



centre for democratic institutions

# **The 2004 Indonesian Elections: How the System Works and What the Parties Stand For**

A Report on Political Parties

Dr Stephen Sherlock

February 2004

## Contents

<b>About the Author .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>About the Centre for Democratic Institutions .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Background: Elections of 1999 and constitutional reform .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>New electoral system and its impact on the parties .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Decentralisation and regional assemblies .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>What the Major Parties Stand For.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<i>The Indonesian party system: the politics of aliran.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>The Big Five Parties .....</i>	<i>24</i>
Indonesian Democratic Party – Struggle (PDIP) .....	25
Golkar .....	28
National Awakening Party ( <i>PKB</i> ).....	30
United Development Party (PPP) .....	32
National Mandate Party (PAN).....	34
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>35</b>
Appendix 1: 1999 Legislative (DPR) Election Results .....	38
Appendix 2: Election Dates .....	39
Appendix 3: Examples of the advantage to candidates on the party list over candidates with a high personal vote .....	40
Appendix 4: The 1955 Election Result.....	41
Appendix 5: Election Results (1971-1997).....	42
<b>Glossary .....</b>	<b>43</b>

## **About the Author**

Stephen Sherlock is a political analyst and development consultant, specializing in Indonesia and South and Southeast Asia. He had ten years experience as an analyst and policy adviser on Indonesia and East Timor in the Australian Parliament. He was also a Governance Adviser to the World Bank office in Jakarta. He is currently working as an independent consultant on governance and political change in Indonesia.

[stephen.sherlock@bigpond.com](mailto:stephen.sherlock@bigpond.com)

## **About the Centre for Democratic Institutions**

CDI was established in 1998 to assist in the development and strengthening of democratic institutions in developing countries.

*CDI's mission is to harness Australian and international best practice in support of developing countries' needs for democratic governance.*

CDI's core work is governance training through short intensive courses for high level officials from developing countries. CDI also undertakes some technical assistance and a limited amount of research.

CDI works in 5 key sectors:

- parliaments, the judiciary, political parties, civil society and the media
- with two cross-cutting themes:
- accountability and human rights

CDI receives its core funding from AusAID, and its geographic focus is on Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific.

Centre for Democratic Institutions  
Research School of Social Sciences  
Australian National University  
Canberra ACT 0200  
Australia

Phone: 61 2 6125 3197

Fax: 61 2 6125 9726

[www.cdi.anu.edu.au](http://www.cdi.anu.edu.au)

## **Introduction**

A new milestone in the process of political change in Indonesia will be marked on 5 April and 5 July 2004 when voters go to the polls for parliamentary and elections. The elections will be the second democratic election since the fall of Suharto's New Order regime in 1998 and the first direct popular election of the President ever to occur in the country's history.

This paper provides an introduction to the main parties that will contest Indonesia's new parliamentary and presidential electoral system and how the new electoral system might affect the fortunes of the various competing parties. The paper shows that party lines in Indonesia derive from longstanding religious, social, and regional divisions in the country. It concludes that all the major political parties in Indonesia have made very little progress in developing coherent policy platforms and that their political identity derives almost entirely from symbolic gestures and rhetoric designed to appeal to the divisions that have historically marked Indonesian society. There is a paradox in that although the parties mostly have well-defined support bases amongst particular religious, regional and socio-economic communities, they have very little to show those communities in terms of targeted policies. It remains to be seen how long the parties can maintain the loyalty of their voters while delivering little in the way of tangible benefits.

## **Background: Elections of 1999 and constitutional reform**

### *The 1999 elections led to a new parliament...*

Following the resignation of President Suharto in May 1998, Indonesia's first genuinely competitive election since 1955 resulted in the creation of a new parliament, usually referred to as the **DPR** (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat* or People's Representative Assembly). The election produced a parliament controlled by 5 or 6 major parties, with no one party able to win a majority or to form an effective coalition. Megawati Sukarnoputri's PDIP won a plurality with 37.4% of the vote and 153 of the 500 DPR seats. Golkar, the old ruling party, followed with 20.9% and 120 seats, with Abdurrahman Wahid's PKB taking 12.6% and 51 seats and PPP, an Islamic party, receiving 10.7% and 58 seats (see Appendix 1 for details and full names).

### *...but the President was elected indirectly*

The election results did not lead directly to the election of the President. Under the country's 1945 Constitution the President was selected by an assembly known as the **MPR** (*Majelis Permusyawarahan Rakyat* or People's Consultative Council). The MPR was made up of all 500 Members of the DPR plus a number of deputies putatively representing the regions and various social groups, but in reality selected by the parliament and the government and thus largely representative of the major political parties. Although PDIP saw itself as the "winner" of the election, it failed to consolidate an alliance in the DPR/MPR necessary to have Megawati elected President. Instead the

office was captured by Abdurrahman Wahid from PKB, despite his party's small minority representation in the DPR/MPR.

### ***The need for constitutional reform***

The 1945 Constitution was designed to be a presidential system, one that usually provides for a clear separation of powers between the legislative and executive arms of government. But the appointment of the President by an assembly dominated by the parliament created a hybrid presidential/parliamentary arrangement which meant that a President depended on the support of the parliament for his/her incumbency.

This inherently unstable system worked under the authoritarian Suharto regime because the powers of both the DPR and MPR were only nominal, with Suharto being repeatedly re-elected by acclamation. But problems with the system soon became apparent after the 1999 election when the various arms of government actually assumed the powers they had in theory. As President, Wahid completely failed to maintain good relations with the parliament and the rapid deterioration of the relationship between executive and legislature during his tenure paralysed government and eventually culminated in his removal from office by the DPR/MPR in July 2001. Wahid's successor, Megawati Sukarnoputri, cognisant of the need for parliamentary support and of her party's earlier isolation, has been very careful not to alienate the Members of the DPR. This approach has, however, only exacerbated her apparently inherent predilection for inaction and lack of interest in policy issues.

### ***Direct presidential election introduced***

The clear shortcomings of the 1945 Constitution added to the clamour for constitutional reform that had emerged immediately after the end of the Suharto regime. A series of changes to the Constitution have been introduced over the last 4 years which have had the effect of increasing the role of the DPR in government but, crucially, have also clarified the division of powers between the parliament and the President. The previously formidable powers of the MPR have largely been eliminated and the power to elect the President has been placed into the hands of the people through direct election. The President will no longer have to calculate the political balance in the DPR but will govern with the legitimacy of a popular mandate. He/she will, of course, still need parliamentary support to pass legislation.

## **New electoral system and its impact on the parties**

The constitutional reforms introduced the broad principle of direct presidential election but the DPR was given the power of putting the principle into effect. The legislative power of the DPR gave it the responsibility to decide exactly what kind of electoral system would be adopted for electing both the parliament and the President. Thus the political parties currently in control of the DPR were granted wide scope to influence their own future political fortunes. The following section outlines the key features of the

electoral legislation passed by the DPR during 2003 and considers the implications of how the new system has been structured for the parties that will contest the 2004 elections.

### ***A long election season***

On 5 April 2004 voters will elect a new DPR of 550 Members. When the results are declared the parties represented in the new DPR will have about a week to announce presidential candidates, in the form of a ticket with both a Presidential and Vice Presidential candidate. The first round presidential election will take place on 5 July 2004. The candidate receiving 50% + 1 of the popular vote, as well as 20% of the vote in at least half the provinces, will be the winner. In the highly likely event that no candidate achieves this result, a second round election between the two highest scoring tickets will be held on 20 September 2004. The winning Presidential/Vice Presidential combination for the 2004-2009 term is due to be sworn in by the MPR on 20 October 2004. With a parliamentary election and two presidential election rounds taking place over a seven month period, 2004 has inevitably been dubbed the “year of voting frequently”<sup>1</sup> (See Appendix 2). With elections for the DPR, as well as for the new regional assembly and for provincial and district assemblies (explained below) taking place on the same day, voters will be given four different ballot papers on 5 April.

