

PDIP
Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan
Indonesian Democracy Party of Struggle

The foundations of this party can be traced to the ruins of the old PDI – and in the wake of the storming of the party headquarters in July 1996 by anti-Megawati goons widely seen as supported by elements of the then government. As Megawati and her supporters withdrew support for the rump party, its support evaporated in the 1997 elections. With the arrival of Reformasi, these former PDI people formed the embryo of what would rapidly emerge as the PDIP.

While through the persona of Mrs. Megawati as daughter of the country's first president, Sukarno, this party clearly promotes itself as the embodiment of the Sukarnoist mystique and spirit, the party can not really be considered to represent a simple reconfiguration of the original PNI. Most notably the party has demonstrated when in Government a much more economically pragmatic accommodation and even embrace of the private and global market system as well as a more inclusive embrace of Indonesia's Sino-Indonesian community than in earlier generations. The party does, however, remain firmly opposed to any special legal privileges or segregation on the basis of religion arguing the traditional line that Indonesians should all bow before the same laws and that no one religion should be placed ahead of any other in the nation.

The party also rhetorically pitches its appeal in a folksy way to the under classes across the archipelago. During the past 4 years the party has been the most vocal and passionate opponent of attempts by the Islamist parties to promote legislation aimed at further "codifying" issues of pornography and some quaint notion called "porno-action". PDIP has argued that while of course opposed to pornography it sees this kind of law as an "thin end of the wedge" to enforce the ideological and theological proclivities and values of one group (namely conservative Islamists) on the rest of Indonesia's heterogeneous society.

The party's base of support has extended beyond the areas where the old PNI was strong to include all Christian areas of the country and in 1999 parts of the old modernist Islamist heartlands of southern Sumatra and western Java, including Jakarta.

In legislative elections the party contested the elections of 1999 and 2004 will also contest the 2009 elections.

In its electoral debut in 1999 the party secured an extraordinary 34% of the popular vote nationally becoming the largest party in 11 of the then 27 provinces. This included the outstanding 79% of the vote across Bali, the highest ever result (at a provincial level) for a democratic election in Indonesia, finally surpassing the 76% secured by Masjumi in Aceh in 1955. The party's support was relatively balanced between Java (36% of total) and Off-Java

(30% of total). The party tended to secure a slightly stronger vote in cities than in rural areas, although the difference was not very significant suggesting a “balanced support base”.

The traditional electoral dynamics of Indonesia (such as the ideological cleavage between a more secular-nationalist vision versus a more orthodox Islamist vision) was largely absent. The critical issue in this election was in relation to the New Order regime. PDIP was seen as reflecting the most aggressively anti-New Order views while Golkar was of course seen as the defender and inheritor of the New Order. In this election the anti-New Order forces were successful. This gave PDIP a significant boost in support – certainly in the urban educated classes, who would not normally be considered “true believers” for such a party.

Heading to the 2004 elections the dynamics were quite different. PDIP was the lead party and its key member, Megawati Sukarnoputri, was the incumbent President. In these elections the party’s vote dropped dramatically from 33.7% to 18.5%. The party lost support in every province of the country. With these results the party maintained its status as the largest party in only four provinces namely in Central Java, Yogyakarta, Bali and Bangka Belitung – with Golkar claiming largest party status in those provinces which PDIP lost with the exception of Jakarta, where the PKS emerged as the largest party. In Bangka Belitung while PBB secured the largest number of votes in the national parliamentary elections, PDIP secured more votes than either PBB or Golkar in the provincial parliamentary elections.

In general the party lost a disproportionate percentage of its support off-Java, especially across the Muslim majority areas of southern Sumatra, which had delivered it a surprisingly solid vote in 1999. In many of the big cities, such as Medan, Bandung, Depok, Bekasi and in West, Central and South Jakarta where PDIP had been the largest party in 1999, it lost to PKS in 2004. In Palembang, North and West Jakarta PDIP lost to Demokrat while in Bogor and Angering cities it lost to Golkar.

In the Presidential election of 2004 the party supported its leader, Megawati Sukarno, in a minor coalition with the revivalist Protestant Party PDS. These two parties gained 21% of the popular vote in the parliamentary elections. In the first round of the Presidential elections the PDIP supported candidate secured 27% of the vote. In the second round the PDIP candidate secured 39% of the vote. The result led to the election of Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono promoted by the Demokrat Party as the new President.