

House mulls creating special committee to probe failure to detect fugitive Djoko Tjandra's return



Graft convict Djoko Tjandra stands trial for his involvement in the Bank Bali graft case in which he was convicted of misusing Bank Indonesia Liquidity Support (BLBI) funds. (JP/Arief Suhardiman)



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Ghina Ghaliya (The Jakarta Post)

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Lawmakers at the House of Representatives have floated a plan to form a special committee following the Immigration Office's failure to detect the arrival of longtime fugitive and graft convict Djoko Soegiarto Tjandra into the country.

Two political party factions in House Commission III overseeing legal affairs – the NasDem Party and the Democratic Party – proposed the formation of the committee to investigate the matter during a hearing with officials from the Law and Human Rights Ministry on Monday.

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The hearing saw Jhoni Ginting, the ministry's Immigration Director General, bombarded with questions from lawmakers, several of which he could not answer, such as on Djoko's whereabouts and whether he was currently still in Indonesia or had fled to another country.

"The director general did not answer our questions. There is a possibility that other institutions could become involved [in the case]," Benny K. Harman of the Democratic Party said, "I propose the commission establish a special committee. Because the director general couldn't handle the things he didn't know."

NasDem politician Taufik Basari said his faction would support the setting up of a special committee.

Commission III chairman Herman Hery said that members of the commission would soon discuss the proposal. "We will discuss it in our internal meeting."

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After remaining at large for more than a decade, Djoko – who was found guilty in a high-profile Bank Bali corruption case – reportedly returned to Indonesia and [filed a review of his case](#) in early June. However, his whereabouts now remain unknown to the authorities.

He was [absent from the first hearing](#) of his case review petition on July 7.

Djoko, who fled to Papua New Guinea in 2009 and has since reportedly been spotted in Malaysia and Singapore, succeeded in obtaining an e-ID card from the South Grogol subdistrict on June 8 and a passport on June 27.

The Jakarta administration dismissed South Grogol subdistrict head Asep Subahan for alleged misuse of authority for issuing an e-ID card to the fugitive.

According to Jakarta inspectorate head Michael Rolandi, Asep was personally involved in the issuance of Djoko's e-ID, having met with the fugitive's lawyer Anita Kolopaking at his residence in May.

Michael claimed Asep had merely asked his subordinates to check on Djoko's citizenship status at the request of Anita.

On Monday, Jhoni told lawmakers during the hearing that Djoko remained an Indonesian citizen as he had never returned his Indonesian passport.

He also admitted there were indeed routes to enter the country illegally that were difficult to monitor.

"We're not making excuses, but many of our undocumented migrant workers have also entered Malaysia through these routes," Jhoni said.

He said the illegal routes included crossing the borders between Papua and Papua New Guinea, Kalimantan and Malaysia, Aceh and southern Thailand and East Nusa Tenggara and Timor-Leste.

"The routes are used often by people seeking to enter or leave Indonesia illegally," Jhoni said.

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