



## Challenges and Urgency of Simultaneous Elections in 2024

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### **Abstract**

Simultaneous regional elections in 2024 are regulated in Article 201 Paragraph (8) of Law Number 10 Year 2016 which stipulates that simultaneous national voting in the elections of governors and deputy governors, regents and deputy regents, and mayors and deputy mayors in all regions of the Republic of Indonesia will be held in November 2024. Regional Head Election (Pilkada) is a political agenda conducted periodically in Indonesia to elect regional heads such as governors, regents, and mayors. Pilkada is one way to determine the leader who will lead a region in a certain period. Pilkada is an important political agenda because in the process there is political contestation between political parties and candidates who compete to win the position of regional head. As a result, Pilkada can influence the political direction of a region and has significant implications for the lives of local communities. In the implementation of Pilkada in 2024, there are certainly many challenges faced by both participants or candidates for regional heads and deputy regional heads, political parties as supporters of candidates for regional heads and deputy regional heads, as well as the General Election Commission (KPU) and the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) as the organiser of the Simultaneous Pilkada in 2024. The Constitutional Court (MK) as the last bastion of institutions that process election fraud will be preoccupied with various problems that occur in the country in the context of the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections.

**Keywords:** *Simultaneous Elections; Democracy; Challenges and Urgency*

### **Introduction**

The 2024 Legislative and Presidential Elections have just ended, marked by the reading of the verdict of the General Election Results Dispute (PHPU) trial by the Constitutional Court. The verdict of the Presidential Election PHPU trial was read out by the Constitutional Court (MK) on 22 April 2024. Meanwhile, the PHPU Pileg was read out on 21-22 May 2024. Through this Constitutional Court decision, the winner of the 2024 Presidential Election will be legitimised. Likewise, the votes and seats of all political parties participating in the 2024 elections at each level of representative institutions are known and have been legally determined. The work of political parties is not finished here. Not yet breathing a sigh of relief after participating in the gruelling Pileg and Pilpres contestations, political parties must be ready to fight again. They must again prepare all resources to face the Simultaneous Regional Head Elections (Pilkada) which will be held on 27 November 2024.

The simultaneous elections to elect governors and deputy governors, regents and deputy regents, and mayors and deputy mayors will be held in 37 provinces, 415 regencies, and 93 cities. Of the 38 provinces in Indonesia, only the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) does not hold elections. This is because, based on Law Number 13 of 2012 concerning DIY Privileges, the position of Governor and Deputy Governor of DIY is not determined through regional elections.

The provisions regarding the 2024 simultaneous elections are regulated through Article 201 Paragraph (8) of Law Number 10/2016 on the Second Amendment to Law Number 1/2015 on the Stipulation of Government Regulation in Lieu of Law Number 1/2014 on the Election of Governors, Regents and Mayors into Law. The article states that simultaneous national voting in the elections of Governors and Deputy Governors, Regents and Deputy Regents, and/or Mayors and Deputy Mayors in all regions of Indonesia will be held in November 2024.

The 2024 simultaneous regional elections are a milestone in the development of democracy in Indonesia. Prior to this, there were elections every year in the country. Whether it was electing a Governor and Deputy Governor, Regent and Deputy Regent, or Mayor and Deputy Mayor. After this, we will only hold elections every five years, not every time as before. This is in accordance with the mandate of Article 22E Paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution. That elections are held directly, generally, freely, secretly, honestly, and fairly every five years.

There are at least two objectives why Pilkada needs to be held simultaneously or simultaneously. First, simultaneous elections are expected to save the state money. The results of these savings can be used to increase the state's ability to achieve other state goals, especially in promoting general welfare. Second, simultaneous elections are expected to reduce the waste of time and reduce horizontal conflicts in the community. As we know, so far, elections in various regions have been marked by the issue of voter mobilisation from regions that do not hold elections to regions that will hold elections. With simultaneous elections, voters are expected to concentrate on voting in their respective regions. Thus, the elections are expected to take place more honestly and fairly.

