

PERSPECTIVE

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Singapore | 25 January 2021

How the 2020 *Pilkada* Reflected Major Structural Flaws in Indonesian Politics

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Gibran Rakabuming Raka (L), the son of President Joko Widodo, arriving with his wife Selvie to cast their votes for his mayoral run in Solo on December 9, 2020, as Indonesia kicked off its nationwide elections.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Indonesia's regional elections (*Pilkada*) was held for 270 regions (municipalities/regencies and provinces) simultaneously on 9 December 2020— with the budget raised by about IDR5.2 trillion (US\$370 million) for implementation of health protocols during the elections. Despite wide criticism of the decision to proceed with the elections during the pandemic, high turnouts were achieved, averaging 76%.
- The 2020 *Pilkada* was remarkable for the lack of genuine ideological contestation among the candidates and political parties. This was reflected in the fluidity of political coalitions formed largely to pursue power instead of policy preferences.
- Dynastic politics featured more prominently in 2020 *Pilkada* than before. For example, the President's son and son-in-law contested and won in Solo and Medan. Many office-holders also clearly benefited from the advantages of incumbency, while newcomers suffered from high barriers to entry into the political arena.
- The socio-political implications of these developments are worrying. The winning or ruling coalitions will not face any real opposition if transactional politics is the order of the day. Consequently, check-and-balance mechanisms will be weak or non-existent, and room for public criticism will shrink. Worst, these trends at the regional level may influence politics at the national level and weaken democracy in the country.

LESS IDEOLOGY, MORE SELF INTEREST: A CHRONIC PROBLEM

In its most idealistic form, the foundation of democratic representation is the ability of voters to “elect politicians who reflect their beliefs and preferences”.¹

Using Müller and Strøm’s categorisation,² if the objectives of political parties are “vote-seeking, office-seeking, and policy-seeking”, the question then is: What fundamental principles can they offer to represent the people’s beliefs and preferences?

There is a broad consensus that Indonesia’s political landscape lacks ideological contestation. Although the country’s party system is more institutionalised than those in most neighbouring countries,³ its parties do not necessarily display ideological differences.⁴ They are therefore able to offer only limited social and economic policy alternatives.⁵ The only differentiation between parties is in the religious dimension, often identified as ‘cleavage’.⁶ This absence of fundamental socio-economic values to be contested paves the way for patronage to become the main driver of party behaviour,⁷ and necessarily leads to transactional politics based on the personal interests of those in power.

Subsequently, as voters become increasingly pragmatic and transactional in response to political actors’ ability to provide cash or other tangible goods,⁸ the fundamental implication for the way the country is run becomes ever more lethal. The lack of ideological concerns (or in a broader sense: ideals) and the personal interest in power, have come to characterise the way the government works, both at the national and sub-national levels. This has become a chronic disease spreading across government institutions and parliament, paralysing them from carrying out their prime responsibilities. Public policies and decisions also come to be crafted in an increasingly transactional fashion.

While a full-fledged analysis of this chronic problem may be a subject for another paper, here we argue that the recent regional elections (or *Pilkada*) in Indonesia in December 2020 amidst the COVID-19 pandemic evidently reflect the worrying conditions mentioned above, namely that in the absence of ideological contestations, self-interests take over, diminishing politics into a mere grab for power. This early post-mortem of the 2020 *Pilkada* considers how Indonesia’s electoral dynamics matter to the future of its democracy.

***PILKADA* 2020: A POST-MORTEM**

Three patterns repeatedly appeared throughout the 2020 *Pilkada*, i.e., single-pair (sole candidate) elections, dynastic politics, and the challenge of holding elections amid a health crisis.

Single - Pair Elections

One of the main trends in the 2020 *Pilkada* is the increased occurrence of single candidacy, indicating the tendency among incumbents to monopolise and insulate the electoral arena from competition.⁹ The results confirm this observation: Solo candidates won in four cities and 21 regencies (Table 1). They secured between 52.5% to 96.2% of total votes in their respective regions, and chalked up median electoral gains of 79.75%.¹⁰ This time, no ‘*Kotak*

*Kosong*⁷ (empty ballot boxes) came out as the victor, unlike what happened in Makassar in the 2018 *Pilkada*.¹¹

Table 1. Background of single-pair candidates and their electoral gains in the 2020 Subnational Elections

