

POLITICAL PULSE

INDONESIA

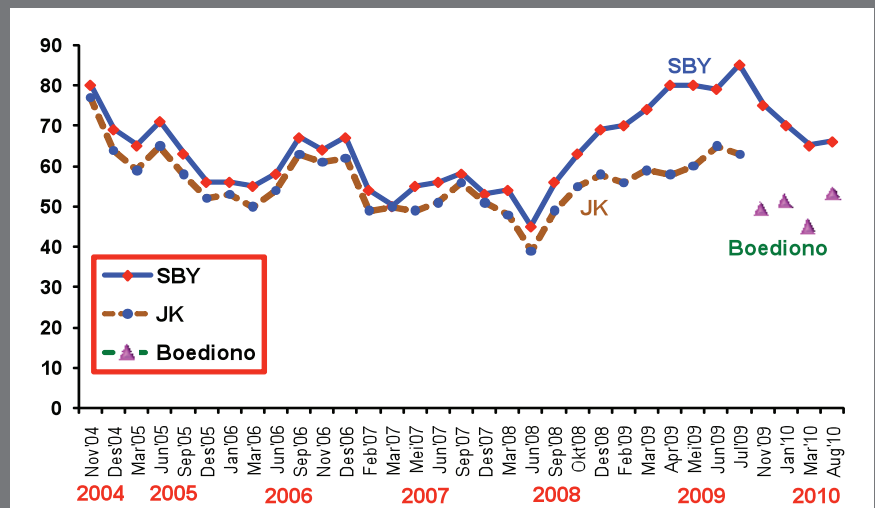


SBY still popular despite controversies

LSI Survey

The latest survey by well-regarded pollster Lembaga Survei Indonesia (LSI) shows President Yudhoyono with a 66% performance rating in August. This is marginally higher than his 65% figure in March, but is down from 75% in November 09 following SBY's inauguration in late October and his peak of 85% in July 09 immediately after his landslide election. Though SBY's ratings have eroded since last year's presidential vote, they are still something most politicians would envy. The ratings decline follows a similar trend following Yudhoyono's first term election in 2004, as the euphoria surrounding his run-off victory subsided. Overall, SBY is still the most popular politician in Indonesia by far. Clearly this is partly a byproduct of Indonesia's surging economy. Vice President Boediono has also probably taken a lot of the blame over Century, as indicated by noticeably lower ratings than his boss. But it also reflects Yudhoyono's uncanny ability to keep problems and controversies from hurting his personal popularity. Recent issues include the KPK-police dispute, tax scandals, surging food prices, rising violence against minorities, LPG container explosions and the July electricity rate hikes.

Voter satisfaction, president & vice president (%)



Source: LSI Aug 2010

Reform agenda still intact

What does all this mean? Most importantly, the figures show Yudhoyono still has the political capital to pursue a reform agenda. In real terms, however, the SBY administration will likely stick with its gradual pace of reforms, with no new programs to be expected, in part because of the political stalemate in parliament and in part due to the president's highly developed instinct for caution. By the same token, there is also no chance of purely populist policies to boost the president's popularity. Thus, the outlook is for continued political stability in Indonesia and no dramatic policy initiatives

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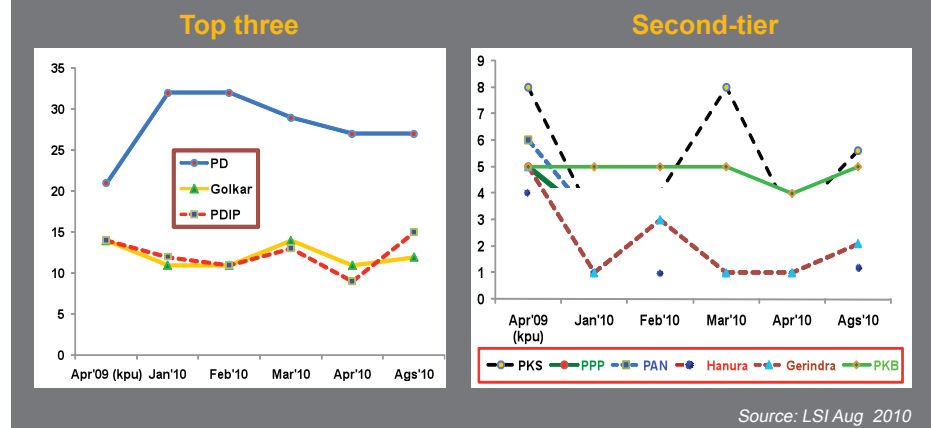
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PD, PDIP and Golkar still dominant

