Thursday evening, the KPU's website real count showed similar results, with Jokowi winning 55.9 percent of the vote against Prabowo's 44.1 percent, with data from 62.4 percent of polling stations received.

The Prabowo camp has alleged that its opponents conducted massive election fraud and a gathering of pro-Prabowo clerics in Bogor, West Java, recommended on Wednesday that the Prabowo campaign team call for Jokowi's disqualification from the election process.

Despite the apparent difference in views, Democratic Party executives remained adamant that the party was still part of Prabowo's coalition. "Up until today the Democratic Party is still part of the [Prabowo] coalition. It would not be polite for the Democrats to leave behind a friend when we are still fighting. We will finish this," said party secretary-general Hinca Panjaitan.

Outspoken Dem politician Andi Arief also claimed that Agus was only meeting Jokowi in his capacity as a private citizen.

"There has been no communication between Pak Jokowi and SBY since Jokowi visited Ibu Ani in Singapore two months ago," Andi posted on his Twitter account.

Jokowi did not make an appearance in front of reporters following the meeting, but later posted a photo of the encounter on his social media accounts.

"Welcoming the arrival of a young figure and politician, Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono, at the Presidential Palace this afternoon," the caption read. "The meeting between me and [Agus] is a good form of *silaturahmi*, under the spirit of nationalism to always advance Indonesia together."

Presidential chief of staff Moeldoko said before the meeting that the President was always looking to "make as many friends as possible".

"A bigger coalition is a stronger one. Politics are very dynamic. In five minutes things can change very quickly, it's entirely possible for those who are over there to come over here," he said.

DEFENSE

## All is well with acquisition of Russian war machines

Novan Iman Santosa

THE JAKARTA POST/JAKARTA

The recent purchase of Russian amphibious armored vehicles has met all regulations on the purchase of foreign weapon systems, including transfer of technology.

The acquisition of BMP-3F infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs) and BT-3F armored personnel carriers (APCs) has met all the required procedures as stipulated in Law No. 16/2012 on the defense industry, defense observer Curie Maharani told *The Jakarta Post* on Wednesday.

The law requires all defense acquisitions from foreign suppliers to include countertrade, local content and offset (IDKLO) deals.

"The IDKLO deals include design and engineering, education and training, transfer of technology, maintenance and joint development," Curie said.

She added the recipients of such deals would include both state-owned defense companies such as land system manufacturer PT Pindad and electronics maker PT LEN as well as private ones.

The Defense Ministry's Defense Facilities Agency signed on April 22 a contract with Russian export agency Rosoboronexport for the purchase of 22 BMP-3F IFVs worth US\$108 million for the Navy's Marine Corps, the ministry said in a release.

The Marine Corps already operates BMP-3F vehicles and the April purchase was the third contract.

The April contract also included the acquisition of 21 BT-3F APCs worth \$67.2 million.

In a separate release, Rosoboron said Indonesia was the launch customer for the BT-3F, which shares the same platform as the BMP-3F, a venerable amphibious war machine using tracked wheels for amphibious landing operations.

Curie said Pindad already had the capabilities in amphibious and tracked wheels technology although it could not be compared to Russia's long experience in the technology. "What we must ensure is that in any defense acqui-

sition from foreign suppliers, we must involve local companies in both the production and maintenance stages."

A similar view was shared by Adik Aviantara, a former president director of Pindad, who said that some of the production process had to be done in Indonesia.

"The most important thing is there should be a political will from the leadership to use local defense products as much as possible," he told the *Post*.

Curie said the acquisition of local defense products, including from Pindad, was seeing an increasing trend.

In 2014, only 28.1 percent of all defense equipment purchases were for local products, and it almost doubled to 49.9 percent in 2018.

The reason for acquiring Russian armored vehicles was because the Marine Corps had two stringent criteria in purchasing their amphibious war machines.

"The first criteria is that the armored vehicle has to be an outstanding swimmer," Sena Maulana, who was involved in designing Pindad's own APC the Anoa, said.

"I have to admit that the BMP-3F is the top swimmer, comparable only to the US-made LVT-7."

The second requirement, Sena said, was that the armored vehicle had to be able to navigate the landing area: sandy beaches.

"Only vehicles with tracked wheels can navigate sandy terrain extremely well," he said. "Pindad already has the capabilities on amphibious vehicles and tracked wheels. We would be very happy if given the chance to work on the Marine Corps' armored vehicles."