### ***The system favours the big players***

The first and most obvious feature of the new electoral system created by the Members of the current DPR in the four political laws of 2003<sup>2</sup> is that the system is clearly designed to favour the existing major political parties. All candidates in the DPR election must be part of an eligible party ticket, with independent or individual candidates not being allowed. Parties must be registered with the General Elections Commission (KPU) and the KPU must be satisfied that the party conforms to a number of criteria set out in the legislation. To be eligible to contest the 2004 election a party must hold at least 2% of the seats in the current DPR. Only 6 parties were large enough to meet this criterion.

Parties that do not meet this criterion must convince the KPU that they have offices or a “full leadership” in at least two-thirds of Indonesia’s provinces and two-thirds of the districts (*kabupaten*) in those provinces. Eighteen parties have met these latter criteria, giving a total of 24 parties eligible to contest the election. Many of those parties are ones that were ruled ineligible on the first criteria (holding less than 2% of DPR seats) and have simply renamed themselves. For example, *Partai Keadilan* (Justice Party), whose 7 seats in the existing DPR was not enough to pass the threshold 2%, will compete as *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (Justice & Welfare Party).

---

<sup>1</sup> See for example BBC, 19 January 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Law 31/2002 on Political Parties, Law 12/2003 on General Elections, Law 22/2003 on the Structure and Composition of Legislative Institutions and Law 23/2003 on the Election of the President and Vice President.

### ***Regional parties are disallowed***

The requirement for parties to have branches in a majority of provinces and districts also means that it is impossible for provincial or regionally-based parties to participate in the electoral process. Even at the provincial and district level (where elections for regional assemblies will also occur on 5 April), the only parties permitted to contest the polls are national level parties. This provision was deliberately introduced on the rationale that it would discourage the rise of separatist elements in the provinces. The effect of the rule, however, perpetuates the highly centralised structure of Indonesia's political parties. Only parties based in Jakarta are able to contest elections at any level of government.

The ban on provincial level parties runs counter to the decentralisation of power from Jakarta that has been under way since the end of the Suharto regime. It arguably exacerbates rather than assuages separatism in the case of provinces where there is indeed strong separatist feeling, especially Aceh and Papua. The major Jakarta-based parties are often distrusted by local people in these regions and such parties are unsuited to giving voice to the strong sense of regional identity or even suppressed nationhood. The electoral law thus means that regional identity in Aceh or Papua can really only be channelled through organisations such as the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and the Free Papua Organisation (OPM) who advocate separation rather than accommodation with the central government. Because the law prevents the central government from offering regionally-based parties a pathway to participation in legal political activity, separatist groups have no incentive to campaign for anything short of independence. Any avenues for legal indigenous political alternatives to parties such as GAM or OPM are blocked by a heavy-handed and counterproductive legal machinery.

### ***Internal party regimes are centralised***

Having eliminated the possibility of non-party candidates and restricting the entry of new players, the electoral system has the effect of maximising the control of central party leaderships over the selection of candidates. The 1999 election was conducted under a system of a "closed list" proportional representation (PR) where voters punched the symbol of the party of their choice and the party later decided who would be the actual individual occupying the seat, most of whom were the clients of the top party leaders.<sup>3</sup> Parties were supposed to name their candidates before the election, but most did not. This arrangement was widely criticised as restricting voter choice and tightening the grip of the party bosses.

During the DPR debate on the system for 2004, some legislators supported the introduction of single member constituencies which, it is usually argued, increase the closeness and accountability of parliamentarians to their constituents. In the event, the DPR majority opted for a system of "open list" PR, under which the parties' candidates will be named on the ballot paper and voters will have the opportunity to cast a vote for a single individual as well as a party. In reality, however, the details of the system actually

---

<sup>3</sup> Harold Crouch, *Indonesia Backgrounder: A Guide to the 2004 Elections*, International Crisis Group, 2003.

mean that voter choice is largely illusory and that it is highly unlikely that any candidate will be elected on his/her personal support without the endorsement of the party heavyweights in Jakarta. Firstly, a voter who opts to support an individual candidate must also vote for the party list or the vote will be declared invalid. A vote will also be invalid if a voter punches a party symbol and also punches the name of a candidate from a different party.

Not only is the supposedly “open list” PR system a sham, it is also so complicated that there is likely to be a very large number of invalid votes cast. In a country with no history of voting in this way and with the KPU having very limited time and resources to conduct voter education, the proportion of invalid votes may even throw the legitimacy of the election into doubt. In late 2003 an electoral NGO conducted a series of “mock elections” to test voter reactions to the procedure and found that from 30 to 50 per cent of ballots would have been declared invalid.<sup>4</sup> The same NGO also published a survey of voters in January 2004 which showed that the majority of voters did not understand the voting system. Even the most democratically-minded party is unlikely to risk a high proportion of its votes being ruled invalid and all parties will probably encourage their supporters to simply follow the party list. Appendix 3 illustrates how the system is weighted against the chances of an individual candidate in favour of those placed high on the party list by the central leadership.

### ***Regional weighting favoured some parties over others...***

Indonesia is dominated demographically and economically by the island of Java. Java contains nearly 60% of the country’s 215 million people and is the centre of finance and industry. Fears about breakaway tendencies in the outer islands that led to the exclusion of regional parties (discussed above) did convince legislators to provide for extra parliamentary representation for off-Java provinces. Special weighting was given to non-Java provinces in the 1999 election, with those provinces being allocated almost 50% of the DPR seats, even though they contained only 40% of the population.

While the objective of this system might be laudable in terms of regional representation, it had the effect of favouring some parties over others, because the parties’ electoral bases are not evenly spread across the country. In 1999, PDIP won 34% of votes but received 33% of parliamentary seats (153) because its vote was concentrated on the island of Java. Golkar, on the other hand, benefited greatly from the fact that its support was centred on the outer islands, receiving 26% of seats (120) while winning only 22% of the popular vote. Another loser was PKB, whose vote was heavily concentrated in Java (especially East and Central Java) and who received only 11% of DPR seats (51), despite winning 12.6% of votes. PKB was put into fourth place behind PPP’s 13% of seats (58), even though PPP (which was strongest in provinces in Sumatra) had picked up only 10.7% of the votes (See Appendix 1 for the seats that each party would have one if strict proportionality had been applied).

---

<sup>4</sup> *Jakarta Post*, 24 October 2003, *Koran Tempo*, 15 October 2003.

*...and its reduction will benefit other parties*

The principle of extra representation for non-Java provinces was carried over into the 2003 electoral laws, but to a much reduced extent. In the 2003 laws the principle is applied by creating a higher maximum size for electoral districts in Java than for the outer islands: the maximum size for seats on Java is 425,000 voters, while outside Java the maximum size is 325,000 voters. This works out as reducing the representation of non-Java provinces from approximately 50% of seats to 45% of seats. Conversely, Java (with 60% of the population), which received 50% of the seats in 1999, now receives 55% of the seats for the 2004 election.<sup>5</sup>

The change in provincial weighting has created the opportunity for PDIP and PKB to regain some of the representation they lost due to the electoral rules of 1999. Some 70 extra seats are available to be won in Java in 2004 (bearing in mind that the whole DPR has been increased from 462 to 550 seats), and if PDIP and PKB can only maintain their 1999 level of support they stand a very good chance of winning the great majority of these new seats. Golkar, on the other hand, with its over-representation of non-Java seats, may have to increase its vote in order to retain its current strength in the DPR because it is less likely to pick up seats in Java. A similar challenge is presented to the Islamic parties, especially PPP and PBB, who have a disproportionately large number of seats in non-Java provinces.

