



Presidential candidate and former Central Java governor Ganjar Pranowo (L), presidential candidate and Indonesia's Defence Minister Prabowo Subianto (R), presidential candidate Anies Baswedan (2nd R) and vice presidential candidate Muhaimin Iskandar react after the last vice presidential election debate at the Jakarta Convention Center (JCC) in Jakarta on January 21, 2024. (Photo by Yasuyoshi CHIBA/AFP)

Policy Possibilities after Indonesia's Presidential Election 2024

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Campaign rhetoric from all the candidates aside, the developmental challenges awaiting Indonesia's next president need fresh thinking and brave action. Will the right people get in?

Indonesia's Presidential Election (PE) 2024 is just around the corner. On Valentine's Day, the first round of voting will take place. A second round – which will happen if no candidate pair wins at least 50 per cent of the national vote plus one and at least 20 per cent in half of Indonesia's 38 provinces – will be on 26 June.

From a national development perspective, the three pairs: Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar (Team AMIN), Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka, and Ganjar Pranowo and Mahfud MD, each have their ways to shape the future of Indonesia. What would the policy possibilities post-PE2024 look like? What are the potential impacts on Indonesia's development trajectory?

As policy (content) cannot be separated from politics (process) and polity (culture), it is important to start answering the question by examining what the presidential nominees' campaigns reveal about the state of the Indonesian political elite.

In terms of coalition building, there have been shifting alliances and power dynamics among the elite. The coalition that supported President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) in his 2014 and 2019 campaigns has now [split](#). Most have gone to Prabowo-Gibran, who have a more [populist agenda](#), some to Ganjar-Mahfud, seen as representing the [nationalists](#), and the remainder to Team AMIN, who claim to be [reformist](#). Thus, their campaign narratives: Team AMIN offer “[change](#)”, Prabowo-Gibran “[continuity](#)”, and Ganjar-Mahfud “[improvement](#)”. These keywords also capture their main policy approaches for key issues in development.

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Despite their promise to bring about significant change, Team AMIN surprisingly set quite a conservative target of annual economic growth between [5.5 to 6.5 per cent](#) until 2029. They aim to reach it through shared prosperity, wealth distribution, and social justice. Prabowo-Gibran's target is [6-7 per cent](#) with a vague, jargonistic strategy: “[Jokowinomics](#)”, interpreted as a version of a “[Pancasila economy](#)”. This is basically a system with a controlled market economy as a counterbalance against [neoclassical](#) economic tenets like individualism and free markets. Ganjar-Mahfud has set an ambitious [7 per cent](#) growth target with a “we have all” (*semua ada di kita*) strategy.

From the three teams' [vision and mission documents](#) and campaigns, there are a few similarities in their policy platforms. On promoting growth, all candidates aim to accelerate it to improve living standards and reduce poverty. On enhancing industrial development, all

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candidates recognise the importance of strengthening the country's industrial base to reduce reliance on imports and strengthen export competitiveness. Last, they all agree to improve physical infrastructure to support economic activity and facilitate trade and investment.

However, the teams differ in the following ways. First, on the role of government, Team AMIN advocate [limited government and greater reliance](#) on private sector initiatives. This is likely due to the influence of their campaign advisor, former finance minister Tom Lembong, who also headed Indonesia's national investment agency. This is in contrast to Prabowo-Gibran, who favour a [more active state role](#) in directing economic policy despite [big businesses' support](#). Ganjar-Mahfud takes [the middle ground](#): in their platform, the government is the regulator and facilitator in guiding development, not an active player.

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Second, on [trade and liberalisation](#), Prabowo-Gibran's focus on protectionism contrasts with Team AMIN's emphasis on liberalisation and market-based solutions. Again, taking the middle stance, Ganjar-Mahfud seeks to balance the protection of domestic industries with fostering foreign direct investment-based innovation.

On social equity and [environmental sustainability](#), Team AMIN and Ganjar-Mahfud emphasise tackling social inequality and environmental concerns, while Prabowo-Gibran's primary focus is on growth and national self-sufficiency.

Many investors are waiting to see if Jokowi's signature policies – including downstreaming, the proposed shift of Indonesia's capital to [Nusantara \(IKN\)](#), East Kalimantan, and infrastructural development – will continue.

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The answer is clearly yes. The signature policies can be grouped into three broad types, the first of which is infrastructure, particularly for connectivity, like ports, roads, and industrial complexes. All the candidates [recognise that infrastructural development](#) is crucial and have pledged to continue upholding this policy.

Second, Jokowi has emphasised social protection, particularly social assistance. All candidates understand that this is a [populist vote-winner](#) that they must continue, even if they differ on how it is delivered. Third, all candidates [will continue downstreaming \(*hilirisasi*\)](#) as they know how important it is for Indonesia to move up the value chain. This is not limited to the mining/extractive sectors but extends to agriculture, fisheries, and even digital downstreaming. Team AMIN and Ganjar-Mahfud have [declared](#) that they will not stop at this but work towards “re-industrialisation”.

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On the planned relocation of the new capital city, Prabowo-Gibran and Ganjar-Mahfud [will continue](#) this part of Jokowi’s legacy. The former pair strongly support IKN. Echoing Jokowi’s rhetoric and notwithstanding criticism from academia and civil society, Prabowo-Gibran emphasise the need to develop areas outside Java and has pledged to uphold sustainability and environmental responsibility in the IKN’s execution.

Ganjar-Mahfud has stated that they will study the project further, expressing concern about its potential impact on the local environment and livelihoods of affected communities. In their campaign, they have offered “corrective measures” for what might have been neglected in the developmental process so far, like considering the impact on indigenous groups and the mitigation of environmental problems.

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Whoever wins, what is clear is that Indonesia must be prepared to fulfil different, creative development policy priorities to meet its challenges.

Team AMIN are the most critical; they omitted discussion of the IKN in their [vision and mission document](#). They question its feasibility and high cost, arguing that the government should focus on addressing other issues such as poverty and inequality. In the less likely scenario (given Prabowo-Gibran's high poll ratings) that they will win PE2024, Team AMIN is unlikely to stop the project outright, even though there is [growing resistance](#) to the shift to Nusantara from the public and civil servants. At most, the relocation can be delayed, as the IKN's status is already enshrined in a [national law](#).

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The new president and his administration will determine Indonesia's development trajectory for the next five or ten years. Whether and to what extent the next administration can realise the vision for Indonesia's "Golden 2045" (*Indonesia Emas*) centennial remains open to scrutiny.

Whoever wins, what is clear is that Indonesia must be prepared to fulfil different, creative development policy priorities to meet its challenges. All things considered, the PE2024 candidates' proposed policies are not far-reaching enough to address the multifaceted challenges awaiting Indonesia, especially as it has aspirations to reach advanced development. Excellent technocratic capacity and strong political support must sustain and surpass what President Jokowi has achieved.

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