No	Subnational Unit	Head (Party Affiliation)	Deputy (Party Affiliation)	Incumbency Status	Dynastic Candidate ¹²	% of Total Votes
1	Kab. Humbang Hasundutan	Dosmar Banjarnahor (PDIP)	Oloan P. Nababan (unknown)	Incumbent	No	52.50%
2	Kota Pematangsiantar	Asner Silalahi (unknown)	Susanti Dewayani (unknown)	Newcomer	Yes (Deputy)	77.40%
3	Kota Gunungsitoli	Lakhomizaro Zebua (PDIP)	Sowa'a Laoli (PDIP)	Incumbent	Yes (Head)	79.30%
4	Kab. Pasaman	Benny Utama (Golkar)	Sabar AS (PD)	Former Incumbent	No	83.60%
5	Kab. Ogan Komering Ulu	Kuryana Azis (Nasdem)	Johan Anuar (Golkar)	Incumbent	No	64.80%
6	Kab. Ogan Komering Ulu Selatan	Popo Ali Martopo (unknown)	Sholehien Abuasir (unknown)	Incumbent	Yes (Head)	96.20%
7	Kab. Bengkulu Utara	Mian (PDIP)	Arie Septia Adinata (unknown)	Incumbent	No	71.70%
8	Kab. Kebumen	Arif Sugiyanto (unknown)	Ristawati Purwaningsih (PDIP)	Incumbent	Yes (Deputy)	60.80%
9	Kab. Wonosobo	Afif Nurhidayat (PDIP)	Muhammad Albar (PKB)	Newcomer	No	63.70%
10	Kab. Boyolali	Mohammad Said Hidayat (PDIP)	Wahyu Irawan (unknown)	Incumbent	No	95.50%
11	Kab. Sragen	Kusnidar Untung Yuni Sukowati (PDIP)	Suroto (PKB)	Incumbent	Yes (Head)	80.20%
12	Kab. Grobogan	Sri Sumarni (PDIP)	Bambang Pujiyanto (unknown)	Incumbent	No	86.20%
13	Kota Semarang	Hendar Prihadi (PDIP)	Hevearita Gunaryanti Rahayu (PDIP)	Incumbent	Yes (Deputy)	91.40%
14	Kab. Kediri	Hanindhito Himawan Pramana (PDIP)	Dewi Mariya Ulfa (unknown)	Newcomer	Yes (Head)	76.50%
15	Kab. Ngawi	Ony Anwar Harsono (unknown)	Dwi Rianto Jatmiko (PDIP)	Incumbent	Yes (Head)	94.30%
16	Kab. Badung	I Nyoman Giri Prasta (PDIP)	I Ketut Suiasa (PDIP)	Incumbent	No	94.60%
17	Kab. Sumbawa Barat	W. Musyafirin (PDIP)	Fud Syaifuddin (unknown)	Incumbent	No	74.40%
18	Kab. Kutai Kartanegara	Edi Damansyah (unknown)	Rendi Solihin (Golkar)	Incumbent	Yes (Deputy)	73.80%
19	Kota Balikpapan	Rahmad Mas'ud (Golkar)	Thohari Aziz (PDIP)	Incumbent	Yes (Head)	62.40%
20	Kab. Gowa	Adnan Purichta Ichsan (Golkar)	Abdul Rauf Malaganni (unknown)	Incumbent	Yes (Head)	91.10%
21	Kab. Soppeng	Kaswadi Razak (Golkar)	Lutfi Halide (Nasdem)	Incumbent	Yes (Deputy)	86.30%
22	Kab. Mamuju Tengah	Aras Tamauni (Golkar)	Muh. Amin Jasa (unknown)	Incumbent	Yes (Head)	94.60%
23	Kab. Raja Ampat	Abdul Faris Umlati (PD)	Orideko I. Burdam (unknown)	Incumbent	No	66.60%
24	Kab. Manokwari Selatan	Markus Waran (PDIP)	Wempie Welly Rengkung (Golkar)	Incumbent	No	93.10%
25	Kab. Pegunungan Arfak	Yosias Saroy (Nasdem)	Marinus Mandacan (PDIP)	Incumbent	No	N/A

Source: KPU Electronic Recapitulation System (Sirekap); authors

This shows two continuing trends. First, political coalitions are increasingly fluid, and ideological stances play a minimal role in their formation. The head-deputy combinations have not necessarily come from the same national coalition camp. The head may be a PDIP's cadre while the deputy may be a Democrat. Thus, while a candidate may be a PDIP cadre, the parties that endorsed him or her may include parties from outside the national governing coalition (See also Table 2). Parties fight over short-term political—in many cases, material—interests, and not in representation of cleavages in society.¹³

Table 2. Coalition of political parties of single-pair candidates in the 2020 Regional Elections