*Smaller electoral districts may benefit larger parties...*

Another feature of the 2003 laws which will certainly affect the electoral chances of some parties over others is the size of electoral districts. In 1999, the electoral districts were provinces, regardless of their population. The average number of seats per province was 17, but this varied tremendously from the largest province, West Java, which had 82 seats, down to Bengkulu and East Timor which had 4 seats each. In 2004 a more complex system has been introduced, under which electoral districts are made up of provinces or parts of provinces, with the range of seats per electoral district being from a minimum of 3 to a maximum of 12.<sup>6</sup> Thus small provinces with a population of less than the 975,000 people nominally required for 3 seats will still be allocated 3 seats (with the entire province considered one electoral district) and the larger provinces, mainly on Java and Sumatra, will be divided into a number of electoral districts.

International experience has repeatedly shown that the larger the size of electoral districts in a proportional representation system, the easier it is for smaller parties to be elected. This is because the percentage of votes (usually known as a “quota”) that needs to be won to obtain a seat is smaller.<sup>7</sup> An examination of the results of the 1999 election indeed

---

<sup>5</sup> Calculations by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), Jakarta.

<sup>6</sup> With the qualification that no province is to be allocated fewer seats than it was allocated in 1999. Thus Bengkulu, for example, will still have 4 seats even though its population would win it only 3 seats if the new formula was applied.

<sup>7</sup> For example, in West Java in 1999 (with 82 seats contested), the vote required to win one seat was little more than 1%. But with the 2004 division of West Java into 10 electoral divisions with an average of 9 seats each, a party must win just over 11% of the vote to gain a seat in the DPR.

suggests that the smaller parties may not perform so well under the new system. The first result could be to eliminate a large number of the very small parties that held from 1 to 5 seats each in the 1999-2003 DPR because most of them have a tiny representation in the larger provinces, especially on Java. With the division of those provinces into smaller electoral districts it will be difficult for the very small parties to win the higher percentage required for a quota. In fact, all of these parties won their seats with less than a quota in 1999 and were allocated seats on a “remainder” basis. Since, however, the 10 parties with one seat each and the 5 parties with 2-5 seats each only hold a total of 26 seats, their distribution amongst the major parties would not have a very significant effect on the balance of forces in the DPR.

### *...and disadvantage the Islamic parties*

Of greater interest is that 43 other seats are held by their parties with a support of less than 90% of a quota and 22 of these seats are located in provinces that will be divided into more than one electoral district for 2004.<sup>8</sup> All of these seats could be considered to be at risk and, especially those in the divided provinces, many are likely to fall into the hands of larger parties. The politically interesting point is that all but 3 of these seats are held by the Islamic parties PKB, PPP, PAN, PBB and PK. All of PK’s seats are held with less than a quota in divided provinces. This is not surprising because PPP, PBB and PK are all currently over-represented in the DPR in relation to their vote. In the event that around 20 or more seats were to be lost by these parties, the result would be a net transfer of 40-50 seats from parties broadly identified with Islam (especially Islamic modernism) to those generally considered to represent the secular nationalist stream (PDIP and Golkar). As discussed below, this represents a shift across the most important faultline in Indonesian politics.

The 1999 system of province-based electoral districts produced results that were favourable to the Islamic modernist parties and the disappearance of that effect will shift the benefit back to other parties. Most PDIP and Golkar seats were won with full quotas in large provinces or (in the case of Golkar) in small provinces that will not be divided. Whatever the intentions of the change to smaller electoral districts in the 2003 electoral laws, the result is likely to be a bolstering of the secular nationalist camp, at the expense of Islamic parties. Given recent western sensitivities about the rise of political Islam in Indonesia, this could be a highly significant outcome of the 2004 election.

### *PDIP is the big potential winner in the new system*

Of the major parties that are most likely to benefit from the totality of changes introduced by the 2003 electoral laws, the greatest potential winner from the new system is PDIP. As the party with the largest presence on Java, it is the party with the greatest opportunity to benefit from both the increased representation for Java and the creation of smaller electoral districts (which will mainly occur on Java). PKB will also probably gain from the increased seats for Java, but its heavy concentration in East and Central Java means that it may continue to “waste” many votes. The picture is a little more complicated for

---

<sup>8</sup> In provinces where the party did not also win 1 or more other seats with a whole quota.

Golkar because it may gain seats in some areas of Java (especially in West Java), but possibly lose others in its key base of support on non-Java islands. The creation of new smaller electoral districts in Golkar's strongholds of West Nusa Tenggara (NTT) and South Sulawesi is unlikely to be of much benefit to the party because it already controls most of the seats in those provinces.

All of these calculations, of course, are only valid if the parties at least retain the percentage of votes they held in 1999. But, in general terms, it can be concluded that PDIP is in the best position to increase its share of DPR seats even without a significant increase in its total vote. To a lesser extent, the same applies to PKB seats on Java. Golkar, on the other hand, needs to increase its vote in certain areas in order to benefit very much from the changes in the system. For the Islamic parties, the new system could bring the greatest losses, because they need to increase their vote significantly just to retain their current number of DPR seats.

***The Presidential election will also be dominated by the major parties...***

We have already seen that the electoral system for the DPR is structured in a way that maximises the control of the major political parties and the power of the central leaderships of those parties. Unsurprisingly, this tendency has been reinforced by the system adopted for the presidential elections. Firstly, no independent or individual presidential candidates are allowed. As in the DPR election, only people who are part of a party-endorsed Presidential/Vice-presidential ticket can stand for election. Secondly, eligibility as a presidential candidate is linked to the results of the DPR election. Only parties that have won 3% of seats (ie 16 seats) or 5% of votes in the DPR election can sponsor tickets in the presidential election. This provision is actually a compromise from one proposal debated in the DPR, (supported by PDIP and Golkar), which would have limited the right to stand candidates to parties that received a minimum of 20% of the vote (ie PDIP and Golkar). The law now states that in later elections the limit will be raised to 15% of seats or 20% of votes. On the basis of the 1999 election results, the 3%/5% rule would limit parties eligible to stand presidential candidates to the top five parties: PDIP, Golkar, PKB, PPP and PAN.

***...but coalition-building is encouraged***

While the big five parties are likely to again dominate the scene after the 2004 election, the new electoral procedures encourage coalitions and power-sharing deals rather than a "winner takes all" approach. The two main mechanisms for this are, firstly, the system of joint Presidential/Vice Presidential tickets and, secondly, the two rounds of elections. The law requires parties to name their candidates for the two offices together, within about three weeks of the announcement of the DPR election results. The ticket cannot be changed in the (very likely) event of a second round election. Because no one party is likely to win a majority in either the DPR or presidential elections, there is an incentive for each of the parties to widen its appeal by joining forces with another party's candidate or by placing a non-party figure on their ticket. The system will force the parties to make a public statement of their alliances soon after the DPR election in April and to maintain

the alliance through both rounds of the election in July and September. Any deal between the parties will undoubtedly also involve “horse-trading” (or *dagang sapi*, “cow-trading” in Indonesian) over other positions such as Cabinet places or Speaker of the DPR, but such deals will be made and unmade in the traditional back-room forums, whereas the coalitions formed in the joint tickets will be public and fixed for the entire presidential election period.