According to the 2024 simultaneous regional election schedule prepared by the KPU, registration of regional head and deputy regional head candidate pairs will be held on 27-29 August 2024. Determination of candidate pairs will be held on 22 September 2024. Meanwhile, the election campaign will be held from 25 September 2024 to 23 November 2024. Voting day will be held on Wednesday 27 November 2024. Given that the time is very close, prospective candidates are currently scrambling for recommendations from the general chairmen of political parties in order to advance as a pair of candidates for regional head and deputy regional head.

The arrival of 27 November 2024 is just a matter of months. Honestly said, ahead of this simultaneous election, the attitude of prospective voters is generally mediocre. Most people care less about who will be elected. It is as if there is no belief that among the candidates who will fight there must be the best son. This may be the result of the demoralisation of practical politics. The behaviour of leaders is often known to be at odds with the interests of the people. In fact, it is not uncommon for regional heads to make policies that hurt the sense of justice for the community. As a result, the public feels that they have no hope for the prospective leaders. This is because it is predictable that those who will be elected will also not work in the interests of the community.

With a heavy heart, it must be said that the behaviour of the elites so far has indeed built massive apathy among the people. People don't care who becomes their leader. This is because whoever they are, they will not necessarily make their lives better. Candidates only approach the people during the campaign period, giving exorbitant promises and tantalising lures. Once elected, the people are again forgotten and left to face their difficulties alone.

In the minds of the public, once they are in power, these candidates will surely act like the previous leaders. He is only busy taking care of the interests of himself and his group. Meanwhile, the lives of the people do not change for the better with the change of leaders. The people are indeed

doubting the sincerity of their leaders in defending the interests of society. For candidates, such public apathy is clearly a test. They must prove that they really want to fight for the aspirations of the people they lead.

Regional heads have a tough task to bring prosperity to their people. A task that is not easy, it must be started by moving the wheels of the economy so that employment opportunities open up again. All of this requires smart policies and it is only possible to be born from leaders who love their people. Because of the severity of the task, not just anyone deserves to be a leader. Elected leaders need to prioritise which problems are urgent and which ones can be left for later. From there, the development programme is made. Only then, choose assistants to run the wheels of government, namely the heads of departments and heads of agencies, who are capable and have high integrity.

All the powers of the governor, regent or mayor should be used to prosper the region. It is hard to say that our leaders do not have this intention. This is because many people competing to become leaders seem to be driven by the libido of power. That being a ruler is delicious. Because, it will achieve all the conveniences. Personal, family and group prosperity, therefore, also becomes easy to achieve. In the midst of such a political situation, simultaneous regional elections were held throughout the country. There is really no hope regarding the improvement of the fate of the community. However, the public must remain realistic. Whether we like it or not, on 27 November 2024 we will elect new regional leaders. Each region will have candidates, one of whom must be elected and lead their respective regions. We just have to hope that those elected will be the best among the various bad choices. The task of the people now is to be careful in making choices.

People should not vote carelessly. Choose only those who deserve to be regional heads. Therefore, the public is obliged to know the character and background of the candidates to be elected.

The track record of each candidate must be thoroughly known so as not to make the wrong choice. It is important to analyse who the candidates really are. What is their morality, leadership style, alignment with the community, and daily behaviour, including what motivates them to become regional heads. Understanding the character of the leader is important to guide the election of the best figure. Do not forget, Pilkada is an expensive political activity and the funds for its implementation are taken from the state budget, from public funds. We do not want that much money to be wasted because it is only used to elect incompetent leaders and corrupt candidates.

This is where voters must know the backgrounds of the candidates. Thus, the people can choose the best. So that the expensive elections do not become just a ritual of democracy, a formal event to elect leaders. So that the public funds used are not wasted.

In addition to hoping that the best people will be elected as regional heads, we also want the elections to take place safely and peacefully. We do not want prolonged post-pilgub conflicts in North Maluku to occur in other regions in the country. Indeed, the elections that have been held in various regions so far have been democratic, safe and smooth. This means that there is enough reason to be optimistic that the simultaneous elections this time will also not be coloured by chaos. Nevertheless, the potential for conflict must still be watched out for.

