

PERSPECTIVE

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North Sumatra's 2018 Election: Identity Politics Ruled the Day

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The North Sumatra gubernatorial election was among the largest local elections this year.
- Edy Rahmayadi, a former commander of the army strategic command, and his running-mate, Musa Rajeckshah, a local businessman, were supported by Gerindra, PKS, PAN, Golkar, Hanura, Nasdem, and Democrat party. They defeated PDIP's candidate Djarot Saiful Hidayat, former Jakarta vice-governor, and his running-mate, a young Jakarta-based businessman Sihar Sitorus.
- Voters' preferences were influenced by identity politics. Muslim districts overwhelmingly voted for the all-Muslim ticket (Edy-Musa) and Christian districts for the religiously combined ticket (Djarot-Sihar).
- On the surface, North Sumatra's election resembled national politics as PDIP went head-to-head with Gerindra-PKS. However, the fact that other ruling coalition parties like Golkar, Hanura and Nasdem, supported Gerindra-PKS dampened the rivalry between the coalitions.
- Due to the fluidity of coalitions, *pilkada* results are not the best indicators for the upcoming presidential and legislative elections. However, the North Sumatra *pilkada* provided a training ground for party machineries for 2019.

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INTRODUCTION

On 27 June 2018, Indonesian voters in 171 regions voted for governors, mayors and regents. This was the third simultaneous regional elections (*pilkada*) held since 2015. With 152 million eligible voters and a turnout of 77.5% on gubernatorial, 75.56% on regency, and 73.82% on mayoral, elections,¹ this year's *pilkada* was among the world's largest one-day elections.

Due to its proximity to the 2019 presidential election, some observers considered *pilkada* a barometer to gauge the popularity of parties and coalitions, and of President Joko Widodo. The fact that the candidates backed by the main government party Indonesian Democratic Party for Struggle (PDIP) have only won in six out of seventeen provinces and lost in the four largest provinces of West Java, Central Java, East Java and North Sumatra, has triggered concerns that the President's popularity is waning.

The defeat of PDIP in North Sumatra in particular is considered a huge blow to the party's posture in the outer Java regions. PDIP, with 16 seats, is reputedly the second strongest party in the province, after Golkar, who has 17 seats.

What underlying factors contributed to the results of North Sumatra's 2018 gubernatorial elections, and will these results have any bearing on the 2019 presidential election?

This paper highlights some of the election's important aspects and analyses their influence on the 2019 presidential election. It begins by discussing North Sumatra's campaign strategies and voting patterns. As a conclusion, the paper argues that local democracy is not an ideal indicator of national politics because the former is always affected by its local contexts.

PILKADA: A DEMOCRATIC MILESTONE WITH MANY CHALLENGES

Direct elections of regional leaders were first held in 2005 and is one of the milestones of Indonesia's democracy. They are considered the best mechanism to ensure the prioritising of local needs and promote local leaders' accountability and is a successful product of post-reform 'decentralization', as governors, regents and mayors are no longer centrally appointed by the President and the Minister of Home Affairs.

Yet *pilkada* is not without its challenges. Money politics and identity politics, for example, have featured heavily during campaigns. The former manifests itself in two layers, firstly, as *mahar*, or money allegedly given by an aspiring candidate to secure a party's support for his/her candidacy.² Due to a dysfunctional party financing system, parties depend on their politicians, and on their offer of nominations for executive and legislative office, for funds.³ This also partly explains why some parties do not hesitate to endorse candidates who are former graft convicts.⁴

Secondly, money politics appears as vote-buying attempts, that is, money and goods distributed among potential voters by candidates' campaign teams.⁵ A well-known practice is *serangan fajar*, or "dawn attack", when money and foodstuff such as rice, cooking oil and sugar are distributed after the dawn prayer on voting day. In addition, vote-buying also takes the form of club goods, such as donations to community associations, funds to repair roads, etc.⁶

