# Realizing Simultaneous and Quality Regional Head Election through Strengthening Supervision Function: Study at the General Election Supervisory Board of North Sumatra Province

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#### Keywords: Head District Election, Supervision Function.

Abstract: This research is aimed at seeing the effectiveness of the supervisory function carried out by the General Election Supervisory Board of North Sumatra Province and its components in simultaneous regional elections of 2018 in North Sumatra Province carried out through a normative juridical research approach. The result of the study indicates that the General Election Supervisory Board of North Sumatra Province has carried out its oversight function well through following-ups of 78 cases of violations out of 182 findings and reports from the public. It is hoped that in the context of realizing quality elections, the General Election Supervisory Board must improve the effectiveness of the supervision and law enforcement functions against election violations, both administrative and criminal violations through the Center for Law Enforcement.

### **1** INTRODUCTION

General Election as a selection process towards the birth of leaders in the context of the realization of democracy in Indonesia (read, *Pancasila* democracy) is expected to be a representation of the people since General Election is a series of political activities to accommodate the interests of the people, which are then formulated in various forms of policy.

Such a reality can be observed from various elements inherent in a democratic country (Lyman Tower Sargent, 1984, p. 32-33):

- 1. Citizen involvement in political decision making;
- 2. Some degree of equality among citizen;
- 3. Some degree of liberty or freedom granted to or retained by citizens;
- 4. A system of representation;
- 5. An electoral system majority rule.

The various elements indicate that the electoral and representation systems are a condition of *sine quanon* for a modern democratic country, meaning that people choose someone to represent them in the context of people's participation in the administration of state governance, as well as a series of political activities to accommodate people's interests or aspirations. The manifestation of this democratic attitude is the active participation of citizens in the life of the nation and state. Participation is intended not only to gain the legitimacy of the power of citizens, but also to further involve the community in all development processes.

Such a context means that participation is not the result of engineering from power (mobilized participation), but participation is based on the full will of citizens who have high political will towards nation-building (autonomic participation).

More systematically, election in a democratic political system has several functions:

First, election functions as a means of political legitimacy. Through the Election, the validity of the ruling government as well as the programs and policies it produces can be enforced. Election is the most democratic means to form representative government. Election is the expression of democratic struggle, where the people determine who rules and what the people want the government to do.

Second, election functions as a means of transferring government in a safe and orderly manner. In this case, the election is expected to be able to produce leadership regeneration with certainty and legitimacy. Therefore, election is a political mechanism to ensure the continuity of regular

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government changes (Harmaily Ibrahim and Moh. Kusnardi, 1983, p. 330).

Third, election functions as the creation of political representativeness to actualize people's aspirations and interests. In this connection Election functions not only as an embodiment of the enactment of the principle of popular sovereignty, but more importantly also as a means to build people's trust in the government to implement policies and programs that are in accordance with the basic aspirations and needs of the community as stakeholders in the country.

Fourth, election functions as a means of socialization and political education of the people. In this function, the election is expected to be able to implement to the people to obtain attitudes and orientations towards political phenomena, which generally apply to the communities where they are located. Socialization and political education are expected to be able to give trust to the community so that their participation can be manifested in an atmosphere that is free to express opinions, declare and access information and freedom of association.

Within the framework of regional autonomy, election is also held to elect the Regional Head (Governor and Deputy Governor, Regent and Deputy Regent, and Mayor and Deputy Mayor), as stipulated in Article 18 Paragraph (4) of the 1945 Constitution of Republic of Indonesia which determines: "Governor, regents and mayors as heads of the provincial, regency and city governments are democratically elected. This provision is then implemented into Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections and Law No. 10 of 2016 concerning the Second Amendment to Law Number 1 of 2015 concerning Determination of Government Regulation in Lieu of Law Number 1 Year 2014 concerning Election of Governors, Regents and Mayors into Laws, which confirms that the election of Governor and Deputy Governor, Regent and Deputy Regent, as well as Mayor and Deputy Mayor are the implementation of popular sovereignty in the province and regency/city to elect Governor and Deputy Governor, Regent and Deputy Regent, as well as "direct and democratic" Mayor and Deputy Mayor (Article 1 Number 1 law No. 8 of 2015).