Most importantly, the system of two rounds of voting ensures that no party can win the presidency without majority electoral support. Given the fractured nature of the Indonesian electorate, a “first past the post” system would inevitably lead to a President with only minority support. The Indonesian approach means that presidential candidates must look to build a coalition in order to win.

### *New alliances or old exclusive clubs?*

While the principle of alliance-building might be seen as a desirable one, it should also be noted that the system could be seen as making it inevitable that Indonesia will again be led by a ramshackle and ill-functioning coalition like the current Megawati administration. The inclusion of every significant party in the DPR in both the Wahid and Megawati cabinets was partly a result of the need to keep parliamentary support in the old system of presidential election by the DPR/MPR, but it also accorded with the instincts of elite-level “consensus” decision-making (*mufakat*) that runs deep in the individuals that dominate current Indonesian politics. During both the Sukarno and Suharto regimes *mufakat*, where no votes were taken but decisions were reached by universal acquiescence to the leaders’ opinions, was presented as a uniquely Indonesian approach to politics. But critics have long argued that this form of “consensus” was (and is) a way of excluding participation from outside the closed, exclusive circles of power and of excusing leaders from being made accountable for their decisions.

In practical terms, the all-party coalitions under the Wahid and Megawati administrations produced dysfunctional cabinets where few real decisions were able to be made. Cabinet ministers have felt no common sense of accountability for the actions of the government as a whole and no incentive to defend the administration’s policies, except to the extent that they affected their own particular ministry. In terms of maintaining probity, the tendency for ministries to be divided up like political spoils meant that cabinet ministers have treated the departments and agencies under their control as vehicles for personal and party political patronage.<sup>9</sup>

The electoral laws introduced for 2004 will probably produce a coalition government, but the past practice of attempting to co-opt all influential elements may mean that the new President will include cabinet members even from parties outside the coalition. It is possible that the clear choice created by the second round presidential election will start a momentum towards the emergence of a sense of government and opposition, or of

---

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of the role of *musyawarah* (deliberation) and *mufakat* (consensus) in the functioning of the DPR and the relations between the DPR and executive government see: Stephen Sherlock, *Struggling to Change*: Centre for Democratic Institutions, Canberra, 2003.

majority and minority parties, with its accompanying culture of collective cabinet responsibility. But it is also possible that the tendency to divide up the spoils of office amongst all the major players will prevail and that the new government will be another all-party administration carefully balanced to keep the parties content.

### *A role for non-party candidates?*

An interesting feature of manoeuvrings for the presidential election is that, despite the centrality of parties to the system, there is considerable attention being paid to the possible candidacy of individuals who are not directly connected with one of the major parties. These individuals include former military leaders and current Cabinet Ministers such as the widely-respected Co-ordinating Minister for Politics and Security, Susilo Bambang Yudhono and Muslim leaders such as Nurcholis Madjid and Hasyim Muzadi. A number of the candidates for the Golkar ticket are also only loosely or recently connected with the party, including former military officers General Wiranto and General Subianto Prabowo and businessmen Surya Paloh and Aburizal Bakrie.

For the different parties there are various motivations for considering candidates not strongly identified as party political figures. For PDIP, the motivation for including an outside candidate would be to have a Vice Presidential candidate to support Megawati by broadening the traditional vote-base of PDIP. As mentioned above, PDIP suffered from its isolation after the 1999 election and, for example, the recruitment of a figure such as Nurcholis Madjid (a well-known Islamic scholar) or Hasyim Muzadi (of the Islamic mass organisation Nadhlatul Ulama (NU)) might attract a portion of the Islamic vote that would not normally support PDIP, while the streams of liberal and traditionalist Islam to which Nurcholis and Hasyim respectively subscribes could be compatible with PDIP's secular principles.

For Golkar, the attempt to attract a range of non-party figures to its cause is particularly aimed at overcoming Golkar's image as the party of New Order apparatchiks and corrupt beneficiaries of the old authoritarian regime.<sup>10</sup> For those Islamic parties that will probably receive enough DPR representation to stand candidates (PKB, PPP and PAN), it will be critically important to widen their appeal if they are to have any chance of making it past the first round of voting. They would probably not achieve this goal unless they are on a ticket with one of the major parties (PDIP or Golkar) or with one or more of the other Islamic parties. They may, however, put a non-party figure on their ticket if their objective is not to win the presidency or even a place in the second round, but is simply to maximise their electoral support in order to gain a place at the bargaining table over cabinet positions and other offices after the contest for the presidency has been resolved. Amien Rais, for example, has clear presidential ambitions and has publicly named Susilo Bambang Yudhono as a possible Vice Presidential running mate. But if PAN performs

---

<sup>10</sup> In 2003, Nurcholis Madjid did briefly put himself forward as a possible presidential candidate for Golkar. He soon withdrew from the contest, however, declaring his distaste for the ruthless and opportunistic nature of the politicking that he experienced within the party. During the time that he was a candidate, it was widely commented that Golkar's motivation in involving Nurcholis was to improve its image as an inclusive and reformed party.

poorly in the DPR poll or Amien is otherwise unable to be part of a winning ticket he may opt to play a kingmaker role as he did during the “horse-trading” that led to the election of Abdurrahman Wahid in 1999. His trade-off might be the Speakership of the DPR. (He is currently Speaker of the MPR, a position that is no longer so attractive because of the reduction in the MPR’s powers.)

## **Decentralisation and regional assemblies**

### ***The DPD: a new regional assembly***

As well as separating the parliamentary and presidential elections and greatly reducing the role of the MPR, the constitutional reforms also created a new assembly designed to increase the participation of the regions in national government – the **DPD** (*Dewan Perwakilan Daerah* or Regional Representative Assembly). This change has sometimes been misleadingly described as creating an upper house in a bicameral parliament, but the DPD is **not** an upper house through which all legislation must pass. The DPD’s powers are limited to submitting bills to the DPR which affect the regions, “participating” in the discussion of all bills affecting the regions and “submitting its advice” to the DPR on the State Budget and on bills concerning taxes, education and religion.<sup>11</sup> It is not clear who will have the final say in the definition of which bills are in the ambit of the DPD and which are not. In all cases, however, the final decision to pass, amend or reject any bill remains with the DPR alone. The actual role and influence of the DPD will only become clear as it begins to function after the election, but in practice it is likely to act only as an influential advisory body.

The electoral system adopted for the DPD is an unusual one in a number of respects. Firstly, in stark contrast to the legislative and presidential elections, all candidates for election to the DPD must be “independent” candidates without direct links to any political party. Only the names of the individual candidates will appear on the ballot paper. This innovation was introduced because of heavy criticism about the dominance of political parties in the other chambers. Secondly, elections for the DPD will be held under what is generally known as a “single non-transferable vote” (SNTV) system, a system which is quite different from the proportional representation (PR) system in the DPR. For the DPD, the electoral districts will be the provinces and each province will elect four representatives. Voters will vote for one candidate only and the four candidates with the highest number of votes will be elected. The DPD elections will take place on the same day as the vote for the DPR.

Despite the attempt to prevent the involvement of political parties, it seems unlikely that the parties will not be closely involved in the DPD campaign. Although candidates for the DPD cannot be party candidates, there is very little to prevent them from having close party connections. Candidates cannot have held an executive position in a party since June 2003, but they can still hold membership of a party while standing for the DPD,

---

<sup>11</sup> Article 22D of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia.

cooperate informally with a particular party's campaign or argue on a platform which is identical to that party's. Most importantly, candidates can receive campaign funds or other material support from a party. In fact, observers of electoral systems internationally have noted that SNTV systems have a tendency to promote the practices of vote-buying and of the misuse of official funds by candidates. What Indonesians call "money politics" is a major problem for the country's political system and as one commentator has noted:

...it is in some ways curious that SNTV should be introduced in Indonesia, given existing concerns about illegal influence of money under the current proportional representation based systems – which are in general the election systems least susceptible to money politics.<sup>12</sup>

What this suggests is that the introduction of a system apparently aimed at reducing what is seen as the corrupting influence of political parties may only serve to perpetuate or worsen the problem in the DPD.