Rostec CEO Sergy Chemezov said the state-owned holding conglomerate saw huge potential to develop cooperation with Indonesia.

"Rostec is ready to build industrial partnerships of the highest profile," Chemezov said in Rosoboronexport's release.

Rostec specializes in defense and high-technology products, ranging from armored vehicles, helicopters, trucks and jet fighters to pharmaceuticals and biotechnology.

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## Jokowi officiates Gondang Dam

**SURAKARTA:** President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo officiated Gondang Dam in Gempolan village, Kerjo district, Karanganyar regency, Central Java, on Thursday. The dam can contain 9.15 million cubic meters to water a total of 4,680 hectares of rice fields in Karanganyar and Sragen regencies.

The President and First Lady Iriana arrived at the site at 10 a.m., accompanied by Public Works and Housing Minister Basuki Hadimuljono, Central Java Deputy Governor Taj Yasin Maimoen, Karanganyar Regent Juliyatmono and Sragen Regent Kusdinar Untung Yuni Sukowati.

"The construction of Gondang Dam has finished. It will water 4,680 hectares of rice fields in Karanganyar and Sragen. The dam is not only for irrigation as it will also be a tourist attraction and this will be good for the economy in both regencies," said Jokowi on the dam, the construction of which began in 2014.

The Semarang Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency (BMKG) reported that during the year 2018, Karanganyar and Sragen were among 19 regencies that experienced extreme drought. The other regencies were Banyumas, Brebes, Demak, Grobogan, Jepara, Kebumen, Kendal, Klaten, Pematang, Kudus, Pematang, Pati, Rembang, Sukoharjo, Tegal, Temanggung, Wonosobo and Wonogiri. — JP

# Relocating capital

## no real help for Jakarta: Experts

**A. Muh. Ibnu Aqil  
and Dwi Atmanta**

THE JAKARTA POST/JAKARTA

As old proverb says: "When there is sugar, there are bound to be ants." Jakarta's sweetness would still engulf the city with urban woes even after its special status of being capital was taken away, according to experts.

Concerns about Jakarta were raised following an announcement made by President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo that he would press ahead with an old plan to relocate the seat of political power away from the city. He made the decision earlier this week because Jakarta's status as the center of government and public services, as well as business activities, made the old port city suffer the massive woes its resi-

dents know too well, such as traffic congestion, floods and patchwork urban development.

Under the relocation plan, which is still being formulated by the government, Jakarta would serve as a business, trade and financial hub while the new capital would host the central government's administrative, legislative and judicial functions.

However, taking away the city's capital status would not automatically wipe out its growing urban woes, as Jakarta would still be what Jakarta is today, Trisakti University urbanist Nirwono Joga said.

"Jakarta's burden lies with the economic activities. This is a center of business and culture. People will still flock to Jakarta for economic opportunities," Nirwono said.

To go ahead with the plan, he

suggested the government should closely study other countries that have moved their capital cities such as the United States, Australia and Malaysia.

"Those cities are only alive during work hours, while every weekend they are deserted because they only live off the government activities," Nirwono said.

Rita Padawangi, an urban expert from the Singapore University of Social Sciences, said that it was erroneous to assume that moving the capital out of Jakarta would fix its mounting problems. Instead, the government could risk replicating those problems in a new place.

She said that if the government did not want everything to center around Jakarta, then the solution was to distribute the economy and services outside of Jakarta

without relocating the capital.

"Relocating the center of administration does not automatically relocate the center of the economy or evenly distribute development," she said.

In response to the relocation plan, Jakarta Governor Anies Baswedan also said that taking the capital status away from Jakarta would not ease the burgeoning traffic congestion as the biggest contributors were household and private sector activities and not administrative activities.

He said that while there were 17 million registered private vehicles in Jakarta, only 141,000 were registered as government vehicles. Moreover, civil servants in the city accounted for about 9 percent of Jakarta's population of 10 million.

"Even if the central govern-

ment administration is moved, traffic challenges would remain as business activities would remain in Jakarta," Anies said.

The capital relocation plan also requires not only prudence but also agile deliberation because of its financial, social and cultural repercussions, another urban development strategist says.

Astrid Haryati, founder and CEO of the Terra Lumen urban planning advocacy institute, said the relocation would mean resettling tens of thousands of government officials and staff, along with their families and their culture. He said it would be reminiscent of the New Order *bedhol desa* (whole village) style of transmigration from the 1970s.

The relocation would also not ease the workload of Jakarta's gov-

ernment, as it would still be the heart of the country's business activities, which contribute 60 percent of the gross domestic product.