Identity politics manifests itself in the mobilization of ethno-religious sentiments. In the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election, Islamist groups managed to prevent the re-election of the Christian-Chinese Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok) by mobilizing sectarian sentiments. Since then, sectarian campaigning has gained centre stage in Indonesian politics and become a strategy repeatedly used by Islamists to challenge the government.⁷

These two factors have also featured in North Sumatra's local elections. In Batak areas (around Lake Toba and the western coast), distribution of banknotes is rampant due to its cultural relevance. Here, wealth and generosity are considered desired qualities of leaders,⁸ as the act of distributing money is a sign of a patron's willingness to take care of his clients. High education and good reputation (e.g. having influential friends) are also considered leadership capital. The winner of the 2005 Toba-Samosir election, for example, was a Jakarta-based Batak who had close ties with a nationally well-known oil-palm tycoon.⁹

Vote-buying attempts are intertwined with identity and patronage, with candidates cultivating their ethnic-base long before the election period. For example, a Chinese candidate in the 2010 Medan mayoral election, who was known for his charitable works, received support from Chinese entrepreneurs and Chinese associations.¹⁰

Undoubtedly, money politics has induced corruption. To date, the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) has convicted several of North Sumatra's former governors and mayors/regents on graft charges. Former governor Gatot Pujo Nugroho, for example, was convicted of embezzling and bribing officials, incurring more than IDR 65 billion (USD 4.52 million) in state losses.¹¹ The first-ever elected Medan mayor Abdillah was convicted of embezzling IDR 26.9 billion (USD 1.87 million).¹² Due to these many cases, the KPK, which did not use to have provincial branches, opened its branch in North Sumatra in 2016.

These graft cases may have made North Sumatran voters sceptical about local elections, and this has resulted in a generally low voter-turnout. The 2015 Medan mayoral election's turnout, for example, was 27%, the lowest across the archipelago. A survey done on voting behaviour in 2015 revealed that 34% of respondents in Medan considered corruption a serious problem in the government.¹³ This year, however, despite concerns on scepticism¹⁴ 4.8 million (52.38%) out of 9.1 million turned out in the gubernatorial election, higher than in 2013 (47%) and 2008 (37%).¹⁵

NORTH SUMATRA'S 2018 GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION: CORRELATION TO NATIONAL POLITICS

North Sumatra's election was a two-horse race between Edy Rahmayadi, the former commander of Army Strategic Command and former commander of Northern Sumatra military command, and his running-mate Musa Rajeckshah, a young businessman whose family is rooted in North Sumatra's politics, against Djarot Saiful Hidayat, former vice-governor of Jakarta under Ahok, and his running-mate Sihar Sitorus, a young western-educated Jakarta-based businessman, son of D.L. Sitorus, who was a well-known oil-palm tycoon. Edy (Malay-Muslim) and Musa (Arab-Muslim) formed the all-Muslim ticket, whereas Djarot (Javanese-Muslim) and Sihar (Batak-Christian) formed the religiously-combined ticket. Edy-Musa was

supported by Gerindra, PKS, PAN, Democrats, Golkar, Nasdem and Hanura, while Djarot-Sihar was only supported by PDIP and PPP.¹⁶

The election was a landslide triumph of Edy-Musa who gained almost 3 million votes (57.66%) while Djarot-Sihar gained only 2.19 million (42.34%).

The competition between the main government party PDIP and Gerindra-PKS is one aspect which made this election similar to national politics.¹⁷ However, other government parties, like Golkar, Nasdem and Hanura, supported the Gerindra-PKS coalition and this gave it a local context. To directly correlate North Sumatra's election with the 2019 presidential election is thus problematic as parties in the Gerindra-PKS coalition support different presidential candidates. For example, in a gubernatorial rally attended by Golkar's leader – and Jokowi supporter – Airlangga Hartarto, Gerindra's leader Prabowo quickly hushed some participants who shouted "Prabowo for President!"¹⁸ The coalitions were also fluid elsewhere across the archipelago, with PDIP coalescing with Gerindra in 48 regions, with PKS in 33 regions and with both in 21 regions.

