

Presidential Election 2024 and the Flaws of Democracy in Indonesia: It's time to return to Islam

News:

The presidential election in Indonesia took place on February 14, 2024, and as of now, the official vote counting is underway by the General Election Commission. According to Quick Count results, there is a high likelihood that the pair Prabowo Subianto and the President's son, Gibran, will emerge victorious.

Comment:

The Prabowo-Gibran pair has been quite controversial in Indonesia because the vice president is the son of the current president. Some findings indicate that those in power favoured the victory of the president's son through efforts to push through Gibran's candidacy as vice president, which initially might not have been legitimate. This was achieved through changes in the law at the Constitutional Court led by Gibran's uncle, making it easier for Gibran to register. Additionally, the regime is suspected of contributing to the success of Prabowo-Gibran by mobilizing civil servants, officials from various levels of government, and distributing various social assistance programs in the months leading up to the presidential election. Many ministers are also alleged to have actively supported this candidate.

There is widespread concern that the election of a pair supported by the ruling president could lead Indonesia's democracy further towards authoritarian practices. Especially given that President Joko Widodo has been criticized for contributing to the decline in Indonesia's democratic quality over the past decade.

This story in democratic politics is not new, where elected leaders use their power for personal or group interests. In Indonesia, the misuse of power by elites for embezzlement through corruption has been a longstanding issue.

It is not just about having bad leaders, but the democratic system itself provides ample opportunities for unscrupulous individuals to come to power and act arbitrarily. From the outset, democracy is designed in a way that those with power and money can win elections, with the quality of leaders not being the primary determinant. Furthermore, secularism as a democratic principle opens the door for unscrupulous politicians to engage in dirty politics. Ultimately, it seems that evil forces tend to dominate in democracies.

Islam has taught an ideal form of leadership based on faith, aiming to create a society that practices good and forbids evil, from rulers to interpersonal relationships. The Islamic system can also foster righteous politicians who fear Allah and genuinely care for their people. It is time for Muslims to reject democracy and uphold Islam as the only foundation for governing a nation.

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
Abdullah Aswar**