The same LSI survey also highlighted the ratings of the country's political parties. There have been no major changes in the standings. SBY's Partai Demokrat (PD) was favored by 27% of LSI respondents in the August survey, unchanged from April but still higher than the 21% the party actually won in last year's election. PDIP was at 15%, up its 12% in April and the 14% won in the 2009 elections. Golkar was steady at 12% compared to 11% in April and 14% in the 2009 elections. Bringing up the rear on the second-tier were PKS at 5.6% (well up from 3% in April but still significantly off its 8% in 2009 elections); PKB was steady at 5% (versus 4% in April and 5% in 2009); PPP held at 4% (versus 3% in April and 5% in 2009); PAN was at 3% (versus 2% in April, but well down from its 6% in 2009); Gerindra rebounded to 2.1% (up from 1% in April, but well off the 5% it won in 2009). Hanura remained mired in last place with only 1% (versus 1% in April and 4% in 2009 elections).

If parliament elections were held today, who would you vote for?



Overall, in the current context of a troubling increase in sectarian violence (albeit still infrequent, is that the three major parties PD, PDIP and Golkar all maintain a clearly secular orientation and remain dominant, accounting for a total of 54% of LSI respondents' picks (up from 47% in April and 49% in 2009 elections). Meanwhile, the religious affiliated parties like PKS, PKB, PPP and PAN and smaller nationalist parties Gerindra and Hanura continue to struggle for relevancy. The issue of violence against Christians and the Ahmadiyah sect by Islamic vigilante groups could give a boost to PDIP which has the strongest base with minorities and has been the most vocal critic of these attacks. However, there is nothing on the political horizon to suggest the broader trends will change significantly. The political discourse in Indonesia will continue to be underpinned by mainstream, moderate thought, expressed through parties that proclaim only broad generalities and very little true policy content. Lacking much in the way of true policy distinctions other than secular versus sectarian, there is little to choose from between the parties and the personal popularity and charisma of leadership will remain the dominant distinction, separated only by conflicting patronage streams.



Speculation abounds

UKP4 highlights
underperformers

Key consideration
could be political

SBY to bring Gerindra
into the fold?

Cabinet Reshuffle?

Will there be a cabinet reshuffle? The rumors are heating up ahead as the first year of the administration's second term draws near. Information and communications minister Tifatul Sembiring (PKS), justice & human rights minister Patrialis Akbar (PAN), transportation minister Freddy Numberi (PD), energy minister Darwin Saleh (PD) and public works minister Djoko Kirmanto (non-partisan) have all been cited in numerous press reports as possible targets. Much of the speculation seems to be based on performance evaluations by the administration's own internal inspectorate UKP4, led by well-regarded technocrat Kuntoro Mangkusubroto. The results, however, have not been made public.

Characteristically, Yudhoyono has given no indication of what he plans to do, and signals from political insiders have been mixed at best. Senior PD officials like Ahmad Mubarak and Hayono Isman have publicly suggested that a reshuffle is forthcoming. Others like PD chairman Anas Urbaningrum and house speaker Marzuki Alie, on the other hand, have expressed doubts. Meanwhile, top lawmakers from coalition parties like Golkar and PAN are making a concerted effort to show that they are not pressuring SBY for a reshuffle and that any changes are his alone to make. Clearly, experience from the debate over Sri Mulyani's replacement and previous cabinet changes during SBY's first term have taught ambitious party members that making demands, especially publicly, will only ensure they will not get what they want.

Certainly a number cabinet changes are justified from a performance point of view. The problems highlighted in Kuntoro's evaluations, however, are thought to be as much departmental as personal, so a reshuffle alone may not get the job done. Political considerations, therefore, will remain paramount. SBY feels he cannot afford to alienate Golkar, despite grumbling from PD executives who want to punish Golkar for its distinctly oppositionist behavior during in the Bank Century bail out dust-up. Thus Golkar-held posts are very likely to be safe. It is a different story, however, for, PKS and PPP, which also played key roles in the parliament's Keystone Cops investigation of the 2008 bailout. They play a much less pivotal role in the coalition, and are, therefore, much more vulnerable. One key consideration for the president will be whether he feels he needs to bring new allies into the fold. There is no indication PDIP is prepared to join the coalition, but Yudhoyono's apparently warmer relationship with ultra-nationalist Prabowo Subianto, may lead the president to invite in a Gerindra member in a bid to strengthen his nationalist credentials and boost his political clout.



Additional Highlights

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono has received the names of candidates to replace National Police chief Gen. Bambang Hendarso Danuri, State Secretary Sudi Silalahi said Wednesday. The candidates were selected by the police chief and the National Police Commission. “The names of the candidates were submitted to the President yesterday [Tuesday]. Maybe we will seek approval from the House of Representatives soon,” Sudi said as quoted by Antara news agency. He said it was possible the government would propose only one candidate to the House, which has been common practice in the past. Sudi declined to name the candidates but it is widely believed that they are National Police Academy head Insp. Gen. Imam Sujarwo and National Police general monitoring inspector Comr. Gen. Nanan Sukarna. Both have long been widely touted as the most likely candidates to replace Bambang, who will retire on Oct. 10.

