

# Jokowi to play major role in cabinet setup

Prabowo's team says he will have final say

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The camp of presumptive president-elect Prabowo Subianto has said outgoing President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo will play a "significant" role in shaping the next administration's cabinet and policies but insists that Prabowo will have the final say.

Official election results are not due until mid-March, but with most signs indicating the Gerindra Party chairman has won the Feb. 14 presidential election, politicians and the public have turned their attention to the composition of a Prabowo cabinet and how large a part Jokowi, whose son Gibran Rakabuming Raka is set to be Prabowo's vice president, will play.

"Jokowi will certainly be asked for his advice and input [in the formation of a cabinet]. That's why his role will be sig-

nificant," Drajad Wibowo, a senior member of Prabowo's campaign team, told *The Jakarta Post*.

Drajad said that as Prabowo's campaign had been built around the idea of continuing and expanding Jokowi's policies, he would welcome the outgoing leader's views not only on the formation of the incoming administration but also on future policies.

Jokowi is widely expected to play a major role in the selection of cabinet members in an effort to maintain his political influence after leaving office and ensure that the next administration is well positioned to pursue his policy aims.

Sources familiar with post-election coalition-building talks say Jokowi has asked Prabowo to give him a say in up to four cabinet posts in the next administration, with some of the President's close

allies, including State Secretary Pratikno and Investment Minister Bahlil Lahadalia, reportedly making the list of candidates.

Drajad, who is also a senior member of the National Mandate Party (PAN), declined to comment on how far Jokowi would seek to influence the cabinet lineup, saying that the final decision would rest with the incoming president.

"Forming a cabinet is a president's prerogative. So when Prabowo is inaugurated as the next President, it will be his prerogative," Drajad said.

But questions remain over how Prabowo would assert his power as president, with some analysts expecting a power game between him and the outgoing President.

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In a report published on Sunday, *Tempo* magazine cited several unnamed sources who claimed that the inner circle of parties backing the Prabowo-Gibran ticket had become concerned that "Jokowi may intervene too far" in the next government and expressed hope that he would retire after stepping down in October.

As Prabowo's alliance has likely fallen short of a legislative majority, Jokowi appears to have begun maneuvering to bring opposition parties over to his favored candidate's side. In

February, the President hosted NasDem Party chairman Surya Paloh, the main sponsor of the rival presidential bid of Anies Baswedan, for dinner at the Presidential Palace. The two reportedly discussed the possibility of the party jumping ship.

The *Tempo* report claimed that not only was Jokowi seeking to bring members of the presumed opposition into a Prabowo-led coalition, he was also seeking to take direct command of the hoped-for big-tent ruling coalition by securing a senior post in the Golkar Party.

Golkar is the largest party supporting Prabowo's presiden-

tial bid and is projected to win the second-largest number of House of Representatives seats after the rival Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P).

Jokowi, who remains a PDI-P member but has kept his distance from the party since his son was named Prabowo's running mate, has declined to answer questions about speculation that he plans to join Golkar.

Golkar chairman Airlangga Hartarto and other senior members have welcomed the idea of Jokowi joining, saying it would be good for the party.

But analysts were not convinced that Jokowi was assured a

commanding position in a ruling coalition and were not sure how long the Prabowo-Jokowi alliance would hold.

"There is no guarantee that the relationship between the two will continue to be harmonious," said analyst Kennedy Muslim of pollster Indikator Politik Indonesia.

"Prabowo is not the kind of President who likes to be told what to do."

Even if Jokowi managed to secure a leading role in Prabowo's coalition, Kennedy said, the uneasy relations between the two would risk dividing the coalition into two camps, one loyal to Prabowo, the other to Jokowi.