

# **Indonesia: Postponing elections will perpetuate Jokowi regime's authoritarian character: YLBHI**

Monday 13 June 2022, by [CNN Indonesia](#) (Date first published: 3 March 2022).

**Jakarta — The Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI) says that postponing the 2024 legislative and presidential elections is an insult to the Constitution and will perpetuate the authoritarian practices of the administration of President Joko “Jokowi” Widodo and Vice President Ma’ruf Amin.**

“In the course of the administration of Joko Widodo and Ma’ruf Amin, authoritarian practices which insult the Constitution have occurred frequently”, said YLBHI Chairperson Muhammad Isnur in a written release on Tuesday March 2.

Isnur believes that the discourse on postponing the 2024 elections is similar to the process of forcing through the revisions to the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) Law, the Mineral and Coal Mining Law, the Job Creation Law and pushing through moving the national capital (IKN) to East Kalimantan, which will endanger the lives of ordinary people and is only in the interests of the oligarchy.

According to Isnur, the discourse on postponing the elections has been doing the rounds for the last three years and has been thrown up by several political party leaders who support government.

“[Even though] President Jokowi explicitly rejected the idea [some time ago], on the other hand he allows the political elite and even his immediate subordinates to carry out maneuvers around postponing the elections,” he said.

“We strongly suspect, that the plan to postpone the elections is intentionally being worked up or is a kind of special operation to extend [the regime's] political power,” Isnur added.

Furthermore, Isnur is asking all parties to obey the 1945 Constitution. According to Isnur there would be two violations if the 2024 elections are postponed, namely a violation of people's political rights and the misuse of power.

“These two constitutional principles must of course be obeyed, if not then it will strengthen the view that the regime today is not obeying the country's laws and is in fact presenting a face which is authoritarian and insults the sovereignty of the people,” he said.

The discourse on postponing the 2024 elections has again been expressed over the last few days. The proposal came from National Awakening Party (PKB) Chairperson Muhaimin Iskandar (Cak Imin) and National Mandate Party (PAN) General Chairperson Zulkifli Hasan. Iskandar proposed the postponement of the elections on the ground of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Long before this, a similar proposal was raised by Investment Minister Bahlil Lahadalia who claimed

that the business community wants to extend President Widodo's term in office for the sake for post-pandemic economic recovery.

A special staff member to State Secretary Minister Pratikno, Faldo Maldini, claims that the government knows nothing about the planned postponement of the elections, although the government will continue to accommodate aspirations which come from these political parties.

"A declaration of support represents an aspiration from a political party. The government does not know about the plan. As an aspiration it will of course be accommodated, in the same way as the government to date has accommodated inputs which have come from the public and all of the political parties," said Maldini in a press release received by CNN Indonesia on Monday February 28.

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