No	Subnational Unit	Head (Party Affiliation)	Deputy (Party Affiliation)	Members of Coalition in Regional Elections
1	Kab. Humbang Hasundutan	Dosmar Banjarnahor (PDIP)	Oloan P. Nababan (unknown)	PDIP, Nasdem, Golkar, Hanura, Demokrat
2	Kota Pematangsiantar	Asner Silalahi (unknown)	Susanti Dewayani (unknown)	PDIP, Golkar, Nasdem, Hanura, Gerindra, Demokrat
3	Kota Gunungsitoli	Lakhomizaro Zebua (PDIP)	Sowa'a Laoli (PDIP)	PDIP, Golkar, Hanura, Perindo, PKPI, Gerindra, Demokrat, PAN
4	Kab. Pasaman	Benny Utama (Golkar)	Sabar AS (PD)	PDIP, Golkar, Nasdem, PKB, PBB, PKS, Demokrat
5	Kab. Ogan Komering Ulu	Kuryana Azis (Nasdem)	Johan Anuar (Golkar)	PDIP, Golkar, Nasdem, Hanura, PKPI, PKB, Demokrat, PKS
6	Kab. Ogan Komering Ulu Selatan	Popo Ali Martopo (unknown)	Sholehien Abuasir (unknown)	PDIP, Golkar, Nasdem, Hanura, Perindo, PBB, PPP, Demokrat, PAN, PKS
7	Kab. Bengkulu Utara	Mian (PDIP)	Arie Septia Adinata (unknown)	PDIP, Golkar, Nasdem, Hanura, PKPI, PPP, Gerindra, PAN, PKS
8	Kab. Kebumen	Arif Sugiyanto (unknown)	Ristawati Purwaningsih (PDIP)	PDIP, Golkar, Nasdem, PPP, PKB, Gerindra, PAN, PKS, Demokrat
9	Kab. Wonosobo	Afif Nurhidayat (PDIP)	Muhammad Albar (PKB)	PDIP, Golkar, Nasdem, Hanura, PKB, Demokrat, PAN
10	Kab. Boyolali	Mohammad Said Hidayat (PDIP)	Wahyu Irawan (unknown)	PDIP
11	Kab. Sragen	Kusnidar Untung Yuni Sukowati (PDIP)	Suroto (PKB)	PDIP, Golkar, Nasdem, PKB, PAN
12	Kab. Grobogan	Sri Sumarni (PDIP)	Bambang Pujiyanto (unknown)	PDIP, Golkar, Hanura, PPP, PKB, Gerindra, PAN, PKS, Demokrat
13	Kota Semarang	Hendar Prihadi (PDIP)	Hevearita Gunaryanti Rahayu (PDIP)	PDIP, Golkar, Nasdem, Gerindra, PKB, PAN, PKS, Demokrat
14	Kab. Kediri	Hanindhito Himawan Pramana (PDIP)	Dewi Mariya Ulfa (unknown)	PDIP, Golkar, Nasdem, Gerindra, PKB, PPP, PAN, PKS, Demokrat
15	Kab. Ngawi	Ony Anwar Harsono (unknown)	Dwi Rianto Jatmiko (PDIP)	PDIP, Golkar, Nasdem, Hanura, Gerindra, PPP, PKB, PAN, Demokrat
16	Kab. Badung	I Nyoman Giri Prasta (PDIP)	I Ketut Suiasa (PDIP)	PDIP, Golkar, Demokrat
17	Kab. Sumbawa Barat	W. Musyafirin (PDIP)	Fud Syaifuddin (unknown)	PDIP, Golkar, Nasdem, PKPI, PPP, PKB, Gerindra, PAN, PKS
18	Kab. Kutai Kartanegara	Edi Damansyah (unknown)	Rendi Solihin (Golkar)	PDIP, Nasdem, Hanura, Gerindra, Perindo, PPP, PAN, PKS
19	Kota Balikpapan	Rahmad Mas'ud (Golkar)	Thohari Aziz (PDIP)	PDIP, Gerindra, PPP, PKB, Demokrat, PKS
20	Kab. Gowa	Adnan Purichta Ichsan (Golkar)	Abdul Rauf Malaganni (unknown)	PDIP, Golkar, Nasdem, Perindo, PKB, PPP, PAN, Demokrat, PKS
21	Kab. Soppeng	Kaswadi Razak (Golkar)	Lutfi Halide (Nasdem)	Golkar, Gerindra, Nasdem, PPP, PKB, Demokrat

No	Subnational Unit	Head (Party Affiliation)	Deputy (Party Affiliation)	Members of Coalition in Regional Elections
22	Kab. Mamuju Tengah	Aras Tamauni (Golkar)	Muh. Amin Jasa (unknown)	PDIP, Golkar, Nasdem, Hanura, Perindo, PKB, Gerindra, Demokrat, PAN
23	Kab. Raja Ampat	Abdul Faris Umlati (PD)	Orideko I. Burdam (unknown)	Golkar, Nasdem, Gerindra, PAN, PKS
24	Kab. Manokwari Selatan	Markus Waran (PDIP)	Wempie Welly Rengkung (Golkar)	PDIP, Golkar, Nasdem, Hanura, Perindo, PKPI
25	Kab. Pegunungan Arfak	Yosias Saroy (Nasdem)	Marinus Mandacan (PDIP)	PDIP, Golkar, Nasdem, Hanura, Perindo, PKPI, PPP, PAN, PKS