Thus the existence of regional head elections is a necessity as the main institution of democratic government, because in essence the authority of the government is only obtained with the consent of the citizens who elect it. The results of regional head elections held in an atmosphere of openness accompanied by freedom of opinion and freedom of association are deemed relevant reflecting the participation and aspirations of the community.

In the 2018 simultaneous regional head elections throughout Indonesia, based on data of the Central General Election Commissions, consisting of 171 regions which will conduct regional elections, consisting of 17 provinces, 39 cities, and 115 districts, including North Sumatra, in addition to the election of the Governor, also there are regional head elections in 8 (eight) districts / cities, namely: *Langkat* District, *Deliserdang* Regency, *Dairi* Regency, *Batubara* Regency, North *Tapanuli* Regency, *Padangsidempuan* City, *Padanglawas* Regency and North *Padanglawas* Regency.

Such a constellation means that regional head election is a method used in the framework of democratic and regional autonomy in Indonesia, to implement the will of the people through their representatives, as well as a series of political activities to accommodate the people's aspirations and for regional governments as the main source of running a regional government in order to realize democratization and people's welfare.

# 2 RESEARCH METHOD

### 2.1 Research Specification

The specification or type of research in this study is descriptive (M. Solly Lubis, 1994, p. 77), because this research is aimed at obtaining an essential picture of strengthening the supervisory function in simultaneous regional elections in North Sumatra Province in order to produce democratic elections.

With regard to the research, the implementation of the supervisory function carried out by the Election Supervisory Board of North Sumatra Province along with its staff in simultaneous regional elections in 2018 will be analyzed, so that the study of the importance of the role of election organizers, especially the General Election Supervisory Board to give birth to elections (regional head elections) as a means of recruiting democratic politics.

#### 2.2 Approach Method

The approach method used in this study is a normative juridical research method or legal research (Bambang Sunggono, 2001, p. 43), using several approaches to be able to answer the problems studied, namely: (1) statute approach and conceptual approach (Peter Mahmud Marzuki, 2005, p. 93-94). Normative legal research is used, because the data studied are in

the form of secondary data or legal literature, which include primary legal materials, secondary legal materials and tertiary legal materials.

The legislation approach is used to examine in depth the regulations relating to legal products in the electoral field, especially regional head elections, such as Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections and Law No. 10 of 2016 concerning the Second Amendment to Law Number 1 of 2015 concerning the Establishment of Government Regulations in lieu of Law Number 1 of 2014 concerning the Election of Governors, Regents and Mayors as Acts.

The conceptual approach is used to be able to understand concepts relating to the existence of elections in democratic countries and the role of the General Election Supervisory Board in regional head elections, which in turn gives birth to democratization in the implementation of regional government.

### **3** DISCUSSION AND RESULT

#### 3.1 Hacking the Path to Quality General Election

The essence of regional head elections in the framework of democratizing the implementation of regional government in Indonesia, at least contains several criteria that must be met so that regional head elections become a parameter of democracy: First, the implementation of regional head elections must be supported by a set of rules that adhere to the principles of freedom, honesty and justice. Second, the implementation of regional head elections must pay attention to the instruments and organizers so that they are truly democratic and trusted by the community. Third, the implementation of regional head elections must involve all citizens without discrimination in order to realize popular sovereignty, thereby gaining public participation. Fourth, the implementation of regional head elections must provide equal opportunities to all candidates carried by political parties and individual candidates to compete freely, honestly and fairly. Fifth, the implementation of regional head elections is intended to elect regional heads who are qualified, and have moral integrity, and reflect the will of the people.

If examined, various legal institutions prepared for the implementation of 2018 regional head elections, such as Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections and Law No. 10 of 2016 concerning the Second Amendment to Law No. 1 of 2015 concerning the Establishment of Government Regulations in lieu of Law No. 1 of 2014 concerning the Election of Governors, Regents and Mayors into Laws have met the criteria of actualization of regional head elections having the principle of honesty and justice.