Another aspect was the candidates' profile. Edy, like Prabowo, is a former military general, meanwhile Djarot's closeness to Ahok, made voters connect him with President Jokowi, Ahok's closest ally. During the campaign, however, these subjective attributes did not play a significant role. Moreover, Edy could not readily be considered Prabowo's ally. In fact, he was among the organizers of Jokowi's daughter's wedding in Medan in November 2017.¹⁹

The third aspect is the support by national leaders. Aside from Prabowo, Gatot Nurmantyo, the former commander of the Armed Forces – who had aspired to be presidential candidate in 2019, campaigned for Edy-Musa, as did the Former President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and his son Agus Yudhoyono.²⁰ For Agus, this was personally strategic, as he had earlier aspired to be Prabowo's vice-presidential candidate in 2019.²¹ Meanwhile, PDIP's leader Megawati and PPP's chairman Romahurmuziy, who also had aspired to be Jokowi's running-mate in 2019, attended Djarot-Sihar's final rally and delivered a speech emphasizing tolerance.²²

MORE "LOCAL" ISSUES: THE INTENSIFYING OF IDENTITY POLITICS

Local elections, however, tend to be about local issues and North Sumatra was no exception. Edy's camp successfully used the "insider-vs-outsider", or "sons-of-the-soil", narrative to attract votes. "Sons-of-the-soil" assumes that individuals born or raised in a particular region, regardless of their ethnicities, would know the region better than outsiders. Edy's camp stated that his years as Northern Sumatra's commander and Musa's experience as a local businessman, qualified them to be better leaders compared to Djarot-Sihar who are based in Java.²³ Responding to this, Sihar claimed that he is of ethnic Batak descent, and the Bataks form the province's largest ethnic group.²⁴ Yet, as will be elaborated further, being a Batak turned out to only be relevant in Batak-Christian areas.

Edy-Musa also benefited from the mobilization of Islamic sentiments. Observers had warned about the possibility of an "Ahok Effect" or bitter Islamist sectarian campaigning against a non-Muslim candidate. Although this did not happen in North Sumatra, Edy-Musa still attracted predominantly Muslim votes because they were the only all-Muslim ticket. In a street

parade, Islamist group GNPf-MUI called for Muslims to vote for Edy-Musa, and not *kafir* (infidel) leaders, clearly referring to the Christian Sihar.²⁵ Some banners calling for people to vote for Muslim leaders were found in mosques.²⁶ Sermons which called for voters to support Muslims were also interpreted by mosque-goers as a call to vote for Edy-Musa.²⁷ The Election Monitoring Body (Bawaslu) had in fact forbidden the use of places of worship as “clandestine campaign venues”. However, religious sermons were difficult to control.²⁸

Religious tension, however, was mostly felt only on social media (e.g. WhatsApp groups and Facebook) where religiously-charged news – real and fake – sparked debates among netizens. One example was the rumour that Edy had received “blessings” from Christian pastors,²⁹ which temporarily brought concerns among some Muslim voters. Social media was also intensively used to cultivate religious voters. Edy-Musa’s camp, for example, called for Muslims to perform communal dawn prayer on voting day and to afterwards flock to the booths (to vote for Edy-Musa).