There has not been a comprehensive survey of the backgrounds of the candidates standing for the DPD, but many international and domestic commentators have noted the prominent role of individuals with a history of party involvement. One report noted that a significant number of candidates were figures from Suharto's New Order and expressed concern that the DPD would be used as a route back to influence by forces from the old regime. There are a large number of former government officials amongst the candidate lists, most of whom would have some Golkar party connections. Some wives of party notables also feature on the lists. Other sources also suggest that the DPD is being used as an alternative route to influence by people who were to be placed in an unwinnable position on the party list for the DPR election.<sup>13</sup> Yet, on the other hand, there are also reports of candidates who have specifically eschewed party political connections and who are making an effort to campaign with the resources of grassroots supporters.

### ***Simultaneous elections for provincial and district assemblies***

In the glare of attention on the national level elections, it is easy to forget that elections will also take place for legislatures at the provincial and district level on 5 April 2004. Elections at these levels also took place for the first time in over 40 years in 1999. These regional assemblies are known as Regional DPR – Level One (DPRD-I) and Regional DPR – Level Two (DPRD – II). One of the key features of the reforms that have taken place since the end of the highly centralised New Order regime in 1998 has been the decentralisation of power from Jakarta to the two other levels of government in Indonesia, the provinces (*propinsi*) and the districts (*kabupaten*). Indonesia remains a unitary state, not a federation, because the regions are still largely dependent on the centre for their finances and because bills passed by the regional assemblies are not considered to be legislation, but as regulations at one level lower than legislation in the

---

<sup>12</sup> Alan Wall, *Single Non Transferable Vote Election Systems and the Elections for the DPD*, International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) paper, January 2004, p. 12. The paper is to be posted on the IFES website: <http://www.ifes.org>

<sup>13</sup> Confidential interviews conducted by the author.

strict hierarchy of laws, decrees and regulations that characterise the Indonesian legal system.

The devolution of power to the regions has had a major impact on the conduct of government in Indonesia and contributed to the strengthening of local-level political activity. Yet, at the same time, as the following section shows, the new laws on elections and political parties severely constrain the growth of local-level political parties. Parties at the provincial and district level can only be branches of national parties headquartered in Jakarta.

The electoral system for the Level One and Level Two regional assemblies replicates the system for the national-level DPR election. The same system of partially open list proportional representation is used as for the national DPR and the same rules on the eligibility of parties and candidates also apply at the regional level. One major effect of simultaneous elections and the compulsory national character of political parties is that the results of regional and national elections are almost identical. If voters opt for a party at the national level, they tend to vote for the same party at all three levels of government. This was the case in the ritual elections during the Suharto regime and for the free elections of 1999.

## **What the Major Parties Stand For**

When attempting to delineate the differences amongst Indonesian parties, one immediately encounters the problem that the parties do not put forward policy platforms in the way that is usually expected in most developed democracies. When asking the question “what do the parties stand for?”, it is not possible to find the answer in detailed (or even relatively brief) statements of philosophy, ideology or policy, because there are none. Nor does it yet appear that the electorate as a whole is demanding that the parties distinguish themselves in policy terms, apart from perhaps a tiny minority of the educated elite. Most of the parties drew up “fighting programs” (*piagam perjuangan*) after their formation or reshaping in 1998, but they contained little that really distinguished them from their competitors and no change has been made to them since that time.<sup>14</sup> Party leaders feel no embarrassment in stating openly that all the parties’ platforms are “the same” or “almost the same”.<sup>15</sup>

Elections in Indonesia are also rarely fought around the issues of fiscal policy and economic management that often dominate political debate in the West. All the parties regularly raise economic issues in their rhetoric, especially since the country’s poor economic situation is uppermost in most Indonesians’ minds, but such statements are usually nothing more than the broadest of promises to provide jobs and to stop prices from rising. In particular, electors rarely demand of their prospective representatives that they provide evidence that their promises are financially viable or actually possible to

---

<sup>14</sup> The “fighting programs” can be found on the party websites, eg., [www.golkar.or.id](http://www.golkar.or.id) See also Ridep Institute, *Pemilu 2004: Apa Janji Partai Politik?*, Jakarta, 2003.

<sup>15</sup> *Kompas*, 29 February 2004, p. 2.

deliver within the budgets available. The best efforts of a range of NGOs to interrogate candidates about their political programs and to demand accountability in terms of both policy and probity are still a relatively marginal part of the political scene. One commentator in the *Jakarta Post*, for example, observed that “less than six weeks away from the election, the people still have no idea what the political parties are offering to improve the nation”<sup>16</sup>, but such criticism in the English-language press does not circulate far beyond elite circles.

The key to the nature of the political spectrum in Indonesia and what the various parties represent cannot be found in platforms and policies as they might be understood in other parts of the world. It is necessary to look into the historical and cultural origins of the parties and the character of certain political traditions that have dominated politics since the declaration of independence in 1945.

The following section aims to provide a guide to the major parties in the 2004 elections by analysing their position in the spectrum of political traditions that have developed since 1945. It introduces the Indonesian party system, generally analysed as a series of what are known as *aliran*, or streams, which provide reference points against which most political organisations in Indonesia define themselves. This section shows that there is a striking continuity in voting patterns and that the electorate generally remains attached to longstanding religious, regional and social affiliations.

### ***The Indonesian party system: the politics of aliran***

Although the 2004 elections are only the second since the end of the New Order regime and many of the current political parties are new creations, it can be convincingly argued that Indonesia has a entrenched party *system*, that is, parties with well-established connections with particular constituencies and which have well-developed modes and patterns of interaction, competition and accommodation amongst each other. Indonesia’s parties have deep historical and cultural roots which tap into the divisions inherent in Indonesian society. When the Suharto-era restrictions on freedoms of political association and organisation were thrown off in 1998, the country’s political parties quickly assumed forms that had would have been familiar to a political actor of the early 1950s, the last time when parties were able to operate freely. Indeed, the results of the 1999 election show some remarkable continuities with the results of the 1955 election.

Understanding the history and special characteristics of the Indonesian party system and the historical continuities that have marked the development of political parties since independence gives an insight into how party members see themselves and how they tend to be viewed by the electorate. In particular it provides a basis on which to anticipate, in the absence of formal policy statements, the position that each of the parties is likely to take on issues that arise during the election campaigns.

---

<sup>16</sup> *Jakarta Post*, 25 February 2004.

## *Religion vs secularism*

Despite the multiplicity of parties that contested the 1999 election, all parties were seen by voters, by commentators and by themselves in relation to a few broad groupings that reflect patterns of association in Indonesian society frequently referred to as *aliran* (streams or currents).<sup>17</sup> Parties are seen as part of one of three main categories: secularist (or secular nationalist), traditionalist Islamic or modernist Islamic. Secular nationalism is generally seen as articulating the aspirations and milieu of the *abangan* or nominal Muslims that compose the majority of the Indonesian population, together with religious minorities such as Christians, Hindus and Buddhists.<sup>18</sup> The *abangan* are also usually identified as being of a lower class background, especially workers, small peasants and rural labourers. Traditionalist Islam is one affiliation of those who are frequently identified as *santri* or orthodox Muslims, from *pesantran* or Islamic school. Adherents to traditionalist Islam are, in class terms, often not socially far removed from *abangan*. Modernist Islam is the other common affiliation of the *santri* and is distinguished from the traditionalist forms by its greater doctrinal and scriptural purity and a rejection of Hindu-influenced and Javanese folk practices that characterise traditional syncretic Islam. Modernist Islamic organisations have historically been based around the urban professional and business middle-class and rural traders.