■ *The Jakarta Post, 16 September 2010*

Attorney General Hendarman Supandji on Tuesday aired hope that President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono would choose a career prosecutor to replace him when his term ends in October. Hendarman said he had submitted the names of *eight career candidates* to replace him, but should the president decide on an outsider he would not object.

He said career prosecutors knew how the system worked and would therefore be able to adapt much quicker. The Indonesia Corruption Watch, the Center for Indonesian Law and Policy Studies (PSHK) and the Indonesian Society of Justice Observers have all said they hope Hendarman’s successor is *an outsider*. They have said that whoever of the two candidates for the Corruption Eradication Commission fails to get the job would be a good choice for attorney general.

■ *The Jakarta Globe, 15 September 2010*

Police have arrested nine suspects behind the recent attack of Batak Christian Protestant Church (HKBP) members in Bekasi, West Java. “The investigation is still ongoing but nine people we *arrested* have already been named suspects,” Jakarta Metropolitan Police Command chief Inspector General Timur Pradopo said here on Tuesday. The suspects known by their initials as AF, the leader, DTS, NN, AN, ISN, PN and KA may be charged under Article 351 on violent torture and Article 170 on group torture. The police are still intensively investigating several other witnesses, including *the head of the Islam Defenders’ Front (FPI)’s Bekasi district chapter*, he said. Timur said he would act firmly against the one who had stabbed one of the church-goers based on the law.

■ *Antara News, 15 September 2010*

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono is unlikely to attend a summit of Southeast Asian leaders called by US President Barack Obama this month in New York, a spokesman said Wednesday. The failure of the leader of the region’s biggest economy and the world’s most populous Muslim-majority country to attend the summit will be *a blow* to Obama’s efforts to reach out to the strategically important region. Officials blamed the short notice given for the summit, which was announced on September 3, and Yudhoyono’s prior engagements. “The US-ASEAN summit invitation was given in short notice. The president’s agenda at that time was fixed earlier this year,” spokesman Teuku Faizasyah told AFP.

■ *Kompas.com, 16 September 2010*

The Ambon-based unit of Detachment 88, accused of brutality and the torture of peaceful political protesters, will be disbanded, the head of the elite counter-terrorism force, Tito Karnavian, has said. The decision to remove *Detachment 88* entirely from the Malukas archipelago came as a Herald investigation exposed serious abuses of political prisoners in the province by its members last month. *The Herald* yesterday revealed allegations by a group of



men who were arrested last month and taken to Detachment 88's Ambon headquarters. It was also revealed the Australian embassy in Jakarta had sent an official *to investigate the abuses*, and the US had blacklisted members of Detachment 88 based in Ambon, the Maluku capital, and had refused to train or equip them since 2008. Brigadier General Karnavian denied there was a systemic problem of excessive force within Detachment 88, a criticism that has also surfaced because of the number of terrorist suspects - 17 in the past year - who have been shot dead rather than arrested.

■ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 September 2010

Three Russians working for Sukhoi aircraft holding in Indonesia have died under *unexplained circumstances*

, the head of the Russian embassy's consular department said on Tuesday. "The warranty service workers of KnAAPO Aviation Construction Company have died," Vladimir Pronin said, adding that the engineers died on Monday. The Russian specialists were helping Indonesian Air Force servicemen *to maintain and use Russian Su-fighters that were recently delivered* to the air base in the city of Makassar in Indonesia's South Sulawesi province. The *cause of the deaths* is being *investigated*, the diplomat said. Under a \$300 million contract, signed in 2007, Russia will *complete the delivery* of three Su-fighters to Indonesia by the end of 2010 in addition to two Su-27SK and two Su-30MK fighters purchased in 2003.

■ *Voice of Russia*, 14 September 2010

We are not in competition with each other. That was the message Golkar Party chairman Aburizal Bakrie and media mogul Surya Paloh, who chairs the National Democrats, aimed to convey by Sunday's surprise public appearance at the home of former top Golkar leader Jusuf Kalla. It was one of the few occasions when both heavyweights have been seen together since Golkar's heated fight for the chairmanship last year that ended in strained relations between the two. Surya lost to Aburizal and the relationship was further fractured when Surya set up the National Democrats as a social organization and then won the backing of a string of well-known political figures. In May, he said that the group would only become a fully fledged political party if it had 10 million to 15 million members, whereas at the time it had just 30,000 on its books.