Secondly, Edy-Musa’s Islamic credentials were strengthened by Musa’s charitable works for mosques long before his candidacy³⁰ and close relationship with Abdul Somad, a popular social-media preacher associated with Islamist groups.³¹ On the final campaign day, Somad and Tengku Zulkarnaen from the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) held a religious gathering which was attended by Edy-Musa and Gatot Nurmantyo, who called for those present to vote for “sons-of-the-soil”.³² Edy Rahmayadi, however, at times emphasized his military (nationalist) background to attract non-Muslim votes.³³

In contrast, Djarot-Sihar were unable to bank on their Javanese and Batak credentials. Ethnically, Batak (45%) and Javanese (33%), are the largest groups in North Sumatra, thus the pairing of Djarot and Sihar could have been effective if voters had prioritised ethnic loyalty. However, despite their ethnicities, both were considered “outsiders”. Some voters pinpointed the fact that Djarot registered for a North Sumatra’s resident card only shortly prior to his candidacy.³⁴ Despite being a Javanese, Djarot did not have any real connection to the Javanese born in North Sumatra, and so, the support of North Sumatra’s Javanese organization “Pujakesuma” for him was not effective.³⁵

PDIP’s decision to send Djarot to North Sumatra was probably because the Batak (Christians) in Jakarta were known to be staunch supporters of Ahok.³⁶ However, North Sumatra’s Batak-Muslims prioritized their religion, and not ethnicity.

Of the 12 electoral districts, Djarot-Sihar only won in four Batak-Christian districts in the west-coast, while Edy-Musa won in all Muslim districts in the east-coast and south (see Map and Table 1). In addition to the predominance of the “insider-vs-outsider” narrative, the vote distribution across districts shows that religion has triumphed against ethnicity. Javanese-Muslim areas, such as Deli-Serdang, Serdang Bedagai and Asahan, prioritised their religion. The Batak-Muslim South Tapanuli also voted for the all-Muslim tickets.³⁷ Even in the areas in which Batak and Javanese are of similar proportions, such as Medan and Labuan Batu, voters prioritised their Muslim identity and not ethnicity. The only exception is Simalungun and Siantar city (district 10) where although Muslims and Christians are of similar proportions, Djarot-Sihar won. Simalungun is were J.R. Saragih, the failed third candidate, is currently regent. He had openly supported Djarot-Sihar, and so voters may have either prioritized their Batak ethnicity or were loyal to Saragih.

Map: Voting pattern in North Sumatra’s Electoral Districts

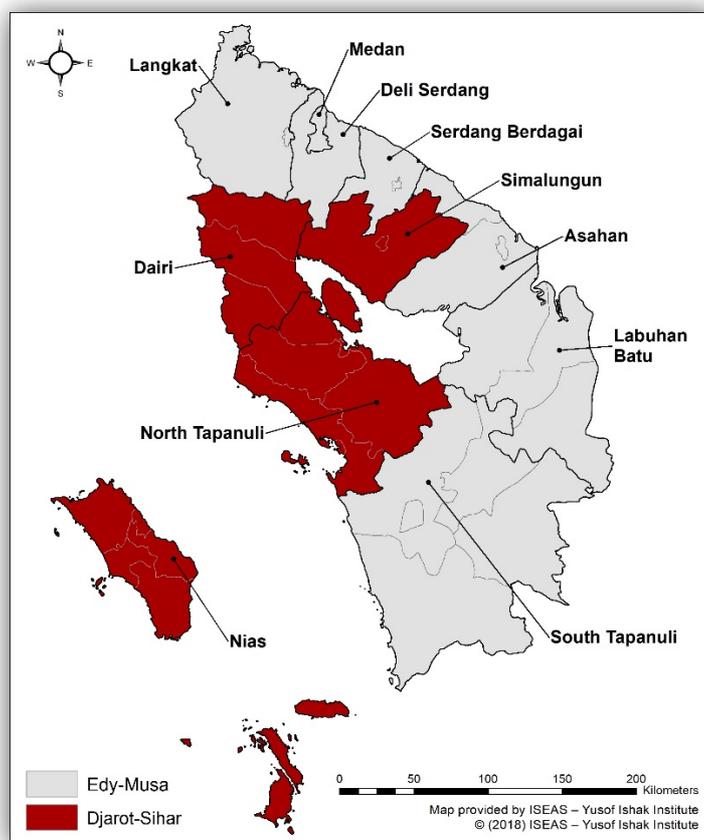


Table 1
Distribution of Votes and Ethno-religious Demography
of North Sumatra’s Electoral Districts