Pilkada is a power struggle involving local elites. They each have geographical and emotional closeness to the grassroots masses. Pilkada is also an estuary of various interests. It is a meeting place for people who have a very high libido for power and people who hope to share the joy of power. Emotional closeness and the hope of being close to this axis of power, can thicken the fanaticism of the mass supporters between candidates. This then hatches a knot of conflict and violence. The birth of violence in the elections, of course, reduces the quality of democracy. This is because the success of elections requires the implementation of honest, fair, direct, general, free, secret and civilised principles. The form of civilised elections is the guarantee of security for citizens to freely exercise their voting rights.

As citizens and communities, we are all obliged to contribute to the quality of the elections. Thus, it is necessary to continue to build commitment among candidate pairs and campaign teams regarding the need for peaceful and democratic elections. This must continue to be promoted so that it becomes a necessity for all parties, as part of the effort to realise the success of the 2024 simultaneous elections. The commitment of the candidates to realise peaceful elections, of course, is not enough until the signing of a joint agreement. More than that, this determination must be realised in the form of a healthy competition that does not justify all means. For example, through the use of black campaigns, shows of strength, money politics, and conflict approaches in the election winning strategy.

The General Election Commission (KPU) is obliged to ensure that the Regional Head Elections take place democratically. As the executor of the elections, the KPU is not the sole actor that will determine the success of the elections. However, as the maker of rules and policies, this institution plays a vital role. In many chaotic elections in a number of regions in the country, the main cause is mass dissatisfaction with KPU policies. Therefore, this institution is required to be an honest, transparent, and independent adjudicator, and have integrity.

According to Robert A. Dahl Democracy has 7 essential characteristics, namely: 1). Elected officials, 2). Free and fair elections, 3). All-inclusive suffrage, 4). The right to be a candidate for all positions, 5). Freedom of oral and written self-disclosure, 6). Alternative information, 7). Freedom to form associations.<sup>1</sup>

Based on the description above, the discussion in writing this article is the readiness of the organizer in the simultaneous regional elections in 2024, in this case the General Election Commission (KPU), the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu), the Constitutional Court (MK) and other legal instruments as well as the financial readiness of the Regional Budget (APBD) in each region in organising simultaneous elections in 2024.

## ***Research Methods***

The research in the article uses normative juridical research. The approach used in this research is a statutory approach and a conceptual approach. The legal materials consist of primary legal materials which include laws and regulations relevant to the research issue and secondary legal materials which include books, journals, papers, newspapers, internet, etc. All legal materials were collected using literature study techniques. All legal materials are collected using literature study techniques. In this research, descriptive-analysis technique will be used to answer the problems, the results of which will be poured into a descriptive description.

## ***Discussion***

### **1. Organizer Readiness for the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections**

Simultaneous direct elections of regional heads and deputy regional heads (Pemilukada) are important and strategic instruments for building democratic regional governments. Simultaneous direct regional elections encourage the people (voters) to elect regional heads and deputy regional heads (governors and deputy governors, as well as regents and deputy regents/mayors and deputy mayors) democratically.

Several impacts will occur if the elections are held in 2024. First, it will increase the workload of the election because it will be held in the same year as the legislative, presidential and vice presidential elections. Second, the impact on people who will be confused to vote because there are many choices and later regional elections will lose the spotlight from the community, because people are more interested in voting for the president and talking about the National Election. Third, it will cut the term of office of regional heads. Fourth, it causes legal uncertainty in the community because there are

some regions where the regional head has not served for up to 5 years, or in other words, must step down before the term ends.<sup>2</sup>

If direct local elections are included in the electoral regime, then the consequence is:

- (a). The organiser is the KPU;
- (b). The participants are pairs of candidates nominated by political parties or independent candidates;
- (c). The election supervisor is independent and is formed by the KPU and/or KPUD;
- (d). In the event of a dispute over the determination of the election results, it will be resolved by the Constitutional Court;
- (e). Disputes in the determination of the list of election candidates by the KPUD are not the competence of the PTUN;
- (f). *Impeachment* of the regional head or deputy regional head is submitted by the DPRD to the Constitutional Court (MK).<sup>3</sup>

The Regional General Election Commission (KPUD) as the organiser of the elections of regional heads and deputy regional heads in each province and regency / city in Indonesia, must prepare themselves as well as possible, the community hopes that the Simultaneous Regional Elections in 2024 will give birth to regional leaders who are fair and can prosper their people. Therefore, the selection of nominations for regional heads and deputy regional heads carried out by the KPUD must really run well and selectively so as not to give birth to leaders who are corrupt and do not care about their people. Voter data collection must also be carried out carefully so that there are no more mistakes in terms of data collection such as not recording someone to vote at a polling station.

The Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu), as a body that oversees the course of the democratic party, must be able to work carefully, so that there are no frauds committed by

candidates for regional heads and deputy regional heads in their place of work. One of the frauds that is often carried out in every election for regional heads and deputy regional heads is *money politics*, where people are forced to vote for certain candidates with the lure of being given a certain amount of money if they want to vote for certain candidates. In addition, Bawaslu is also expected to be able to supervise candidates for regional heads and deputy regional heads and *incumbent candidates* or candidates who are still in office, because the habits that occur in the community will always have directives of strength carried out by *incumbent* candidates because they still feel they have positions, the supervision factor for devices in the regions such as the head of the RT and the Head of the Neighbourhood also does not escape Bawaslu's supervision. To anticipate all these problems Bawaslu must be able to work extra carefully and carefully.

With the simultaneous elections throughout Indonesia, various problems will inevitably arise, in conflict-prone areas there are often riots due to one of the candidates supported not winning or fraud in terms of voting, the role of the police is needed to anticipate these problems so that they do not occur. The Constitutional Court will also be one of the institutions that are busy with the simultaneous election of regional heads and deputy regional heads because there will be many violations that occur during the elections and these problems must be resolved by the Constitutional Court, therefore the Constitutional Court as a decision maker in the election dispute can prepare itself better so that this democratic party can run fairly, honestly, safely and peacefully.

## 2. APBD Financial Readiness in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections

The implementation of simultaneous regional elections in 2024 will certainly require a very large amount of funds, therefore the readiness of local governments in preparing these funds is needed. Local

governments must be able to allocate funds from local governments to support the implementation of simultaneous regional election activities.

Based on the Circular Letter of the Minister of Home Affairs Number 900.1.9.1/435 / SJ dated 24 January 2023, it is stated that to ensure the budget allocation for Pilkada activities is charged to the 2023 APBD and the 2024 APBD in the form of grant expenditure on the SKPD of the Provincial / Regency / City Kesbangpol Agency. The Provincial / Regency / City Regional Government (Kesbangpol Agency) coordinates with KPUD and Bawaslu to immediately submit proposals for budgetary needs for Pilkada activities. The discussion of the proposed Pilkada needs by the TAPD and the Kesbangpol Agency with the KPUD, as well as the discussion by the TAPD and the Kesbangpol Agency with Bawaslu, guided the standard unit cost of funding needs for election activities in accordance with statutory provisions and is the highest limit that cannot be exceeded.<sup>4</sup>

Regional Finance is all regional rights and obligations in the context of implementing regional government that can be valued in money as well as all forms of wealth that can be used as Regional property in connection with these Regional rights and obligations.<sup>5</sup> Funding for Governor, Regent and Mayor Election Activities is charged to the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget.<sup>6</sup> In the context of simultaneous regional elections in 2024, the Regional Government provides funding for joint election activities between the province and regency / city concerned which are charged to the APBD of each Regional Government proportionally according to their respective workloads with simultaneous election stages.<sup>7</sup> The Regional Government in supporting the implementation of simultaneous regional elections in 2024 budgets the funding support for simultaneous election and regional election activities in accordance with the stages, schedules, and election activity programmes.<sup>8</sup>



Figure 1. Funding Support Budgeting Scheme in 2024 Regional Elections

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Year 2024.

In the event that the regency/city government experiences limited regional financial capacity for the implementation of regent and deputy regent and mayor and deputy mayor election activities, the provincial government may assist in Funding Election Activities. In the event that the provincial government experiences limited regional financial capacity for the election of governors and deputy governors, the regency/city government can assist in funding the election activities. In the context of simultaneous regional elections in 2024, the Regional Government provides funding for joint election activities between the province and regency / city concerned which are charged to the APBD of each Regional Government proportionally according to their respective workloads with simultaneous election stages.









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