

What are the chances of Anies Baswedan in the 2024 presidential election in Indonesia?

Description



In 2010, I met Anies Baswedan at Walailak University, Tha Sala, Nakhorn Sri Thammarat. He was still the Rector of Paramadina University in Jakarta. I sat beside him talking about Surin Pitsuwan, the former Secretary-General of ASEAN. I suspect that Surin Pitsuwan is interested in the figure of Anies Baswedan. After that, we enjoyed the beauty and hospitality of the city of Nakhon Sri Thammarat. Anies Baswedan's best friend, Imang Jasmine, captured some moments when Anies was in Southern Thailand.



Imang Jasmine still keeps some photos as our memories in Nakhorn Sri Thammarat. I communicated again on February 19, 2021, after losing contact with Imang Jasmine after several years. He then sent some photos with Anies Baswedan. The photos are some of our activities 12 years ago in Southern Thailand.

At that time, I suspected that Surin Pitsuwan wanted to introduce the figure of Anies Baswedan at the regional level. After that, I no longer followed Anies' academic and political career development. One of my students told me about the program of Indonesia Mengajar, which Anies initiated until the last few years. He was stationed in Eastern Indonesia.

Anies' appearance when he was governor of Jakarta was also fascinating. He defeated Basuki Tjahaja Purnama in the Jakarta governor election. He was nominated by the Partai Gerindra and the Partai Keadilan. As a result, he and Sandiaga Uno won the election. Then in 2019, Anies was left alone by Sandiaga Uno to accompany Prabowo as a vice-presidential candidate. However, they have not succeeded in defeating Jokowi, who is also the former governor of Jakarta.



Jokowi was also promoted by the Partai Gerindra when he was with Ahok against Fauzi Bowo. The Partai Gerindra has succeeded in “helping” Jokowi and Anies become governor in Jakarta. The development of national figures is interesting to observe. Anies was left alone by Sandiaga Uno. Meanwhile, Jokowi left Basuki to fight with Prabowo and Hatta Rajasa. Despite losing, both of them (Prabowo and Sandiaga Uno) became ministers in Jokowi’s government. The question is who exactly “lost” and “won” in Jakarta’s “political chess drama”?

The answer is that there is neither a loser nor a winner. Everyone was still together in Jakarta, except for Basuki, who had to “rest” in prison for a while, then came out to become an essential person at Pertamina.



Jokowi's supporters are directed to criticize Anies' programs. Prabowo's supporters from Islamic groups in the 2019 elections seem to be defending Anies. Basuki's supporters who do not accept his figure being put in prison take an act of massive revenge in trying to keep "anyone" in prison. Those who supported Prabowo during the 2019 presidential election were also always "conditioned" to go to prison. It seems that prisons in Jakarta are the best place to "rest" someone from the crowds in the "political market." Anyone who makes "noise" will be reported to the police. All "uncontrolled" noise must be resolved at the police desk. After that, netizens fought each other in cyberspace.

Before Anies' figure was "displayed" on the ballot paper to voters throughout Indonesia, would he be able to survive the raging "political chess drama" in Jakarta?

I would say yes. However, Anies attracted the interest of Islamic groups. Surya Paloh may also glimpse him. Anies is close to the Partai Keadilan. However, Anies is not very attractive in East Java, Central Java, and East Indonesia. Except for the pockets of Muslim voters, almost all regions in Eastern Indonesia prefer a national-leaning presidential candidate under the political umbrella of PDI-P.

This is except in Sumatra, where Anies will get his fans. Again, two provinces may not be very interested in Anies, namely Lampung and North Sumatra. Lampung is a “Javanese province” in Sumatra. Meanwhile, North Sumatra may still be the PDIP’s ballot box.

Another problem is which parties will nominate Anies which is not easy to predict now, considering that it all depends on the distribution of votes in the parliament. Anies can also become a vice presidential candidate if his character can win the hearts of some voters. So, if Anies’ “line of destiny” does become a candidate for a leader in this republic, there will be unexpected events to open their arms to Anies.

Jokowi is experiencing from Solo, then becoming the Governor of Jakarta, then his footsteps towards the palace can be used as a lesson for Anies. Namely, communication strategies, political alliances, understanding the world of journalism, a playmaker that gives his total loyalty to the day of the appointment of the oath, familiar with social media, have a characteristic that other candidates do not have. These are the main things for Anies to prepare himself to become a potential leader.



I want to close this essay with some crucial things to understand “political chess” in Jakarta. First, politics in Jakarta is not that serious. Only the drama is serious. The experiences of Jokowi, Ahok and Anies Baswedan are actors who have successfully adorned the pages of political history in this republic for the last ten years. Previously, they were local figures who were never considered at all to be VVIP persons in Jakarta. Previously, Jokowi was the mayor. Ahok is the regent. Meanwhile, Anies is an academic on campus.

Second, during the last ten years, Anies, who was originally a campus academic, has taught important lessons that getting into politics depends on the role played from the start. So, the second 10 years will be Anies’ peak journey if he succeeds in becoming the leader of this country. On the other hand, if he fails, then he is very likely to return to campus. He will tell or write about his experiences for ten years outside the campus.

Third, Surin Pitsuwan has introduced Anies to me, where perhaps Surin understands Anies’ potential as a leader. Hopefully, Anies will also find a candidate for a leader whom he gave the “stage” to enter the “political chess drama” in Jakarta. Cadreization is a vital thing in a person’s life journey. Great people are those who can make other people great. I will continue to look for great people in this country, to write their history in the future.