No.	Electoral Districts	Edy-Musa (1)	Djarot-Sihar (1)	Religions (2)	Ethnicities (2)
1	North Medan	61.28%	38.72%	Islam (59.68%) Christian (28.26%) Buddha (9.9%)	Batak (35.2%) Javanese (33%) Chinese (9.7%) Malay (6.9%)
2	South Medan	51.88%	48.1%		
3	Deli Serdang	61.15%	38.85%	Islam (78.24%) Christian (19.5%)	Javanese (51.9%) Batak (30.64%) Malay (6.39%) Chinese (2.32%)
4	Serdang Bedagai, Tebing Tinggi city.	65.64%	34.36%	Islam (89%) Christian (18.64%)	Javanese (48%) Batak (30%) Malay (6.73%) Chinese (4.7%)

5	Asahan, Tanjung Balai, Batu Bara	81.40%	18.60%	Islam (87.2%) Christian (37.3%)	Javanese (38.6%) Batak (33.2%) Malay (21.13%) Chinese (2.7%)
6	Labuhan Batu, South Labuhan Batu, North Labuhan Batu.	81.77%	18.23%	Islam (82%) Christian (17.6%)	Batak (46.5%) Javanese (45.5%) Malay (4.3%) Chinese (1%)
7	South Tapanuli, Mandailing Natal, Padang Lawas, Padang Sidempuan city.	86.21%	13.79%	Islam (89.1%) Christian (10.7%)	Batak (82.8%) Javanese (9.4%)
8	Nias, South Nias, North Nias, West Nias, Gunungsitoli.	29.18%	70.82%	Christian (96%) Islam (4%)	Nias (99%)
9	North Tapanuli, Central Tapanuli, Tobasa, Humbahas, Sibolga city.	13.8%	86.82%	Christian (75%) Islam (23%)	Batak (85.65%) Javanese (3.2%) Malay (1%)
10	Simalungun, Siantar city.	40.40%	59.60%	Islam (49.6%) Christian (48.31%)	Batak (58%) Javanese (35.38%) Chinese (2.5%)
11	Dairi, West Pakpak, Karo.	13.55%	86.45%	Christian (74.23%) Islam (25.4%)	Batak (93.23%) Javanese (4.32%)
12	Langkat, Binjai city.	70.41%	29.59%	Islam (86.55%) Christian (10%)	Javanese (54.35%) Batak (21%) Malay (10.1%) Chinese (3.55%)

Source: (1) *Lingkaran Survei Indonesia (LSI)*, Antara News, 27 June 2018, <https://www.antaranews.com/info-pilkada/quick-count/prov-sumatera-utara/97> (2) Processed by Author from Indonesian Census 2010 data. Ethnic-groups less than 1% are not included in the table.

Money politics was not as evident. Edy-Musa was rumoured to be distributing alms-coupons of IDR 500,000 (USD 35), but this was denied by the team.³⁸ One day before the voting, sacks of rice with a photo of Syamsul Arifin, former North Sumatra governor who openly supported Djarot-Sihar, were confiscated, but Syamsul denied that this was connected to the election.³⁹ Both allegations fizzled out quickly in the absence of further investigations. Bawaslu had also mentioned that east-coast plantation areas could be susceptible to electoral intimidation as the ‘management’ could force their labourers to vote for certain candidates⁴⁰, but there was no report to this effect.⁴¹

The distribution of religions throughout the districts thus showed that the oft-mentioned division of “east-coast vs west-coast”⁴² does not refer to geographical, but to religious, especially Islamic, influence in voting. This is not a surprise, since Islam is the province’s predominant religion and gubernatorial candidates supported by Islamist party PKS have always won.