However, to apply these norms, a variety of significant efforts are needed regarding democratic regional head elections:

First, the commitment of the General Election Commission (KPU) and the General Election Supervisory Board (Bawaslu) along with their supporting instruments, as organizers of regional head elections that are trusted by the public must be build on. It is believed that the community in this context intended election organizers who have integrity, neutrality and professionalism. This effort is very much needed, both personally and institutionally so that it is expected to reduce the distrust of the community to the results of regional elections. The practices that have occurred so far, there are several KPU members in the Regional and Bawaslu in the Region who then change from "referees" to "players", so the principle of fair play in the administration of regional head elections is tarnished. This indication can be seen from the 76 cases of violations of the ethic code of the election organizers from January to February 2018 involving 163 individuals, and have been examined, and in fact 61.2 percents violated the code of ethics, which according to Ida Budhiati (DKPP or Honorary Board of General Election Organizer members) has 37 strong warnings were made, 27 people were warned, 3 were temporarily dismissed, 11 were permanently dismissed, 3 were dismissed from their positions as Chairmen, and 76 were rehabilitated, and most were violations of professionalism. This cases still happen even though the electoral legal framework has been designed so that election organizers generally work professionally concerning not only procedures but also integrity. (INDOPOS.CO.ID, 27 February 2018).

If this is not overcome, it will have broad implications for the community, general election participants (political parties and individuals), both related to the electoral disputes and community actions that can lead to anarchism.

Therefore, it is expected that the election organizers (*KPU*/ General Election Commission, in the Regions and *Bawaslu*/ General Election Supervisory Board, in the Regions) must have a commitment to hold the 2018 regional head elections in accordance with the principles of good governance as stipulated in Article 3 of Law No. 7 of 2017: independent, honest, fair, legal certainty, orderly,

open, proportional, professional, accountable, effective and efficient.

If this can be done by the organizers of regional head elections, the legitimacy of the 2018 regional head elections produced will be stronger, for the birth of new regional governments that are in accordance with the aspirations and desires of the people.

**Second**, the political knowledge of the community must be increased. If the community's political knowledge is still relatively low, it will affect the level of community participation. The higher the community participation, the more legitimate the quality of the implementation of regional head elections. Quantitatively, the success of regional head elections is measured by the number of arrivals to polling stations, while qualitatively it is seen from the rationality of elections and the active role of the community.

Therefore, it is expected that the role of community leaders can increase community participation in the 2018 regional head elections, to reduce the White Group (*Golput*) figure. In simultaneous regional head elections in 2015, the level of community participation was very low, only around 26%, while the regional head elections of Tebing Tinggi City in 2017 were 55% which were also still below the target of Tebing Tinggi City *KPU* at 77.5%. Therefore according to Yulhasni, Commissioner of North Sumatra *KPU*, the target of community political participation in the 2018 regional head election is 77.5% (Sumutpos.Co, 18 October 2017).

Third, the readiness of candidates for Regional Heads and candidates for Deputy Regional Heads and their supporters who have direct interests is a necessity. Therefore, it is very relevant for simultaneous post-conflict local election participants in 2018, especially in North Sumatra Province to run a campaign with a spirit of togetherness in order to realize an advanced and prosperous regional government, post-conflict local election campaign is not a candidate match but an idea to provide political education to the community. Based on this, fraud should be avoided by regional head elections, including the Black Campaign, so that leaders who have integrity can be built to establish a clean and qualified democracy in the region.

**Fourth**, law enforcement of regional head elections must be qualified. In order to create a qualified regional head election, of course it must be balanced with effective law enforcement for perpetrators of violations of regional head elections so that a sense of justice and legal certainty can be realized for regional head election participant.

Qualified regional head elections can be seen from the lack of violations in the implementation of regional head elections. It turns out that in the 2018 regional head general election according to the North Sumatra Bawaslu/ General Election Supervisory Board, Abuse Acting Division Coordinator, Hardi Munthe, there had been more than 150 reports of violations submitted by the Regency/ City Panwaslih (Election Supervisory Committee) which had to be followed up and processed by the Provincial Bawaslu/ General Election Supervisory Board, including allegations of involvement of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN), violation of the installation of the Campaign Teaching Tool (APK), involvement of children during campaigns and advertisements (Sindonews.com, Friday, March 30, 2018). Such a reality, of course, must be balanced with law enforcement that gives a sense of justice and legal certainty. It is to reduce the level of public distrust in the results of regional head elections. If it is not followed up in the long term, of course this condition can reduce the legitimacy of the local government administrators formed.