Secularist parties have, since the achievement of independence in 1949, generally been the strongest parties. The clearest expression of this tradition today is PDIP, which sees itself as the legitimate bearer of the mantle of secular nationalism and of its formulation by the nationalist leader and first President, Sukarno. Its main rival for the loyalty of the secular nationalist constituency is Golkar, although this party has had Islamic currents competing within it for influence. A large number of small parties contested the 1999 election under an explicitly secularist or Sukarnoist banner and a number of leaders who have defected from PDIP since 1999 have formed parties to contest the 2004 elections.

PKB is the clearest example of an expression of traditionalist Islam, having been formed out of the mass Islamic traditionalist organisation Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) (loosely translated as the Awakening of Islamic Scholars). Abdurrahman Wahid has been the principal leader of both NU and PKB and is the grandson of NU's founder.

A number of parties are generally recognised under the umbrella of Islamic modernism, even though not all explicitly declare a religious association. PAN was formed by Amien

---

<sup>17</sup> The term *aliran* is a rich and nuanced one in Indonesian political discourse. The work of the sociologist Clifford Geertz on Javanese society is generally credited with introducing the term as a category of social analysis. The term has moved out of the arena of academic study into the common language of social and political analysis and has been employed in ways that takes it far beyond Geertz's conceptions. The term is sometimes used in a sociological sense and sometimes applied directly to the identity of political organisations. There are differing opinions about how meaningful these distinctions have become with the evolution of Indonesian society in recent years, especially with increasing urbanisation. But especially in rural areas, where the great majority of Indonesians still live, such divisions still appear to be important.

<sup>18</sup> Many Christians have supported small Christian parties, while the vast majority of Hindus have been loyal to PDIP or its predecessor party, PNI.

Rais, who has been a prominent leader of the mass Islamic modernist organisation, Muhammadiyah. The small PK (now PKS) is probably the most closely identified with Islamic modernism, with PBB also explicitly declaring its attachment to Islamist goals. PPP, having been created as a forced amalgamation of Islamic parties by the Suharto regime, has a mixed membership with connections to both traditionalist and modernist Islamic groups. Generally, however, within PPP, those with modernist affiliations or who take positions compatible with the modernists predominate over those with affiliations to organisations such as NU. There are also a dozen or more very small Islamic parties of similar marginal significance to those that attach themselves to the secularist stream.

### *Continuity from 1955 to 1999*

With the above basic divisions in mind, the strong continuities in the electorate and the party system in Indonesia can be seen when comparing the results of the 1955 and 1999 elections. One particular study has convincingly demonstrated that localities that voted for certain parties in 1955 were strongly inclined to vote for successor parties in 1999. Using regression analysis, the study concluded that people with particular religious, class regional affiliations voted in identifiable patterns in 1955 and that those patterns were reproduced in 1999.<sup>19</sup> In 1955, four main parties, explicitly presenting themselves along the secular-religious spectrum, attracted 77% of the vote: two secular parties and one representing traditionalist and modernist Muslims respectively. In the first category were the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI), led by Sukarno and winning 22% of the vote, and the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) with 16%, both of which attracted *abangan* and non-Muslim voters, with a special emphasis on worker and peasant class identity in the case of the PKI. Masyumi, the main party of modernist Islam, attracted 21% of the vote and NU, the traditionalist Islamic organisation, drew 18% of voters. In addition, two Christian parties, an Islamic party and the Socialist Party of Indonesia (PSI) drew a total of another 9.5% of the vote.

The 1999 results threw up an array of parties which, as outlined above, followed very similar patterns to those of 1955. PDIP saw itself as the direct descendent of PNI and as the guardian of secular nationalism in general and of the Sukarno legacy in particular. The PKI, of course, was destroyed during Suharto's takeover in 1965-66 and was banned from participation in 1999. It is interesting to note, however, that the combined PNI/PKI vote in 1955 was exactly the same as the 37% achieved by PDIP in 1999. PKB was seen as the return of NU to active politics (NU withdrew from formal politics in 1984), although PKB's vote of 13% in 1999 was below NU's 18% in 1955. The total vote for the mainly modernist Islamic parties in 1955, Masyumi and PNII, was 24%, which is remarkably close to the total of 22% for PPP, PAN, PBB and PK in 1999. PBB particularly sees itself as the descendent of Masyumi, although its 1.8% vote is far below Masyumi's support in 1955.

The prominent change in the political landscape between 1955 and 1999 (apart from the absence of PKI) was, of course, the emergence of Golkar. As the party of the New Order,

---

<sup>19</sup> Dwight Y King, *Half-hearted Reform: Electoral Institutions and the Struggle for Democracy in Indonesia*, Praeger, Westport, 2003, pp. 139-165.

it was able to establish itself on the political scene by a mixture of coercion by the security forces and the inducement of its control of patronage. Its vote naturally plunged after the end of the New Order but its great achievement since 1998 has been to stay together as a party and to maintain the allegiance of a major constituency, scoring 21% of the vote in 1999. Although generally seen as a secular party, it has been able to cut across the traditional secular-religious division and to build a party that seems to have drawn votes from a range of constituencies, both secular and religious.

The second important continuity from 1955 to 1999 is the regional dimension of voting patterns. Not only did Indonesians vote along similar lines in secular/religious terms, but the various regions retained distinct patterns of political allegiance over the two elections. The clearest trend was that the concentration of secular and traditionalist Islamic voters in Java in the 1955 election continued through into 1999. The PNI and PKI of 1955 were both predominately Javanese parties and in 1999 PDIP maintained that special strength despite the four decades between the two elections. Similarly, there was a heavy concentration of NU votes in Java in 1955 and a corresponding concentration of PKB support on the island in 1999. This is partly because the *abangan* stream in Indonesian society is, in cultural terms, strongly Javanese, as are many of the influences of traditionalist Islam. Part of the explanation also lies in the fact that Sukarnoism carried, and still carries, strong connotations of a centralised (and therefore Javanese) view of the Indonesian state which has sometimes been viewed with suspicion or downright hostility in parts of the outer islands.

Conversely, the preponderance of support for modernist Islamic parties in the outer islands in 1955 was also manifest in 1999. Masyumi was strongest outside Java, especially in Sumatra and Sulawesi, and much weaker in Java. The other modernist parties were also strongest on the outer islands in 1955. In this case, however, the modernist parties in 1999 were less successful in picking up the votes of their predecessor parties outside Java and they were still relatively weak in Java. For example, PPP, PAN, PBB and PK were able to win most of the votes that had made Masyumi overwhelmingly the strongest party in Aceh in 1955, yet in other parts of the country, especially in eastern Indonesia, much of the Masyumi vote has apparently been won over by Golkar.<sup>20</sup>

It could be argued, of course, that the 1999 election was a special case where people were mainly voting for the principle of democracy and that subsequent elections will see a more educated scrutiny of candidates and parties. Indeed, public opinion polls, while giving wildly variant readings of voter sentiment, have consistently shown a large number of voters answering “don’t know” to the question of who they will vote for.<sup>21</sup> But polling is very unreliable in Indonesia and the polls give no indication of consistent

---

<sup>20</sup> An excellent local case study showing Golkar’s winning over of Islamic voters in eastern Indonesia is: Sven Cederroth, “Traditional power and party politics in North Lombok, 1965-99”, in Hans Antlov & Sven Cederroth (eds.), *Elections in Indonesia: The New Order and Beyond*, Routledge, 2004, pp.111-137.