Despite the predominance of voting based on religion, the absence of bitter sectarian campaigning can be explained in the following ways: firstly, unlike in Jakarta, there was no “blasphemy” allegation that the Islamists could anchor on. Secondly, unlike in Jakarta where ethnicity is considered associated with religion (for example, Betawi are considered Muslim, Batak are non-Muslim), in North Sumatra, Muslims and non-Muslims are considered equally represented in major ethnic-groups, such as the Bataks. Sharing a common ethnic background might have prevented more serious friction between religions. Thirdly, many North Sumatran (Muslims) considered it necessary to protect the province from a Jakarta-like bitter campaigning.⁴³

WILL THIS IMPACT THE 2019 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION?

What are some of the distinctive features in North Sumatra’s *pilkada*? Firstly, party coalitions are fluid. Government and opposition parties can even coalesce to support a candidate. Thus, a candidate’s victory in a region does not indicate that a certain national coalition is gaining popularity.

Secondly, local elections are about local candidates’ appeal. Parties are less influential and function merely as candidate nominators. They tend to nominate figures that are already popular, instead of promoting their own cadres. In North Sumatra, the winning coalition supported a well-known former general and a local entrepreneur. They won using locally relevant narratives, such as “sons-of-the-soil”.

Thirdly, the candidates’ victory does not correlate with President Jokowi’s popularity. In North Sumatra, although the PKS candidates won in the gubernatorial elections, 52% of voters would vote for Jokowi whereas only 40.4% would vote for Prabowo.⁴⁴

However, this is not to say that the 2018 *Pilkada* will not have any bearing on 2019. Firstly, the political preference of the new governors will to some extent influence the voting pattern in their provinces. In 2014, for example, the governors of West Java, West Sumatra and West Nusa Tenggara swayed their electorates towards Prabowo Subianto.⁴⁵ The winners in North Sumatra, however, have not decided who to support in 2019.⁴⁶ Judging from the parties in their coalition, they may lean either way, toward President Jokowi or towards Prabowo. Secondly, *pilkada* has provided a training ground for party machineries in their preparation for 2019. For PKS, they now know that religious campaigning works well in North Sumatra, where they have won, and in West Java and Central Java, where their candidates only lost by a small margin. PKS-Gerindra is likely to use the same strategy of Islamic-charged campaigning in the 2019 election.