"I wish the policymakers would plan the relocation in a professional manner. On one hand they need to handle the matter with care, but on the other hand they have to move quickly unless land speculators undermine the plan," Astrid, who used to advise the mayors of Chicago and San Francisco on green planning, said on Thursday.

She insisted that the relocation is of pressing urgency, now that Jakarta's urban support system can no longer withstand its population growth, as is evident from the housing, transportation and environmental problems tormenting the city.

# Does sprawling Indonesia really need a new capital?

**E**ven as he awaits official confirmation of his election to a second term, President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo appears to be thinking about his legacy. He's proposing a US\$33 billion plan to relocate the capital far away from clogged Jakarta. The idea isn't as crazy as it sounds. That doesn't mean it'll work.

Jokowi is right to question Jakarta's long-term viability as a capital city. The population has swollen to 30 million people and, while a new subway system offers some relief at the margins, Jakarta's roads are plagued by chronic congestion and flooding. Indonesia's planning minister has even warned about the potential for a pandemic, given poor sanitation. That's not to mention the earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis that periodically beset the country.

The president's team is also correct that as a member of the G-20, Indonesia should have an administrative capital that functions well and can accommodate the country's predicted rise as a major economic player.

Building one from scratch would help boost Jokowi's plans to increase infrastructure spending. The government also wants to spread development beyond Java, the island on which Jakarta is located and the source of about 60 percent of gross domestic product.

Other countries — from Malaysia to Australia, Pakistan, Myanmar, South Korea and Bra-

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OPINION



zil — have created new, purpose-built centers for the machinery of government. Their example, though, illustrates the pitfalls Jokowi needs to fear.

It's one thing to build a more efficient capital. (The plan is for the executive branch, legislature and ministries to shift; Bank Indonesia and investment functions will remain in Jakarta.) It's another to construct monuments to national vanity. Cities and governments that work well aren't just about having the world's tallest this, longest that, or highest the other thing, as if such superlatives could instill a sense of nationhood. Malaysia fell prey to this temptation in the 1990s. Indonesian planners ought to focus instead on what any city needs to work, such as communications, transport links, sustainability and the ease of doing business.

Related to this is the other obvious issue: location. Malaysia's new administrative center, Putrajaya, is a short journey from Kuala Lumpur, the long-time business and political center. The same holds true for Sejong in South Korea, a brief and pleasant train ride from Seoul. While shifting offices to those new areas has eased congestion, it hasn't

revolutionized the way decisions are made in either country.

For its part, Canberra was intended from the earliest years of Australian federation to be the national capital. I grew up and was educated there; I am the son and sibling of career civil servants. Lavished with federal resources, the city is extremely livable but can be very insular and subject to groupthink. Canberra can also be used as a byword for whatever ails Australia at any given moment.

Other countries that have created capitals far from traditional cultural or commercial centers have fared less well. It's a stretch to blame all the flaws in Brazilian politics and economics on Brasilia, the capital designed by Oscar Niemeyer in the 1950s, but its air of faded ambition does seem emblematic of the country's recent travails.

While Jokowi hasn't officially decided on a venue, talk of locating the new capital in Central Kalimantan, on the island of Borneo, is worrying. This would force a wholesale shift, not just next door from the existing capital but to another part of the extensive country entirely.

Indonesia is a sprawling archipelago of 17,000 islands and the concept of the state and its structures has been an elastic one. It's an incredibly diverse place geographically, ethnically and in levels of development. While decentralizing political authority might make sense in theory, shifting off of Java, the most densely populat-

ed island and the traditional seat of power, would bring no small amount of upheaval.

Economic management would be bifurcated under the plan outlined Monday and, while Indonesia has become an easier place to do business, it still sits only in the middle of the World Bank's rankings. A site in Kalimantan risks becoming a bureaucratic outpost, removed from the concerns of Indonesia's most populous regions.

Indonesian Borneo may also not be prepared to handle the excitement: GDP per capita is a fraction of Jakarta's and the island is one of the main sources of air pollution known as "the haze" that blankets swathes of Southeast Asia each year as land is cleared for agriculture.

Certainly, given the threats posed by climate change, every critical government agency needs a backup site. But does Jakarta need to be abandoned?

A better idea might be for the government to focus on the difficult infrastructure and planning decisions required to preserve the megacity as the seat of authority while looking for a place nearby that might work as an administrative hive. If the capital is going to move, it probably shouldn't go far.