Source: KPU Electronic Recapitulation System (Sirekap); ISEAS compilation; authors

The second trend is the growing tendency and ability of the elites to insulate the local electoral arena. Unsurprisingly, this capability tends to belong to incumbents and dynastic candidates. Our data show that 21 out of the 25 single-pair candidates were incumbents.¹⁴ This suggests that it is difficult for most newcomers to get ahead; enormous political and material capital—known as ‘incumbency advantage’—is required.¹⁵ Newcomers who do succeed, tend to belong to the second type of candidate: the dynastic candidates.¹⁶

The Performance of Dynastic Candidates

The increased presence of dynastic candidates indicates the pool of local elites supply is shrinking. The number of dynastic candidates has in fact increased more than threefold in a short time, for example from 52 in 2015 to 159 in 2020¹⁷, i.e. in just one electoral cycle.¹⁸ Three factors contributed to this. First, the rescission of the ‘anti-dynastic’ clause in the Law No 8/2015 on Regional Elections opened the door for relatives of political elites to run in *Pilkada*.¹⁹ This is related to the second factor, which is that many incumbents or former incumbents consequently began promoting relative(s) to run for office, in order to extend—and expand—their political domination. Finally, dynastic candidates and political parties share a symbiotic relationship:²⁰ the former need the latter’s endorsement in subnational or legislative elections, while the latter need the former’s support to fund regional operational costs and to attract votes.

While the number of dynastic candidates in the 2020 elections may have surged, the preliminary results for them are rather mixed. Apparently 74 won, 81 lost, and 6 are still waiting for the final decision, delayed by the vote margins being less than two per cent. Dynastic politicians who won include President Jokowi’s son, Gibran Rakabuming Raka, and son-in-law, Muhammad Bobby Afif Nasution, in the Solo and Medan mayoral elections respectively. Their victories set a new record: for the first time in Indonesian history, two family members of a sitting President won subnational elections.²¹ Several other high-profile dynastic candidates also won.²² At the same time, some who share family ties with national political figures were defeated.²³ Their losses indicate that family brand-name is not the only determinant for victory at the subnational level. Some of these lost to popular incumbents.²⁴

The win/loss ratio of dynastic candidates in this election cycle presents a contradictory picture of Indonesia’s elite circulation. On the one hand, their increasing number suggests that the pool of elites supply is narrowing. On the other hand, the direct local elections (*Pilkada langsung*) system provides a fighting chance for non-dynastic politicians to defeat dynastic candidates.²⁵ There is however no guarantee that non-dynastic candidates, after their victories, will not establish their own dynasties. Still, the results show that a political

dynasty is not an all-powerful entity.²⁶ What Indonesia needs, though, is a level electoral playing field and the work should start early in the candidacy process.

Elections During a Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has been shaping discussions related to the conducting of elections during a global health crisis. Activists, analysts, and mass organisation leaders expressed grave concerns when it was decided that elections would be held on 9 December 2020, with many predicting that the voter turnout would be low due to health concerns.²⁷

Yet, against the odds, *Pilkada* 2020 showed the opposite. Election Commission (KPU) data put voter turnout at 76% on average.²⁸ Although slightly below KPU's ambitious target of 77.5%, this was nevertheless impressive, given the rising rate of Covid-19 cases at the time.

Three factors might have contributed to this. First, institutionally, Indonesia has one of the world's most voter-friendly electoral management designs, which lowers the barrier for voters getting to the voting stations.²⁹ Most of the responsibility of voter registration is in the hands of KPU, not the voters. Furthermore, to increase voter turnout, the government picked a national holiday as polling day, even when not all subnational units were involved in the 2020 elections.³⁰ The government also took into account the geographical variable in determining the location of voting stations. To calm voter concerns about COVID-19, KPU added a number of preventive measures, including reducing the number of voters allowed at each voting station to prevent crowds and shorten the queues, and providing necessary equipment and supplies to protect the health of voters and staff at all polling stations.³¹ KPU also ensured that those in quarantine could cast their ballots, by sending KPPS to the quarantine sites.