- ¹ <https://pilkada.tempo.co/read/1105876/tingkat-partisipasi-pemilih-di-pilkada-2018-di-bawah-target> (accessed 14 July 2018).
- ² This year, an individual who failed to get the backing of Gerindra party in East Java claimed that he was asked to donate IDR 40 billion (USD 2.8 million). Upon denying this, the party blamed the implementation of direct elections for the higher electoral costs that force parties to collect *mahar* from aspiring candidates. <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20180113180020-32-268637/dituding-minta-mahar-gerindra-salahkan-sistem-pilkada> (accessed 17/07/18).
- ³ Marcus Mietzner, “Political party financing in Indonesia is a recipe for corruption” Strategic Review Oct-Dec 2013, <http://sr-indonesia.com/read/political-party-financing-in-indonesia-is-a-recipe-for-corruption> (accessed 23/08/2018).
- ⁴ Deasy Simandjuntak, “Persistent Patronage: Explaining the popularity of former corruption convicts as candidates in Indonesia’s regional elections”, ISEAS Perspective No. 55, 2015, https://www.iseas.edu.sg/images/pdf/ISEAS_Perspective_2015_55.pdf (accessed 23/08/2018).
- ⁵ Deasy Simandjuntak, “Gifts and promises: Patronage democracy in a decentralised Indonesia,” *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 11.1 (2012): 99-126.
- ⁶ Edward Aspinall and Mada Sukmajati, “Patronage and Clientelism in Indonesian electoral politics”, in Aspinall and Sukmajati, eds. *Electoral dynamics in Indonesia: Money politics, patronage and clientelism at the grassroots*. NUS Press, 2016, p. 23.
- ⁷ Deasy Simandjuntak, “Cards stacked against Jokowi in Indonesia’s new political landscape”. Channel NewsAsia, 16/01/2018. <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asia/commentary-cards-stacked-against-jokowi-in-indonesia-s-new-9848476> (accessed 16/07/2018).
- ⁸ Deasy Simandjuntak, “Beyond wealth and pleasant posture: exploring elite competition in the patronage democracy of Indonesia.” *The Anthropology of Elites*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2013. 95-112.
- ⁹ Deasy Simandjuntak, “Gifts and Promises”, 2012.
- ¹⁰ Ahmad Taufan Damanik, “Medan, North Sumatra: Between ethnic politics and money politics” in Aspinall and Sukmajati, 2016, pp. 70-85.
- ¹¹ <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2017/03/09/20295981/beri.uang.ketok.kepada.dprd.sumut.gatot.pujo.divonis.4.tahun.penjara> (accessed 17/07/2018).
- ¹² <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2008/09/22/12232833/Walikota.Medan.Divonis.5.tahun.Penjara> (accessed 17/07/2018).
- ¹³ Diego Fossati, “The state of local politics in Indonesia: survey evidence from three cities”, *Trends in Southeast Asia* no.5, ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, 2016. https://www.iseas.edu.sg/images/pdf/TRS5_16.pdf
- ¹⁴ Interviews with multiple potential voters, 21-26 June 2018.
- ¹⁵ <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2018/07/09/19405841/selisih-15-persen-djarot-sihar-kalah-di-pilkada-sumut> (accessed 18/07/2018).
- ¹⁶ There was a third pair, J.R. Saragih, a popular Batak-Christian regent of Simalungun and head of North Sumatra’s branch of the Democrats, and his running mate Ance Selian from PKB. Their candidacy was however dismissed by the Electoral Commission. Interview with Benget Silitonga, Commissioner at North Sumatra’s Election Commission, 17 May 2018. Upon dismissal, Saragih, against his own party, announced his support for Djarot-Sihar and called for his supporters to vote for them. <https://www.liputan6.com/pilkada/read/3422126/gagal-jadi-cagub-jr-saragih-ajak-relawan-menangkan-djarot-sihar> (accessed 27/07/2018).
- ¹⁷ At the national level, Democrat aspires to be a balancing party. However their recent moves suggest that they have gradually become an opposition, while PAN, which is officially still in the government coalition, has moved closer to Gerindra. See <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20171030080605-32-252055/manuver-sby-dan-strategi-politik-penyeimbang-ala-demokrat> (accessed 19/07/2018) and

<https://nasional.tempo.co/read/891926/analisis-politik-ini-sebut-dosa-terbesar-pan-di-kabinet-jokowi> (accessed 19/07/2018).

¹⁸ ‘5 Parpol deklarasikan Edy Rahmayadi-Ijeck di Medan’ (‘5 Parties Declare for Edy Rahmayadi-Ijeck in Medan’), <https://www.merdeka.com/politik/5-parpol-deklarasikan-edy-rahmayadi-ijeck-di-medan.html>, (accessed 16/05/18).

¹⁹ <https://www.liputan6.com/news/read/3153227/pangkostrad-dapat-tugas-khusus-di-pernikahan-kahiyang-bobby> (accessed 20/07/2018).

²⁰ <https://news.detik.com/berita/4055905/sby-harap-gubernur-sumut-mendatang-sayang-rakyat> (accessed 23/07/2018).

²¹ <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-3539088/demokrat-tunggu-ruu-pemilu-sebelum-usung-agus-yudhoyono-di-pilpres> (accessed 25/07/2018).

²² Baharoeddin Siregar stadium, Deli-Serdang, 23 June 2018.

Jokowi ended up choosing Ma’ruf Amin, a senior cleric who is also the supreme leader of the Islamic organization Nahdlatul Ulama, as his vice-presidential candidate.

²³ Interview with Sugiart Santoso, Gerindra politician, deputy-head of Edy-Musa’s campaign team, 19 May 2018.