Fifth, community participation in organizing regional head elections must be appreiated. In this connection, the involvement of community institutions both in the form of socialization of regional head elections, political education for voters, surveys or polls on regional head elections, and a quick calculation of the results of regional head elections must be appreciated as a means of realizing good governance in implementation. Regional head elections must comply with various legal institutions of post-conflict local elections, as among others mentioned in Article 131 of Law No. 8 of 2015: do not make partiality that is beneficial or detrimental to one of the candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor, Candidates for Regents and Candidates for Deputy Regent, as well as Candidates for Mayors and Candidates for Deputy Mayor; does not interfere with the process of conducting the Election stage; aims to increase the political participation of the community at large; and encourage the realization of a conducive atmosphere for the implementation of safe, peaceful, orderly and smooth elections.

One important element in this context is the media, both electronic and print mass media, because it can provide oversight of the implementation of a clean, honest, fair, transparent and professional regional head election. Electronic media and printed mass media are a means for the public to obtain information, including the track record of candidates for the Regional Head and Candidates for Deputy Regional Heads in order to provide political education so that regional head elections are not intended to "buy cat in the sack".

#### 3.2 Strengthening Supervision of Simultaneous Regional General Elections in North Sumatra Province

Simultaneous regional head elections that have taken place in Indonesia, both in the 2015 and 2017 regional head elections simultaneously have proceeded well, but the results of regional head elections have not only given birth to new leaders as a result of the people's choices, but also created various problems, such as the increasingly massive practice of money politics, conflicts, disputes, even riots always haunt the implementation of regional head elections. Indeed, this condition does not occur in all regions, because there are certain regional heads as the results of regional head elections that have succeeded in leading their regions.

In connection with the implementation of regional head elections, Anthon Raharusun stated:

However, if people look at the data that since 2004, hundreds of regional heads and former regional heads have become suspects or convicted in various corruption cases which continue to increase each year. This certainly becomes a separate problem in the implementation of regional government so that regional head elections need to be addressed comprehensively. In addition, the amount of money that must be incurred to become the head of the region is alleged to be one of the bases for the dragging of regional heads in the swirl of budget fraud. The issue of regional head elections that are increasingly bursting later by the Ministry of Home Affairs - takes the initiative to organize regional head elections through simultaneous regional head elections as the entrance to organize the system for overall regional head elections to be far better and more efficient (Anthon Raharusun, 2017, p. 5).

In line with this reality, one of the strategic efforts in improving the implementation of regional head elections is to strengthen the oversight function:

1. Strengthening the Supervision Function at the General Election Supervisory Board

When observing the provisions of Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections, strengthening the supervisory function given to the Republic of Indonesia *Bawaslu*, Provincial *Bawaslu*, Regency / City *Bawaslu*, District *Panwas*, Field Supervisory

Committees, and Polling Station Supervisors, is meant to hold a more just, clean and democratic election.

According to Ramlan Surbakti, there are several reasons for the need to transform *Bawaslu* in the context of holding general elections, including regional head elections:

First, the transformation of Bawaslu is based on efforts to strengthen the existence of society as the principal of democracy. This starts from the weakening of supervision by the community when there are efforts to strengthen the Bawaslu institution. Therefore Bawaslu's transformation efforts must also be interpreted as an effort to strengthen the supervisory role election by the community. In other words, it returns the supervisory function to the owner, namely the community. Second, efforts to encourage the transformation of *Bawaslu* are also seen as an effort to create an effective and efficient system of handling violations and electoral dispute resolution. One of the causes of ineffective and efficient election law enforcement is that there are too many institutions involved in handling violations and resolving electoral disputes, so what happens is that the technical prosecution and resolution of electoral cases becomes a complex and time-consuming process. As a result of many institutions that handle violations and resolution of electoral disputes, there is overlapping of authority, which in turn has an impact on legal uncertainty. Third, transformation efforts must present an integrated and sovereign electoral law enforcement system (Ramlan Surbakti and Hari Fitrianto, 2015, p. 28).