Second, local political dynamics also influenced voter mobilisation on election day. All *Pilkada*, except Jakarta, adopt the First Past the Post (FPTP) system: the candidate who secures the most votes will automatically win the race and there will be no second round.³² In such a context, all competing candidates will go the extra mile to mobilise voters, including mobilising their most ardent supporters (*tim sukses*). They work hard to ensure that members of their local networks cast their vote, including disbursing money for turnout buying if necessary.³³ This year, this trend was particularly apparent in regions where there were only two pairs of candidates and where political polarisation between these two existed.

Finally, the central government made an extra effort to ensure that *Pilkada* was conducted safely and peacefully, and with high turnout rate. For various reasons, it had insisted that the *Pilkada* be held on December 9, 2020, with the Ministry of Home Affairs (Kemendagri) and of Communications and Information (Kominfo) doing the heavy lifting to promote it. The Kominfo, for example, put out numerous election-related advertisements. Although these were mainly on health protocol during voting, they showed how the government was trying its best to convince the people that voting during the pandemic was safe. In a similar vein, the Kemendagri formed a dedicated section to monitor the recording process of e-ID (e-KTP) and the Civil Registry Information Letter.³⁴ These initiatives were taken by the central government to ensure that their decision to set the election in motion was a correct one, on the one hand, and, on the other, to preserve its legitimacy despite its failure thus far in handling the pandemic nationwide.

It is too early to determine which political party reaped the most advantage in the 2020 *Pilkada*, because of the fluidity of the multi-party coalitions supporting the winning candidates. The result of the single-pair races, however, can give us an early indication (See Table 2). Eleven elected regents and mayors are identified as PDIP's cadres; five are Golkar's; two are Nasdem's; one is from the Democratic Party (PD); and the party affiliation of the other six regents/mayors is unknown. Seven of the elected deputy regents/mayors are cadres of PDIP; three are Golkar's; two are affiliated with the National Awakening Party (PKB); one with PD; and the party affiliation of the other 10 elected deputy regents/mayors is unknown. In three regions—Badung, Semarang City and Gunungsitoli—both the elected heads and deputies are identified as PDIP cadres. While these results cannot be extrapolated nationally directly, the indication is therefore that PDI-P cadres won a majority of the *Pilkada*.

REGIONAL ELECTIONS DURING PANDEMIC, WHY?

In the Indonesia context, the longer elections are postponed, the shorter term of office the winning politicians will hold. This *Pilkada* had already been postponed once (from 23 September to 9 December 2020). Shorter terms of office mean less access to resources and policymaking. Moreover, another delay would mean that some officeholders may run after their terms of office are over, losing their advantage of running an election as an incumbent, adding uncertainty in the internal power configuration and support within their party.

This consideration led the government to support its political dignity by supporting a narrative showing that their decision to uphold the regional election was legitimate and would not be a health hazard, and explains why the massive advertisement for *Pilkada* was carried out by the government—instead of KPU. During the campaign period, any violation of health protocol regulations, especially on crowd emergence, was met with a stern penalty,³⁵ arguably because the government did not wish to face any further resistance to the regional election. Cabinet members also made statements to reinforce the safety of the election: Home Minister Tito Karnavian, rather than the Election Commissioner, repeatedly issued warnings regarding health regulations during the election process.³⁶ Five days after the election, the Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs stated adamantly that no COVID-19 cluster had emerged during the election.^{37,38}

In hindsight, the regional elections can be seen as a means for mobilising governmental resources rather than as an expression of the government's commitment to democracy. On the surface, the KPU ticked almost all the procedural requirements, including ensuring the implementation of health protocols in all voting stations. The substantive aspects of democracy, however, once again failed to dominate public debate; this was because the dominant topics throughout the elections were mostly related to the ways in which the government and KPU could minimise the risks of creating new pandemic clusters. Although the issues of dynastic politics and of sole candidates emerged sporadically, there was much less discussion about how Indonesians should deal with the shrinking pool of candidates. The public hardly paid any attention to deficiencies in the process of candidate recruitment, or to the candidates' integrity and objectives. That the results of 2020 *Pilkada* will bring significant advancement for the public remains highly uncertain.

In short, Indonesia's representative democratic system appears to be malfunctioning, and its democracy caters too much to the whims of its patrons. Performative and procedural aspects are brought forward to legitimise power-seeking behaviour, and consequently, it is difficult to directly observe whether elections—especially regional elections—actually influence elite behaviour to bring significant and structural progress to the people.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE INDONESIA'S DEMOCRACY

Most scholars of Indonesian politics believe that oligarchic elites have a tight grip on the country's institutions.³⁹ These patronage tendencies along with the lack of ideology make party lines quite meaningless. Coalition of parties present themselves as opposites to gain votes, while fluid coalitions—not necessarily reflective of the national alignment—can be formed to bolster local candidates, as was seen during all four sets of *Pilkada* in 2015, 2017, 2018, and 2020.⁴⁰ Quoting an analyst, “The motivation of almost all parties in the 2020 regional election coalitions was electoral interest.”⁴¹

This pragmatic approach offers little fundamental policy, programmes, or even ideas for improving socio-economic-political conditions in society. The government practically runs on transactional politics, and the bureaucracy has become an extension on the interest of many political actors. These are not interested in ideological contestation and work mainly based on mere interest in power. Now, with no real opposition, except perhaps from the small party, PKS, there are no real checks-and-balances by the legislative on the executive. The government acts almost without control from the parliament. The decision to push for regional elections despite the pandemic, or other decisions such as the passing of the Law on KPK, or Omnibus Law, or the disbanding of FPI, are examples of this.