²⁴ Interview with Sihar Sitorus, vice-gubernatorial candidate, 19 May 2018.

²⁵ GNPf-MUI was among the groups calling for the imprisonment of Ahok for blasphemy in 2017. http://www.medanbisnisdaily.com/news/online/read/2018/05/15/37010/gnpf_mui_serukan_umat_islam_pilih_erasmas?fb_comment_id=1967905783283173_1971896552884096#f1313b0052becf4 (accessed 25/07/2018).

²⁶ <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2018/06/08/21392391/soal-baliho-yayasan-masjid-al-jihad-sebut-aneh-jika-ada-yang-tersinggung> (accessed 23/07/2018).

²⁷ Informal conversations with potential voters, 21-26 June 2018.

²⁸ Interview with Syafrida Rasahan, Head of North Sumatra’s Election Monitory Body, 16 May 2018.

²⁹ <http://medan.tribunnews.com/2018/05/09/video-viral-edy-rahmayadi-didoakan-pendeta-ini-komentar-beberapa-pendeta-yang-berhasil-dihimpun> (accessed 23/07/2018).

³⁰ Interview with Chairil Huda, senior journalist, 15 May 2018.

³¹ Somad met Rizieq Shihab, the leader of the Islamist mobilization in Jakarta in 2017. . <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-3792754/ini-yang-dibahas-ustaz-abdul-somad-dengan-habib-rizieq-di-mekkah> (accessed 22/07/2018).

³² <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2018/04/06/17594281/relawan-gnr-dukung-gatot-nurmantyo-sebagai-calon-presiden-di-pilpres-2019> (accessed 23/07/2018).

³³ Interview with Edy Rahmayadi, gubernatorial candidate, 25 June 2018.

³⁴ <https://news.detik.com/berita/4062549/heboh-soal-e-ktp-djarot-saiful-hidayat-ini-penjelasan-mendagri> (accessed 23/08/2018).

³⁵ Interview with Suherdi, Secretary General of Pujakesuma, 23 June 2018.

³⁶ <http://mediaindonesia.com/read/detail/73175-sebagian-besar-etnis-di-jakarta-dukung-ahok-djarot> (accessed 25/07/2018).

³⁷ South Tapanuli’s electoral district includes Padang Lawas, the area of “register 40” protected forest, upon 47,000 hectares of which Sihar’s late father D.L. Sitorus was convicted of land-grabbing in 2006.

³⁸ <https://news.detik.com/berita/4068803/paslon-erasmas-mengaku-diserang-isu-kupon-zakat-palsu> (accessed 25/07/2018).

³⁹ <http://medan.tribunnews.com/2018/06/26/ini-klarifikasi-syamsul-arifin-soal-rencana-bagi-bagi-sembako-di-jalan-puri> (accessed 3/8/2018).

⁴⁰ Informal discussion with National and North Sumatra Bawaslu leaders, Deli Serdang, 25 June 2018.

⁴¹ Serious allegations of foul-play were not on the gubernatorial election, but on the regent-election of North Tapanuli. However the case was closed by Bawaslu.

<http://medan.tribunnews.com/2018/07/14/laporan-dugaan-pelanggaran-pilkada-taput-dihentikan-bawaslu-begini-reaksi-tim-jtp-frends?page=2> (accessed 3/8/2018).

⁴² Interview with Muryanto Amin, Dean of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, North Sumatra University, 27 June 2018.

⁴³ Informal conversations with potential voters, 21-26 June 2018.

⁴⁴ <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2018/07/03/17440961/exit-poll-smrc-jokowi-ungguli-prabowo-di-5-provinsi> (accessed 6/8/2018).

⁴⁵ <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2014/05/19/2240508/Aher.Siap.Jadi.Jurkam.Prabowo-Hatta> (accessed 23/08/2018).

⁴⁶ Interview with Musa Rajeckshah, 27 June 2018.

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