<sup>21</sup> Many polls have used samples based mainly in urban areas or have been biased by methods such as contacting people by telephone (in a country with millions without phone connections). The most reliable public opinion surveys have been conducted by organisations such as the Asia Foundation and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).

readable patterns of change in voter allegiances. Similar polls before the 1999 election also indicated a large number of undecided voters right up to shortly before voting day.

### ***Indonesian election campaigns: leadership and connections***

Having established that the major political parties have a long historical pedigree and that they rarely distinguish themselves by their policy differences, the question remains how they do actually campaign during elections. Electoral campaigning in Indonesia tends to be composed of three major elements. The first element is promoting the profile of the national leader as the symbol of the party's identity. The second is making and maintaining networks of support amongst prominent national, regional and local figures of influence. The third is organising public expressions of mass support through rallies, processions, putting up of posters and flags, distributions of gifts, and so on.

The first element is the frontline of a party's campaign and a critical part of electoral politics throughout the world. In the case of Indonesia, the importance of individual national leaders varies from party to party and is not such a key element of politics as is sometimes suggested, particularly when compared to other developing countries. The clearest example of an individual profile is, of course, Megawati Sukarnoputri, who is a major factor in her party's vote-getting capacity. Likewise, Abdurrahman Wahid plays a central role in attracting votes to PKB and PAN depends greatly on Amien Rais to boost the party's presence.

But in the case of the other major parties, Golkar and PPP, the party is not strongly identified with a particular leader. Golkar received the second highest vote in the 1999 election despite having recently undergone a major factional struggle for the leadership of the party and going to the polls without a well-recognised figure at its head. There are many indications that Golkar will improve its position in the 2004 elections, even though its leader is an uncharismatic New Order-style machine politician who has only just shaken off a conviction for corruption. Equally, PPP performed well in the 1999 election with a leader who, at the time, had a low level of public recognition and a reputation for close connections with the Suharto regime.

Even the notable case of Megawati Sukarnoputri needs to be understood carefully. Megawati herself is far from the charismatic figure that her father was. She has not become popular because of her own ability to fire the masses and to set out a new vision for the country. On the contrary, she is generally regarded as a figure of lack-lustre personal qualities with little discernible interest in politics beyond the actual holding of power. She is, rather, a symbol of the qualities and vision that are identified with her father and which continue to inspire large numbers of Indonesians, especially urban and agricultural workers in Java and Bali. This kind of mass populism is characteristic of the secular nationalist tradition of Indonesian politics and Megawati's success as a leader is that she has become the means by which her party can tap into that stream and channel it in particular directions. Neither Megawati nor PDIP created a new political phenomenon during the 1999 election. Their achievement was to become the latest expression of an already-existing current in Indonesian politics and society.

In a similar way, Abdurrahman Wahid did not win votes for PKB through his own personality or policies but because he was a capable leader of a different longstanding political and religious tradition. He is a scion of the family that founded the traditionalist Islamic current of politics. Amien Rais also depends for much of his support on the fact of his history as a recognised leader of the Islamic modernist politico-religious stream. In fact, his party's relatively poor performance in the 1999 election has frequently been seen as a result of his failure to fully consolidate his position as the single expression of that tradition.

The second element of electoral campaigning in Indonesia, connections with localised influential figures, is possibly the most important. For most parties, the key to ensuring a good vote in a particular area is to be seen to have strong connections with individuals or institutions that are important in the cultural, economic or public life of the region. In some regions this might be with local religious notables or religious organisations. In many areas of East and Central Java, for instance, the most important factor behind electoral success could be a good relationship the local *kiai* (Islamic scholar) of NU, while in parts of eastern Indonesia the equivalent figure is the *tuan guru*, also a respected religious leader.<sup>22</sup> In other eastern islands, where Christians are most numerous, a close connection with the local church is critically important. In certain areas the important link is to have the endorsement of the leader of a particular ethnic group that is numerous in the region. Thus a party campaigning in a particular area will usually make the local mosque, church, office of NU or Muhammadiyah or home of an eminent regional notable a major port of call.

Throughout the country, but especially in areas outside Java, government officials (including military officers) are especially influential and their support is eagerly courted by political parties of all colours. The particular importance of officials outside Java is that many of these areas are amongst the least economically developed in the country and the local representatives of the central or regional government are seen as critical to bringing wealth and developmental resources to the area.

Building networks such as these can translate into votes either through the influential figures instructing their followers to vote in a particular way or merely by the implicit endorsement created by the connection with the party. In many cases it is a matter of the party recruiting an influential individual as their candidate. As an important Golkar leader expressed it:

Political loyalty in Indonesia is not based on political groups but on sociological groups. 'My father is the *lurai* or the *kiai* so we all should vote for him'. If say NU has a foot in a place it's very difficult [for others to break in].<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> See for example the analysis of the PKB electoral strategy in Indra Pahlevi, et. al., *Strategi Partai Politik Menghadapi Pemilihan Umum 2004*, Pusat Penkajian dan Pelayanan Informasi, Sekretariat Jenderal, DPR-RI, Jakarta, 2003, pp. 236-239.

<sup>23</sup> Golkar MPR leader in interview with the author, Jakarta, February 2004.

Of course in urban areas where the influence of local figures tends to be less, the endorsement of respected or powerful village, district or provincial figures can be less effective in turning out the vote. This is part of the reason why PDIP, with its particular (although by no means exclusively) urban constituency, is increasingly attempting to recruit celebrities and media stars as candidates or as public supporters. PDIP's constituency on Java also has a longer tradition of mass political mobilisation from the days of Sukarno and the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) which tends to make it more open to national-level campaigns endorsed by artists and entertainers as well as explicitly political figures.

The building and maintenance of networks, connections and endorsements is an essential ingredient of the politics of *aliran* in action.<sup>24</sup> Parties see their major task as winning recognition by influential leaders and institutions as the leading expression of a particular *aliran* and having this identification transmitted to the relevant voters. To date, such recognition has largely been expressed in terms of the personal integrity or the connections with sources of power and protection that the party or candidate might possess. If a party and its candidates are seen as morally upright or sufficiently well-connected to be able to speak for a particular community to those in power, it is considered to be a good representative. This culture, of course, is not one which encourages the development of policy platforms or detailed political programs.

The third element of Indonesian election campaigns appears largely during a designated official campaign period of a few weeks before the election date.<sup>25</sup> The official public campaign period is the time when parties attempt to show themselves to be powerful in terms of popularity, wealth and connections. This time is marked by an explosion of rallies, meetings, parades, cavalcades of buses, motorbikes and other public displays of party strength. Parties will also expend a lot of resources in staging entertainment events and distributing gifts to voters. These include sporting and dancing competitions, concerts, activities such as cooking and make-up courses, as well as the distribution of food, sweets, matches, T-shirts, caps and so on with party logos and pictures of leaders. Particular attention is often paid to giving gifts such as clothes and caps emblazoned with party symbols to people who are publicly visible, such as stallholders and *ojek* (motorcycle taxi) drivers.<sup>26</sup>

All parts of the country become covered with posters, flags, stickers and graffiti and the parties set up a myriad of *posko* (command posts), small stalls or kiosks designed to be

---

<sup>24</sup> Endang Turmudi, "Patronage, *aliran* and Islamic ideologies during elections in Jombang, East Java", in Antlov & Cederroth, op. cit., pp. 38-60.