There is clearly an urgent need for structural changes among political parties, and to the political system.⁴² The patronage and the lack of ideological dimensions have led to stagnation in political parties, and they are unable to attract younger people, which contributes to, and becomes a fertile ground for, the growth of political dynasties, even at the regional level.

Reforming the parties should therefore be a priority in the continued democratisation of Indonesia. Conditions that encourage political parties to come up with concrete programmes with ideological ambitions are sorely needed, as is political education for the public to empower voters to ‘punish’ political parties that fail to offer actionable programmes. In a young democracy like Indonesia, nobody knows how long this will take. But surely if that fails, then democracy will also vanish.

- ¹ Fossati D, Aspinall E, Muhtadi B, Warburton E. (2020) Ideological representation in clientelistic democracies: The Indonesian case. *Electoral Studies* 63:102111.
- ² Müller W and Strøm K (eds). (1999) Policy, office, or votes? How political parties in Western Europe make hard decisions. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ³ Hicken A and Kuhonta E. (2011) Shadows from the past: Party system institutionalization in Asia. *Comparative Political Studies* 44, 5: 572-597. See also Croissant A and Völkel P. (2012) Party system types and party system institutionalization: Comparing new democracies in East and Southeast Asia. *Party Politics* 18, 2: 235-265.
- ⁴ See, among others: Fiona U and Tomsa D. (2020) Changing patterns of factionalism in Indonesia: From principle to patronage. *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 39, 1: 39-58; Slater D and Simmons E. (2012) Coping by colluding: Political uncertainty and promiscuous power sharing in Indonesia and Bolivia. *Comparative Political Studies* 46, 11: 1366-1393; Mietzner M. (2013) Money, power, and ideology: Political parties in post-authoritarian Indonesia. Singapore: NUS Press; Ufen A. (2018) From aliran to dealignment: Political parties in post-Soeharto Indonesia. *South East Asia Research* 16, 1: 5-41; and Fossati D. (2019) The resurgence of ideology in Indonesia: Political Islam, aliran and political behaviour. *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 38, 2: 119-148.
- ⁵ Fossati D, et al (2020) op.cit.
- ⁶ Mietzner M. (2013) op.cit.
- ⁷ Aspinall E. (2014) Parliament and patronage. *Journal of Democracy* 25, 4: 96-110. See also Dettman S, Pepinsky T, and Jan P. (2017) Incumbency advantage and candidate characteristics in open-list proportional representation systems: Evidence from Indonesia. *Election Studies* 48, 111-120.
- ⁸ Aspinall E. (2014) op.cit.
- ⁹ Wilson I. and Yew-Foong H. (2020), Signs of democratic contraction and recentralisation of power in Indonesia's 2020 regional elections. *ISEAS Perspective*, No. 140, 7 December.
- ¹⁰ This number excludes the percentage of total votes in Kabupaten Pegunungan Arfak which was unavailable at the time of the writing.
- ¹¹ For a detailed description of the 2018 regional elections in Makassar, see Wilson I and Yew-Foong H. (2020) *ibid.*, pp. 4-5 and David Binns, "Incumbents with attitude in Indonesia's local elections", *New Mandala*, 4 November 2020. <https://www.newmandala.org/incumbents-with-attitude-in-indonesias-local-elections/>
- ¹² The authors anticipate missing data of candidates' dynastic status. The unavailability of a single and publicly available national family registry presents enormous challenges in identifying all members of political dynasties in Indonesia.
- ¹³ Buehler M and Tan P. (2007) Party-candidate relationships in Indonesian local politics: A case study of the 2005 regional elections in Gowa, South Sulawesi Province. *Indonesia* 84: 41-69.
- ¹⁴ Either the heads and their deputies or deputy heads.
- ¹⁵ On the topic of incumbency advantages in subnational elections in Indonesia, see Testriono and Schraufnagel S. (2020) Testing for incumbency advantages in a developing democracy: Elections for local government leaders in Indonesia. *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 42, 2: 200-223.
- ¹⁶ Hanindhito Himawan Pramana's candidacy in Kabupaten Kediri is a case in point. He is the Cabinet Secretary's son and a seasoned politician of the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP), Pramono Anung. Another example is Susanti Dewayani's candidacy as Asner Silalahi's deputy in Kota Pematangsiantar. Susanti is the mother-in-law of Boy Iskandar Warongan, an MP in Pematangsiantar, and the wife of a wealthy local entrepreneur Kusma Erizal Ginting. Note that some of the incumbents are also members of political dynasties. Additionally, among the three newcomers, only the pair of Afif Nurhidayat and Muhammad Albar in Wonosobo (Central Java) does not belong to any political dynasty.
- ¹⁷ Yoes C. Kenawas had previously recorded 146 dynastic candidates in the 2020 elections. This article provides the latest update on the number of dynastic politicians who competed in the 2020 elections. See Kenawas, YC. (2020) Dynastic politics: Indonesia's new normal, *Indonesia at*

