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Judul : Setya moves to regain control
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His political career having hit rock bottom following an alleged scandal involving a giant mining firm, Golkar Party chairman and former House of Representatives speaker, Setya Novanto is climbing back up the greasy pole following the revelation that the party will soon reinstall the seasoned politician to the legislature's top post. Executives of the country's second-biggest political party have confirmed the plan to appoint Setya as House speaker, replacing Ade Komarudin, who was Setya's rival during the party chairmanship race earlier this year. "This is the party's formal decision and it is what the party currently needs. It has nothing to do with Setya's personal interest nor ambition," Golkar secretary-general Idrus Marham said on Tuesday. Ade, however, could not be reached for comment. "Ade is one of our best members. We are sure that he understands the party's democratic decision," Idrus said. The revelation was made less than a week after Setya had a meeting with President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo at the State Palace. Last year, Jokowi expressed his anger over a perceived scandal in which then speaker Setya was accused of "using" the President's name in a backroom deal related to the mining contract of PT. Freeport Indonesia. Then energy and mineral resources minister Sudirman Said leaked a taped conversation between Setya, then Freeport president director Maroef Sjamsoeddin and oil tycoon Riza Chalid. The scandal caused public outcry and forced Setya to resign from his position as House leader amid ongoing hearings over his alleged ethical misconduct. Investigators at the Attorney General's Office (AGO) also launched an initial probe into the alleged scandal but the investigation has long since stalled. But Setya's supporters said no wrongdoing had ever been proved, thus, there was no reason to prevent Setya from getting his House speaker position back. Setya is on the brink of becoming one of the country's most powerful politicians after months of political maneuvers. Soon after he dramatically won the Golkar chairmanship election, he declared the party to be a government supporter, regardless of its position as a supporter of Gerindra Party chairman Prabowo Subianto, Jokowi's rival during the 2014 presidential election. But being only the latest party to join the government coalition has not prevented Golkar from gaining more influence over the government. Observers say that, under Setya's leadership, Golkar seems to have overshadowed the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle's (PDI-P) influence over Jokowi. However, some Golkar factions may be not happy with the decision. The leader of Golkar's youth organization, Ahmad Doli Kurnia Tandjung, said the decision showed that Golkar's current leadership was "thoughtless". "The political steps taken are more personal-interest oriented and conspiratorial. The decision will just create more public uproar and internal disputes, lower Golkar's image and hamper the House's performance and country's development," Doli said. Similarly, PDI-P lawmaker Arif Wibowo called on Golkar to consider public opinion in the decision. Also on Tuesday, Jokowi hosted breakfast, lunch and afternoon meal meetings at the palace for three different leaders of pro-government parties — Nasdem's Surya Paloh, the PPP's Romahurmuziy and Setya, respectively. It was Jokowi's second meeting with Setya. "We all know that Golkar has a widespread power base over almost all of Indonesia. Therefore, on this occasion, I urge Golkar across the country to maintain stability. Second, to maintain tolerance in this diverse country. And third, to work together to maintain unity and harmony among all elements of the nation," Jokowi said. But Jokowi declined to comment on Setya's possible comeback as House speaker. "Regarding the House speakership, it is an internal matter for Golkar," Jokowi told reporters in a firm statement, which was echoed by Setya. Arya Fernandes, an analyst with the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), has said Jokowi, through his meetings with leading political figures, has been sending out the message that his administration still has strong support among the majority of the public.