Tomorrow's Affairs
Analysis of today
Assessment of tomorrow

By: TA | AP Insight

Thousands of troops on the streets of Jakarta while the investigation into the wiretapping of the president continues



Indonesia's military is deploying more than 20,000 troops and personnel to the capital, Jakarta, officials said Wednesday, as authorities investigate an alleged illegal wiretapping operation targeting the country's president that has led to the detention of three senior police generals.

The scandal took on added significance after the presidential palace said the alleged wiretapping targeting President Prabowo Subianto could be regarded as conduct "leading toward treason."

Sensitive information accessible through a head of state's communications could endanger the state and national leadership, it said.

Among those implicated is Gen. Listyo Sigit Prabowo, who was appointed presidential chief of staff last month.

The president dismissed him Wednesday. Listyo previously served as national police chief after being appointed by then- President Joko Widodo in 2021.

There are allegations that Cabinet officials, politicians, journalists, civil society leaders and business executives were also subjected to unauthorized surveillance.

Thousands of troops deploy to the capital amid the arrests

Authorities have not confirmed that the deployment is connected to the wiretapping probe.

The first phase began on Monday with 2,100 personnel from units already stationed in Jakarta.

Troops from outside the capital were to start arriving Wednesday, bringing the total number of personnel involved to 20,980, according to the navy operations assistant, Vice Adm. Yayan Sofiyan.

The new deployments include troops from marine and navy units as well as training centers and naval bases from Java and Lampung province.

An additional 13,140 personnel are on standby and ready for deployment if needed, Sofiyan said.

> Troop deployments are a normal occurrence - Muhammad Nas

Sofiyan did not elaborate on the purpose of the deployment or respond to questions about whether there were concerns about security or political tensions in Jakarta.

Indonesian armed forces spokesperson Maj. Gen. Muhammad Nas said the troop movement was standard procedure for maintaining national security and territorial integrity.

"Troop deployments are a normal occurrence," Nas said, adding that the military "must always be prepared to protect the entire nation and safeguard the integrity of the Republic of Indonesia."

Presidential office raises concerns about national security

The minister of state secretariat, Prasetyo Hadi, told a news conference Wednesday at the presidential palace in Jakarta that the alleged surveillance of the president raised concerns about national security.

"If we are talking about a head of state, there is a great deal of highly sensitive information that could potentially be used for purposes that endanger the interests of the nation," Hadi said. "What they did could be considered as leading toward an act of treason because it endangers state interests, including the country's leadership."

Yusril Ihza Mahendra, the coordinating

minister for law, human rights, immigration and corrections, said investigators had found preliminary indications that the alleged wiretapping operation may have gone beyond illegal interception and could point to a broader effort to undermine the government.

> There are signs and indications pointing toward an act of treason - Yusril Ihza Mahendra

He stressed that the assessment was not final and that investigators were continuing to explore the motive and ultimate objective of the surveillance.

“Based on the progress of the investigation so far, there are signs and indications pointing toward an act of treason,” Mahendra said in a separate news conference on Wednesday.

He said investigators initially had sufficient evidence to pursue wiretapping and interception charges, but subsequent findings suggested the operation may have been aimed at “paralyzing the government so that it could not function.”

As the alleged interceptions specifically targeted the president, investigators are examining whether additional charges under Article 191 of Indonesia’s Criminal Code, which carries penalties up to the death sentence, may apply.

Who could have ordered any wiretapping remains unclear

Indonesian police announced in a televised news conference late Tuesday that they had detained three senior police generals as suspects in the investigation.

Police named Listyo and two other police generals, Ahrie Sonta Nasution and Eko Hadi Santoso, as suspects in a case involving illegal interception of communications, unlawful access to electronic systems and the deletion of electronic data, and said they were detained Sunday.



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Police allege the unauthorized wiretapping took place between 2025 and 2026 — when Listyo was Indonesia's police chief — and that the suspects ordered the wiretaps without following proper procedure.

The suspects are also accused of ordering in late October the deletion of files containing intercepted communications, allegedly in an attempt to conceal evidence and erase traces of the operation.

Bambang Rukminto, a police analyst at the Institute for Security and Strategic Studies, said the alleged wiretapping of a sitting president raised far more serious questions than the surveillance of business executives, political party leaders or other public figures.

While wiretapping lower-profile targets could potentially be used for intimidation or to gain political leverage, the same explanation would be difficult to apply in this case, Rukminto said.

“But if the target is the president, what would the motive be? Intimidating the president is clearly not a plausible explanation,” Rukminto said.

“The investigation should establish not only the perpetrators, but also the intended use of the information and the parties that may have had an interest in obtaining it,” he said.

The suspects have not responded publicly to the wiretapping allegations.

Adrianus Meliala, a criminologist at the

University of Indonesia and a former commissioner of the National Police Commission, said the allegations raised questions about whether the surveillance was conducted on behalf of interests outside the police force or the state.

“No one expected Listyo Sigit Prabowo to be named a suspect,” said Meliala. “But if the allegations are proven, the case could be understood in the context of political maneuvering. Anyone who engages in politics must also be prepared to face the political consequences.”