Melbourne, 29 September 2020. <https://indonesiaatmelbourne.unimelb.edu.au/dynastic-politics-indonesias-new-normal/>

¹⁸ Except Makassar, all regions that held subnational elections in 2020 belong to the same set of regions that held subnational elections in 2015.

¹⁹ Michael Buehler, “Married with children”, *Inside Indonesia*, 20 July 2013.

<https://www.insideindonesia.org/married-with-children>

²⁰ Kenawas, YC. (2020) op.cit.

²¹ Previously, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono’s son, Edhie Baskoro Yudhoyono, had won a parliamentary seat in 2019 when the President was still in the office. This year, President Yudhoyono’s nephew, Indrata Nur Bayuaji, won local elections in Pacitan, East Java.

²² This includes Hanindhito Himawan Pramana (son of the Cabinet Secretary Pramono Anung), Ipek Fiestianani Azwar Anas (wife of the Regent of Banyuwangi Abdullah Azwar Anas), and Adnan Purichta Ichsan (nephew of the Minister of Agriculture Syahrul Yasin Limpo).

²³ They include Vice President K.H. Ma’ruf Amin’s daughter, Siti Nur Azizah, and the Minister of Defence Prabowo Subianto’s niece, Rahayu Saraswati Djojohadikusumo (Sara). Both Siti and Sara lost the South Tangerang mayoral elections to the Deputy Mayor of South Tangerang, Benjamin Davnie, who paired with a member of a powerful local Bantenese dynasty, Pilar Saga Ichsan. Ichsan himself is the eldest son of Ratu Tatu Chasanah, the Regent of Serang, who was just re-elected for her second term in office. Pilar is the niece of the current Mayor of South Tangerang, Airin Rachmi Diany, who married the brother of a former Governor of Banten, Ratu Atut Choisyah. This means Pilar has five relatives currently occupying elected offices, including Andhika Hazrumy (Deputy Governor of Banten, Ratu Atut’s son), Tanto Warsono Arban (Deputy Regent of Pandeglang, Ratu Atut’s son-in-law), Andiara Aprilia Hikmat (a member of the Regional Representative Council (DPD), Ratu Atut’s daughter), Tubagus Haerul Jaman (a member of the People’s Representative Council (DPR), Ratu Atut’s step-brother), and Adde Rosi Khoerunnisa (a DPR member, Ratu Atut’s daughter-in-law and Andhika Hazrumy’s wife). Similarly, Titik Masudah (sister of the Minister of Manpower, Ida Fauziyah) and Munafri Arifuddin (nephew of the former Vice President Jusuf Kalla) were defeated by local dynastic candidates in Mojokerto and Makassar respectively. Munafri lost to the pair of Danny Pomanto and Fatmawati Rusdi. While Danny is not a member of any political dynasty, Fatmawati is the wife of Rusdi Masse Mappasessu, former Regent of Sidenreng Rappang (South Sulawesi) from 2008 to 2018 and now member of DPR RI from the National Democrat Party (Partai Nasdem). Rusdi is also an influential member of the Nasdem Party.

²⁴ See Binns, D. (2020) “Incumbents with attitude in Indonesia’s local elections”. *New Mandala*. <https://www.newmandala.org/incumbents-with-attitude-in-indonesias-local-elections/> for more nuanced account. Munafri Arifuddin, for example, lost for the second time to Danny Pomanto, a popular former Mayor of Makassar who was disqualified from joining the 2018 Makassar mayoral elections. Siti Nur Azizah, Rahayu Saraswati Djojohadikusumo, and Titik Masudah, however, lost to other dynastic candidates who were able to build better local networks. Pilar’s victory against Siti and Rahayu was inseparable from Airin Rachmi Diany’s status as the incumbent Mayor of South Tangerang who controls the local government’s budget, bureaucratic networks, and well-oiled *tim sukses* (success teams). Similarly, Titik Masudah suffered a defeat by Ikfina Fahmawati, the wife of former Regent of Mojokerto Mustafa Kamal Pasa), who is now in jail due to his involvement in a bribery case. Despite the physical absence of Mustafa, Ikfina ‘inherited’ her husband’s political networks –both within the bureaucratic structure and the *tim sukses*—in Mojokerto.