■ *The Jakarta Globe*, 13 September 2010

The top Islamic body in the world's most populous Muslim-majority country, Indonesia

, said Wednesday it opposed France's ban on full-face veils. "Middle-eastern Muslim women wear full-face veils as part of their culture and religious belief. If the French parliament wants to champion human rights, it should allow women to wear the veils in public," council chairman Amidhan told AFP. "If it's for security reasons, the question is to what extent is there a threat posed by women wearing burqas?" The Indonesia Ulema Council said the issue was of limited importance

for Indonesia's roughly 200 million Muslims, with very few women in the Southeast Asian archipelago wearing full-face veils. "We disagree with the law but it's not much of an issue for us here. We're quite far away and Muslim women in Indonesia don't wear full-face veils."

■ *AFP*, 15 September 2010

Vietnam and Indonesia have agreed to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on defense cooperation soon. The agreement was reached at talks between visiting Deputy Defence Minister Lt. Gen. Nguyen Chi Vinh and his Indonesian counterpart Sjafie Siamsoeddin in Jakarta, Indonesia, on Sept. 15. At the talks, Lt. Gen. Vinh informed the host of Vietnam's preparations for the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM+) that is slated for mid-October in Hanoi, and other countries' feedback. The two sides discussed issues of mutual concern to bring into play ASEAN achievements in enhancing defense cooperation with its dialogue partners to ensure regional stability, peace and development.

■ *Vietnam News*, 15 September 2010

A German expat living on Indonesia's Lombok Island is in protective police custody after hundreds of Muslim villagers attacked his home and set alight to his motorbike for allegedly insulting Islam. Lombok Island, Indonesia, where an expat's home was attacked



after he allegedly insulted Islam. The Jakarta Globe newspaper reported how Stephen Alexander, 35, approached a village chief and accused villagers of decapitating one of the statues in his front garden, threatening to tell the police if the culprit was not found within two weeks. Villagers had just finished Tarawih (evening prayers during Ramadan) and, according to Mustan, were deeply hurt by Alexander's words. Following the altercation, the German national who has lived on the island for ten years and has an Indonesian wife, fled into a nearby forest while hundreds of villagers are believed to have attacked his villa and set alight to his motorbike

■ *The Telegraph, 13 September 2010*

The Human Rights Resource Centre for ASEAN (HRRCA) appointed a veteran Indonesian human rights campaigner, Mr. Marzuki Darusman, as its founding Chairman/Director. Mr. Darusman will oversee the HRRCA's agenda to provide research, education, and training on human rights issues in the Asean region, including rule of law, judicial independence, women and children's issues, indigenous peoples, migrant labor rights, regulatory environments for human rights, and law enforcement approaches. Darusman, a former Attorney General and past Chairman of Indonesia's National Human Rights Commission, has deep knowledge of and practical experience in the Asean region's legal and regulatory

systems. Over the past 20 years he has earned a reputation as a leading regional human rights advocate through his leadership of the Working Group for an Asean Human Rights Mechanism that ultimately resulted in the formation of the Asean Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights.

■ *The Nation, 13 September 2010*

Indonesia has welcomed Kevin Rudd's appointment as Australia's new foreign minister, saying the bilateral relationship will benefit from his knowledge and experience of the Asia-Pacific. A spokeswoman for Prime Minister Julia Gillard has confirmed Mr. Rudd, a Mandarin-speaking former diplomat who was Labor foreign affairs spokesman in opposition, would take over the job from Stephen Smith. Indonesian Foreign Ministry spokesman Teuku Faizasyah said that while it was somewhat "curious" for Mr. Rudd to go from being prime minister to foreign minister, it was a welcome appointment. Mr. Faizasyah said Indonesia was looking forward to continuing to work with Mr. Smith in his new role as defense minister.

■ *The Age, 11 September 2010*

The youngest son of Indonesia's longest ruling dictator Soeharto, Tommy has filed a civil lawsuit against Garuda Indonesia over an article in its in-flight publication on a tourist destination owned by the convicted judge murderer, which

referred him as, well, a murderer which was convicted by a court. After drawing the public attention by disputing his once frozen bank accounts at BNP Paribas with the Attorney General's Office, and later casting rumors of his attempt to retain his family control over the party set up at the backdrop of coup de tat against Soekarno which later established under his father leadership, Tommy is launching legal challenge against the state flagship carrier for inclusion of irrelevant fact in its publication. The article titled "A New Destination to Enjoy in Bali" in Majalah Garuda's December 2009 edition promoting Pecatu Indah Resort, a property owned by Tommy, which also informs that "Tommy Soeharto is the owner of the area and he is a murderer which was convicted by the court."

■ *Tempo Interactive, 7 September 2010*

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