In the context of the transformation, Bawaslu through the 2017 election law has the duty to prevent and prosecute election violations and dispute the electoral process, oversee all stages of the election, prevent the practice of money politics. Bawaslu is also in charge of overseeing the neutrality of the state civil apparatus (ASN), the neutrality of members of the TNI (Indonesian National Army) and Polri, (Indonesian Police) overseeing the implementation of the Election Administrators' Honorary Council (DKPP), court decisions, decisions of the General Election Commission (KPU), and decisions of authorized officials for violations of ASN neutrality, members of the TNI (Indonesian Army), and members of the National Police, as well as conveying allegations of violations of the ethics code of the

election administrators to DKPP/Honorary Board of General Election Organizers. Member (Article 93 of Law No. 7 of 2017).

Based on these arrangements, there is a shift in the supervision paradigm, which was initially directed at the discovery of violations (repressive), but now the supervision is mandated to prioritize preventive (occurrence) violations. Based on this paradigm shift, the benchmark for the success of monitoring the stages of regional head elections that are currently underway is no longer determined by the number of findings of violations and follow-up by supervisory bodies of regional head elections, but rather on how effective efforts to prevent violations of regional head elections can be carried out by electoral supervisory institutions.

In this construction, especially in repressive supervision, the Provincial and Regency/ City *Bawaslu* is strengthened by the authority to decide on electoral process disputes in the Provincial and Regency/ City Areas (Article 98 Paragraph (3) letter c and Article 103 Paragraph (3) letter c of the Law No. 7 of 2017).

In its implementation in the simultaneous regional head elections in North Sumatra Province 2018, the role of the North Sumatra and Regency/ City *Bawaslu* has followed up on the findings of violations:

The North Sumatra General Election Supervisory Board and the Regency/ City of North Sumatra Election Supervisory Board together with all the respective parties handles 182 violations of the Election of Governor and Deputy Governor, Regent and Deputy Regent, Mayor and Deputy Mayor in 2018. A total of 96 of them are findings and 86 cases of community reports (http://www.mdn.biz.id / o / 39560 /, June 5, 2018).

In this context, Hardi Munthe, the Coordinator of the Violation Handling Division at the Election Supervisory Board of North Sumatra Province, stated that both the findings and reports of alleged violations, as many as 78 cases met the violation element, with details of 52 administrative violations which were forwarded to the *KPU* and the respective parties to follow up, 2 (two) general election criminal cases that were forwarded to the police, as well as 4 (four) cases of ethical violations of the election organizers.

Furthermore Hardi Munthe stated that in the 2018 head regional election, there were also 20 other violations of law cases which were not violations of general elections. As many as 12 cases related to the neutrality of the State Civil Apparatus (*ASN*) which were forwarded to the *ASN* Commission, 2 (two) general criminal cases, 3 (three) cyber cases which were forwarded to the Sub-Division of Cyber Crime Special Criminal Investigation Directorate (*Ditreskrimsus*), Police Department of North Sumatera, and 1 (one) violation by the village head forwarded to the Regent, and 1 (one) employee of a Regional Owned Enterprise (*BUMD*) forwarded to the Governor of North Sumatra (http://www.mdn.biz.id/o/39560/, June 5, 2018).

Such a reality shows the existence of *Bawaslu* and all its instruments in conducting intensive supervision, both early prevention and repression, will give birth to an effective monitoring function. For this reason, it is hoped that cooperation and coordination will be integrated with the *KPU* at all levels in carrying out preventive oversight efforts. Furthermore, it is expected that either the Provincial or Regency/ City Bawaslu with *KPU* in the regions must be able to work together and become partners in the post-conflict local election implementation, and not vice versa to become competitors in carrying out the functions of prevention and supervision of administrative and criminal violations in post-conflict local elections.