²⁵ In Batanghari (Jambi Province), for example, the pair of Muhammad Fadhil Arief and Bakhtiar defeated three dynastic candidates, including Yunninta Asmara (the wife of Batanghari Regent Syahrishyah) and the pair of Muhammad Firdaus (son of the late Deputy Regent of Batanghari Sofia Joesoef) and Camelia Puji Astuti (daughter of the former Deputy Governor of Jambi Hasip Kalimuddin Syam). A similar story can be found in Timor Tengah Utara, Bolaang Mongondow Timur, and Minahasa Selatan.

- ²⁶ Aspinall E. and As'ad M.U. (2016) Understanding family politics: Successes and failures of political dynasties in regional Indonesia. *South East Asia Research* 24, 3: 420-435.
- ²⁷ <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/09/06/voter-turnout-in-upcoming-elections-may-drop-nearly-50-percent-due-to-covid-19-lsi.html> and <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-5059658/partisipasi-pemilih-pilkada-2020-saat-pandemi-dinilai-sulit-capai-target-775>
- ²⁸ <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1415456/kpu-sebut-partisipasi-pemilih-pilkada-2020-capai-7613-persen>
- ²⁹ Interview with Titi Anggraini of Perludem (26/12/20)
- ³⁰ The government also decided to hold the elections on Wednesday to discourage voters from taking a long weekend, which could have further reduced the voter turnout.
- ³¹ This included portable hand washing stations, contactless thermometers, dedicated voting booths for those whose body temperature was above 37.3C, and personal protective equipment for the polling station working committee (KPPS).
- ³² In cases where the winning margin is less than 0.5 to 2 percent (depending on the size of local population), the losing candidates may challenge the election result at the Constitutional Court (MK).
- ³³ Nichter S. (2008) Vote buying or turnout buying? Machine politics and the secret ballot. *American Political Science Review* 102, 1: 19-31; Muhtadi B. (2019) Vote buying in Indonesia: The mechanics of electoral bribery. Palgrave Macmillan, Singapore.
- ³⁴ <https://www.pikiran-rakyat.com/nasional/pr-011061154/tito-karnavian-beberkan-strategi-khusus-untuk-pilkada-2020-di-tengah-pandemi-covid-19>
- ³⁵ <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2020/11/25/18503421/polri-ada-1448-pelanggaran-protokol-kesehatan-selama-kampanye-pilkada?page=all>
- ³⁶ For example: <https://www.merdeka.com/politik/mendagri-paparkan-langkah-penegakan-protokol-kesehatan-saat-pilkada-2020.html>
- ³⁷ The government is well aware that the incubation period of the virus varies generally from 3 to 14 days after initial infection. <https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/news/20201214190933-4-209042/klaim-mahfud-md-pilkada-serentak-2020-bebas-klaster-covid-19>
- ³⁸ It is worth noting that the Regent of East Luwu, South Sulawesi, an incumbent, was hospitalised three days after the election due to Covid-19 and died on 24 December 2020. <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2020/12/24/10521871/bupati-luwu-timur-meninggal-dunia-setelah-terjangkit-covid-19?page=all>
- ³⁹ Mietzner M. (2015) Reinventing Asian populism: Jokowi's rise, democracy, and political contestation in Indonesia. East West Center, Honolulu; Hadiz, V. R. and Robison, R. (2014) The political economy of oligarchy and the recentralization of power in Indonesia in *Beyond oligarchy: Wealth, power, and contemporary Indonesian politics*, Ford M. and Pepinsky T. Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, Ithaca; Winters J.A. 2011 Oligarchy. Cambridge University Press, New York.
- ⁴⁰ <https://www.beritasatu.com/nasional/335081/pilkada-di-jatim-dikuasai-pdip-dan-gerindra>, <https://lokadata.id/artikel/asal-menang-dalam-pilkada-2017>, https://news.detik.com/berita/d-4083401/pdip-gerindra-koalisi-di-48-daerah-pdip-pks-di-33-daerah_and <https://rmco.id/baca-berita/pilkada/45854/bersatu-di-13-pilkada-pdippks-ternyata-bukan-minyak-dan-air>
- ⁴¹ Informal interview with Arya Fernandes of Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) (21/12/20).
- ⁴² However, it is not something that could be realistically done—at least in the short run.

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