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# MRT now runs till midnight with shorter headway

A. Muh. Ibnu Aqil

JAKARTA

To keep up with commuter demands and to make sure they do not switch to other modes of transportation, MRT Jakarta has shortened the headway of its trains during the morning and afternoon rush hours and started operating the service until midnight.

The decision was reached after an evaluation of the first month of the MRT's commercial operation starting in April, during which the MRT saw 82,615 passengers daily and a train punctuality rate of 99.8 percent, according to MRT Jakarta president director William Sabandar.

"We decided to begin normal operation of the 16 trains starting May 1, after when they will run from 5 a.m. to 12 a.m.," William told reporters.

The shorter headway would only be in effect from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays. During peak hours up to 14 trains would be used, while during regular hours only seven of them would be, the company's operational director Muhammad Effendi said.

"To make sure the MRT is ready for the five-minute headway we have conducted eight trials from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. to make sure there are no obstacles," Effendi said.

Also starting on May 1 was the operation of designated women-only passenger cars during the same rush hours.

The women-only car is provided at the center of each MRT

MRT Jakarta deploys 16 trains to boost service

Discounted fare lasts until May 12

train. On the car's door a pink sticker reads "women-only car", *kompas.com* reported.

The MRT machinists, along with the station staffers, will also be given additional training to prepare them for the five-minute headway and for using two machinists in one train during peak hours.

Initially, the MRT Jakarta targeted 65,000 passengers daily.

Data from April 2 to 28 show that Jakartans are flocking to use the MRT, with the lowest usage on April 4 with 62,352 passengers, and the highest on April 13 with 116,074 passengers.

"From April 13 it [the number of passengers] kept moving upward," William said.

The data also show that during weekends, the total number of passengers increased by 11 percent compared to on weekdays.

William said passengers on weekdays and those on weekends were different, as on weekdays 80 percent of the passengers were daily commuters and 20 percent were visitors, while on weekends 70 percent were visitors and only 30 percent were commuters.

William said MRT Jakarta could not seek to convert the visitors to become regular users, rather it would try to keep up with the daily commuters in the MRT.

"We cannot convert them, the visitors can come from the out-

skirts [of Jakarta] so we will [focus on] managing those daily commuters," William said.

He said there were two kinds of customers, those who cared more about cheap fares and those who cared more about the service.

"For those who care about punctuality, we address them by [shortening] the headway. For those who care about fares, we are still studying them," William said.

He said the MRT would need to be supported by other facilities, such as integration with other modes of transportation, so commuters would accept the current fare even without the promotional 50 percent discount currently in effect.

As many MRT passengers used the service because of its 50 percent discount, MRT Jakarta plans to extend the discounted price to persuade more people to use the MRT while convincing those already using it to continue doing so.

William said MRT Jakarta had proposed the matter to the Jakarta administration, while working to reach a target of 100,000 daily passengers.

The Jakarta administration has decided to extend the discount until May 12.

People can travel on the rapid transit service, which employs a cashless fare payment system, using a single-trip MRT Jakarta card or the Jak Lingko card. Other accepted payment forms are electronic cash cards issued by state-owned lenders Mandiri (e-money), BRI (brizzi), and BNI (tap cash), as well as those issued

by private lender BCA (hazz) and city-owned lender DKI (Jakarta One).

The fare is kilometer-based with an average cost of Rp 8,500 (60 US cents). The cheapest fare is Rp 3,000 between the closest two stations, and up to Rp 14,000 to travel from Lebak Bulus Station to Bundaran HI Station.

MRT Jakarta has also dismissed concerns that it will negatively impact the city's Transjakarta service, especially Corridor 1 from Blok M to Kota.

Transjakarta president director Agung Wicaksono said their passengers even increased alongside the MRT's.

Transjakarta data show that from Jan. 1 to March 11 it served daily passengers of 73,761 on Corridor 1. And from March 13 to April 25, when the MRT started its operation, the corridor served an average of 78,010 passengers each day.

"They used to be viewed as overlapping each other, but it turned out that [Transjakarta's ridership] increased alongside the MRT's commercial operation," Agung said.

Transjakarta has also started running nine new routes to serve as feeders to the MRT.

The presence of the MRT has also reinvigorated the Blok M area, which was previously suffering from a decline in visitor numbers.

Stefanus Ridwan, the president director of PT Pakuwon Jati Tbk, which manages the area, claimed that visitor numbers increased by up to 150 percent after the MRT opened, *kompas.com* reported.