#### 2. Strengthening Participatory Supervision

The success of supervision carried out by the election supervisory institutions in regional head elections, of course, must be balanced with independent supervision and public participation so that various forms of violations can be known by the election supervisory agency in regional head elections through reports submitted, both by individuals, community organizations and political organizations. This participatory supervision has been given space by Law No. 10 of 2016 as stipulated in Article 123 which states "that the election of regional heads in their implementation can be monitored by Election observers, both domestic community organizations registered with the Government and foreign Election monitoring institutions. In carrying out the supervision of the simultaneous regional head elections, the existence of election observers outside the organizers certainly has a significant role, especially in finding various violations both committed by organizers and regional head election participants. Even though the election monitors do not have the authority to carry out prosecution, of course the various reports submitted must be followed up by the election supervisory institution, including an integrated law enforcement center.

The existence of these election monitoring institutions can certainly increase the quality of regional head elections, because the more election observers who participate in supervising regional head elections, the better implementation of elections will be overseen. This way will certainly reduce the potential for violations and disputes in regional head elections. However, it must be noted that this election monitor must be registered with the Provincial *KPU* or Regency/ City KPU and does not interfere with the process of holding the post-conflict local election, by implementing the rights and obligations and prohibitions as regulated by law.

In addition to the existence of election monitoring institutions, in the simultaneous regional head elections in 2018, this must also involve wider public participation as mandated by Article 131 of Law No. 10 of 2016, especially in supervising each stage of election, election socialization, voter political education, survey or opinion poll on the election and quick calculation of the results of regional head elections, with provisions: do not make partiality that is beneficial or detrimental to one of the candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor, Candidates for Regents and Candidates for Deputy Regents, and Candidates for Mayors and Candidates for Deputy Mayor; does not interfere with the process of conducting the Election stage; aims to increase the political participation of the community at large; and encourage the realization of a conducive atmosphere for the implementation of safe, peaceful, orderly and smooth elections.

In the context of simultaneous regional elections in North Sumatra, community participation other than through people's political education efforts has also submitted reports of violations as many as 86 cases in 2018 regional head elections.

Taking into account these arrangements, strengthening community participation is urgently needed, and includes several activities:

First, do voter training. Secondly, socialize the procedures for each stage of the election. Third, monitor each stage of the election and submitting an evaluation of the election based on the results of monitoring. Fourth, report suspected violations of the General Election, both violations of the Election Code of Ethics and violations of election administration provisions and violations of Election Criminal provisions. Fifth, register themselves as voters and inviting other parties to register themselves as voters (including checking their own names and other family members in the Temporary Voters List). Sixth, become a participant in the Election campaign (supporting certain Election participants and / or criticizing other Election participants). Seventh, vote on voting day, witnessing the

vote counting process at the polling station, becoming a witness representing the Election Participants, and / or become a member of the KPPS / PPS / PPK. Eighth, play a role in the process of reporting on elections in the print media or the broadcasting process about elections in electronic media. Ninth, take part in the Survey Institution that carried out the research process on the Election and disseminated the results of the research to the general public. Tenth, participate in the process of Quick Counting of the results of the General Elections at the polling station and disseminating the results to the community. Eleventh, volunteer to ensure the integrity of election results by recording and disseminating the results of vote counting at polling stations to the public through various available media (Ramlan Surbakti and Hari Fitrianto, 2015, p. 51).

However, in handling violations of regional head elections in North Sumatra Province, the Election Supervisory Agency found several cases that could not be followed up due to several factors: limited reporting deadline, incomplete reports, difficulty obtaining witnesses who knew violations, and reporters were not present when called to follow up on the report. Therefore, it is expected that both the General Election Supervisory Board and the community members must be actively involved in overseeing the implementation of regional head elections.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results and discussion as described, it shows that with the strengthening of the authority of the Election Supervisory Agency through Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections, the supervision of the implementation of regional head elections in North Sumatra Province has been carried out by the General Election Supervisory Board of North Sumatra Province along with its staff in following up findings and public reports on various violations of simultaneous regional elections in 2018.

#### RECOMMENDATION

Taking into account that 2018 and 2019 as a political year, it is expected that the Election Supervisory

Board in carrying out its oversight and law enforcement functions, violations of general elections must be carried out effectively so that they can give confidence to the public in the success of elections, especially in the regions.

Finally, it is expected that simultaneous regional elections and legislative elections and Presidential elections held in Indonesia in 2018 and 2019 can create clean and qualified elections in accordance with various legal institutions that surround them to create leaders who prioritize the interests of the community, especially people's welfare and regional autonomy.

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