

**Judul** : Public Lies - Prabowo Camp Faces Repercussions of Ratna Incident  
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**PUBLIC LIES**

## Prabowo camp faces repercussions of Ratna incident

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Amid campaigning ahead of the 2019 presidential election, the opposition camp led by presidential candidate Prabowo Subianto is under fire for allegedly seeking to capitalize on an assault that never took place.

On Thursday, the campaign team of the incumbent, President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo, reported to the Elections Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) an alleged violation against an agreement by the two presidential campaign teams to conduct a peaceful campaign.

The team's advocacy and legal division director, Irfan Pulungan, said he had not reported any particular individual but admitted that it was related to a lie created by Ratna Sarumpaet when she was still a member of Prabowo's campaign team.

"We see that [the rival camp] is not serious about the fair cam-

paigning we agreed to," Irfan said. "We don't want to sue any individual. We only want to provide input to the Bawaslu to be more careful with regard to potential hate speech and hoaxes."

Ratna claimed on Tuesday that she had been assaulted by three men in Bandung, West Java, last month, after a photo showing her with a swollen face circulated on social media. Her story attracted the sympathy of Prabowo, who claimed it was a human rights violation and that he would talk to National Police chief Gen. Tito Karnavian about the incident.

A day later, however, Ratna admitted that it was a lie, explaining that her face was swollen as a result of liposuction and that "Satan" had made her "delusional" and create such a lie.

Prabowo has since apologized to the public for having trusted Ratna and dismissed her from the campaign team, but the story does not end there.

Opposition camp members, in-

cluding Prabowo himself and other top politicians, now face criminal charges and sanctions for ethic code violations.

On Wednesday, a group of advocates reported Gerindra deputy chairman Fadli Zon, party member Rachel Maryam as well as Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) lawmakers Fahri Hamzah and Mardani Ali Sera to the House of Representatives ethics council (MKD) for provocation.

All of them had backed Ratna before the latter made her confession and had raised the matter in public statements and social media, saying the "assault" had violated democracy.

Later on Wednesday, the advocate group also reported Prabowo, the Gerindra Party chairman, his running mate Sandiaga Uno as well as Fadli to the National Police's criminal investigation division for hate speech and spreading hoaxes.

"Prabowo should not have jumped to conclusions about what happened to Ratna. He

should have first checked the matter by asking the police for help and seeking confirmation," Saor Siagian of the advocate group said.

Ratna was later dismissed from Prabowo's campaign team. On Thursday evening, she was arrested by the police at Soekarno-Hatta International Airport in Tangerang, Banten, when she was about to depart to Chile.

The campaign team of President Jokowi said Prabowo had accused the Jokowi administration as being responsible for the assault that never took place.

Fadli, meanwhile, claimed he had not spread any hoaxes, saying that he brought up the "assault" before knowing that Ratna had lied to him.

"I don't think I spread fake news. I just actively responded to her story. She told [us] that she had been physically assaulted. If that had been true, it would have been impossible for us to do nothing," Fadli said.