

Understanding Asia: Transforming Families



Join in-person:

Date: 20. January 2026

Time: 12:15 – 13:45

Location: Via Zoom only

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A Family Affair

The rise of the Djojohadikusmo dynasty in Indonesian politics

Presented by **Dr. Jemma Purdey (Monash University)**

On the evening of Prabowo Subianto's inauguration as Indonesia's 8th President on 20 October 2024, a very exclusive party was held in a downtown Jakarta ballroom. Those in attendance were dressed in matching *batik* and had a very special connection to each other and to the new president. All are members of the Djojohadisumo family, descendants of Prabowo's grandfather, Margono. The celebration was the culmination of over two decades of work to build a political platform for the current patriarch, Prabowo. But more than that, it was the realisation of a dream held for at least three generations, to achieve the ultimate prize for this family.

Over the past two decades, dynastic politics has become more and more prominent in Indonesia. Today many of the leading political parties are headed by dynastic families, including those led by former presidents, Megawati Sukarnoputri and Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. The son of the most recent past president, Joko Widodo, is Prabowo's Vice President.

This talk will describe the rise of this Indonesian family within the context of the increasing dominance of dynastic politics since Indonesia's reformasi in 1998. What has fuelled this rise? And what does Prabowo's success tell us about how the public feel about the role of the family in politics?

Dr. Jemma Purdey is Adjunct Fellow at the Australia Indonesia Centre, Monash University. Her research interests include Indonesian politics and contemporary history, and Australia-Indonesia interactions. Her recent publications include *Indonesia: State and Society in Transition* (Lynne Rienner, 2020), co-authored with Antje Missbach and Dave McRae, and *Film Activism in Contemporary Indonesia* (Routledge, 2025), co-edited with Edwin Jurriens and Novi Kurnia. Jemma is Chair of the Board and Commissioning Editor of the magazine *Inside Indonesia*, co-host of the podcast *Talking Indonesia* and founding Director of the *ReelOzInd! Australia Indonesia Short Film Festival*.