



IDN/ANTARA

## PRESIDENT JOKOWI HALAL BIHALAL TO MEGAWATI SOEKARNOPUTRI

President Joko Widodo (left) and First Lady Iriana Joko Widodo (right) talk with Megawati Soekarnoputri (center) during the Halal Bihalal for Eid al-Fitr 1444 Hijriah at Megawati Soekarnoputri's residence, Jalan Teuku Umar, Menteng, Jakarta, Thursday (27/4).

# Prepare to Face El Nino in Aug: Minister Pandjaitan

**Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs and Investment Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan has urged all ministries, agencies, and local governments to prepare to mitigate the impact of El Niño, which has been forecast for August 2023.**

HE said that in 2015, the occurrence of El Niño triggered drought as well as forest and land fires in several regions in Indonesia, which led to a decline in agricultural and mining production and eventually pushed up the inflation rate.

During that year, 41 percent of paddy fields in Indonesia experienced extreme

drought, causing food inflation, which added to the overall national inflation rate, he said on Wednesday (26/4).

"Hence, I ask all related ministries/agencies as well as local governments to begin early preparation and consider all the steps that must be taken, thus the bad situation that occurred eight years ago will not happen again," the coordinating

minister said.

Currently, the government is preparing to conduct weather modification to mitigate the impact of El Niño, he added.

Recently, high temperatures have been reported in several parts of Indonesia, the minister noted.

Quoting a statement issued by secretary general of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Petteri Taalas, Pandjaitan said that the La Niña phenomenon, which prevailed for three consecutive years and caused wetter weather, has finally ended.

Meanwhile, El Niño will trigger higher temperatures, making the weather drier.

Based on data obtained from the Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs

and Investment, sea temperatures have reached their highest level since 2016. In addition, recently, a heat wave swept through Asia, with several countries reporting record-high temperatures in some areas.

"According to the weather modeling that we (the ministry) have obtained, El Niño is predicted to occur in August 2023, although it is uncertain how severe (the impact of) El Niño will be," the coordinating minister said.

According to the World Food Program (WFP), three out of five households lost some of their income due to drought, while one out of five households had to reduce their spending on food because of disaster, he added.

"Hence, we will prepare for (facing) the most extreme conditions," he said. (\*)