<sup>25</sup> Parties are prohibited by law from campaigning outside the official campaign period. The definition of campaigning, however, is open to broad interpretation and has resulted in some arbitrary interventions into party activities. A DPR candidate from PAN, for example, was questioned by police after he produced 2000 copies of a calendar with pictures of himself and party leader, Amien Rais, before the start of the campaign period. *Kompas*, 29 February 2004, p. 2. On the other hand, Suharto's daughter, Tutut, the presidential candidate for her party, was widely reported to be making visits to religious leaders in various parts of the country and to be distributing rice and fish to people in the area. Such actions raised no response from the authorities. *Kompas Online*, 22 February 2004. AFP, 22 February 2004.

<sup>26</sup> Pahlevi, et. al., *Strategi Partai Politik*, op. cit., pp. 246-247.

both a statement of the party's presence in a locality and to coordinate the logistics of the various events. In many regions, locally dominant parties effectively set up "no-go" areas where rival parties dare not show themselves for fear of having their material destroyed, their meetings disrupted or even suffering physical attack. The highly segmented nature of the Indonesian electorate is reflected in these practices: most parties tend to respect the territorial divisions because they know that other parties will respect the boundaries of "their" area.

## ***The Big Five Parties***

As the previous section has discussed, it is necessary to place Indonesia's political parties in the context of their historical origins in the divisions of *aliran* and region in order to understand their conduct during an election campaign. Although the major parties have shown themselves able to build lasting allegiances amongst the various religious, class and regional groupings in Indonesian society, they have done very little in the way of developing clear policy directions that would relate their party's stance to the interests of the groups that support them. Thus it is not possible to describe a range of policies being debated in the election because the parties do not have them. Rather, one can only infer what the parties are likely to say on any issue from their place in the overall political spectrum and from the public pronouncements made by key party figures. Such pronouncements, along with the few written and philosophical and policy statements that the parties do issue, tend to very general statements of principle and intent. Discovering detailed policy agendas is an elusive task and such statements of principle that are issued are not only very general and abstract, but they are not designed for general dissemination.

The following section is a survey of the history and general outlook of the five major parties. These are, in descending order of their vote in the 1999 election:

- Indonesian Democratic Party – Struggle (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia – Penguasaan (PDIP)*), led by President Megawati Sukarnoputri.
- Golkar, led by DPR Speaker Akbar Tanjung
- National Awakening Party (*Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB)*), led by former President Abdurrahman Wahid
- United Development Party (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP)*), led by Vice President Hamza Haz
- National Mandate Party (*Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN)*), led by MPR Speaker Amien Rais

All the major parties have been subject to splits and the formation of rival parties. In other cases, particularly the modernist Islamic stream, there was difficulty establishing unity after 1998 and multiple small parties sprang up. This section includes reference to the smaller parties that are challenging the big five players for the support of their respective constituencies. None of the splinter parties is likely to be a serious challenger to the major parties, but many of the new parties' founders are motivated by an attempt to

establish a small base of support so as to be able to win a place at the table during the “horse-trading” for positions that will follow both the parliamentary and presidential elections.

## **Indonesian Democratic Party – Struggle (PDIP)**

### *History*

The Indonesian Democratic Party – Struggle (PDIP) was formed out of a conflict that occurred in the closing years of the Suharto regime when the officially-sanctioned Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) was split between those supporting the leadership of Megawati Sukarnoputri and a leadership imposed on the party by the government. PDI was one of three parties permitted to contest the ritual elections for the rubber-stamp DPR that occurred from 1971 to 1997. In 1973, Suharto had brought about the forced fusion of Sukarno’s old PNI with the two Christian parties and two smaller secular parties to form PDI as the one permitted secular nationalist (or non-Islamic) party. The Islamic parties remaining from the period of Sukarno’s Guided Democracy regime before 1965 were forced to merge into the United Development Party (PPP) as the putative united voice of Islamic political forces. The third party, Golkar, was the vehicle for the regime and the one effective political force in the country.

Although the two non-government parties could participate in the elections, they were subjected to continual interference from the government regarding their political stance and the composition of their leadership. Only leaders approved by the government were allowed and repeated interventions replaced leaders who had lost Suharto’s blessing. In the case of PDI, Suharto became concerned that Megawati Sukarnoputri was developing into a rallying point for opposition to the regime and in mid-1996 intervened to replace her as leader of the party with a more compliant figure in the lead-up to the 1997 election. In a sign of the changing atmosphere of Indonesian politics, the government’s heavy-handed action generated the very public response it had sought to forestall and Megawati became a symbol of resistance to authoritarianism. In July 1996, with Megawati supporters occupying the party’s headquarters in Jakarta, Suharto unleashed thugs and elements of the security forces to forcibly remove the Megawati faction from the building. The ensuing violence triggered riots throughout the capital for several days.

The events of July 1996 were something of a turning point in Indonesian politics and indicated the beginning of Suharto’s loss of total control. Although he successfully re-installed an obedient PDI leadership, the official party became a shell with virtually no public support, its vote collapsing from 15% in 1992 to 3% in the 1997 election. Megawati’s faction formed PDI – Struggle (PDIP) in early 1999 and, as discussed above, quickly assumed leadership of the secular nationalist constituency and emerged as the largest party in the 1999 election.

### *Ideological Outlook*

PDIP's ideological position emphasises three main points: defence of the unity and integrity of Indonesia, secularism and fighting for the interests of the common people. The circumstances of the emergence of PDIP from the events of July 1996 and the popular sympathy for Megawati they created helped to cement the party's image as a defender of the masses or the *wong cilik*, a Javanese term popularised by Sukarno meaning "little people". The figure of Sukarno is also presented as the inspiration of the party's advocacy of national unity and the separation of religion from political affairs.

The party's image as the strongest defender of national unity has manifested itself in the cultivation of close ties between Megawati and the military. The leadership of TNI sees itself as the ultimate guarantor of Indonesia's unity and is highly intolerant of any idea or organised movement that the military considers is separatist or in any way threatens the integrity of the country. This commonality has enabled PDIP under Megawati to build good relations with the military, despite the military's role in unseating Sukarno in 1965, its integral role in the New Order regime and its involvement in forcibly evicting the pro-Megawati elements from leadership of PDI in 1996. The most important policy outcome of this connection is that Megawati supported the declaration of a state of emergency in Aceh in 2003, a move which effectively returned control of policy on the problem of Aceh back into the hands of TNI. The party's nationalism has sometimes inclined it towards economic nationalism, but the economic policies it has followed in government have been quite orthodox, particularly in relation to fulfilling commitments attached to IMF programs of support.

Secularism as an idea is strongly stressed in the rhetoric of PDIP leaders and is seen as critical for maintaining a just balance between the rights of all parts of the diverse Indonesian community. Like all positions adopted by the party, it is not expressed in clear policy terms in the party's electoral campaigns, but has emerged during debates on issues such as religious education where PDIP has found itself in opposition to proposals by Islamic party leaders for policies which would arguably provide greater allocation of government resources to Islamic schools rather than to those of other religious communities.

The most problematic aspect of PDIP's political outlook for its electoral success in 2004 is the emphasis on support for the *wong cilik* or common people. In many people's eyes, PDIP in government has become not the party of the masses but the party of the elite. This is partly because it has become associated with the corruption that was previously associated with the Suharto regime. Secondly, the Megawati government's policies of reducing government subsidies on fuel and other basic items, while necessary in fiscal terms, have been seen as a betrayal of the poor who suffer the most direct consequences of increasing prices for kerosene, transport and so on. Of course, all the major parties are part of the Megawati cabinet and thus should also be connected with such decisions, but the other parties have been effective as identifying such moves as the initiative of the "governing party". Nevertheless, PDIP is still seen by most people as somehow a party of the "left" of the Indonesian political spectrum, despite the complete absence of a political program that would justify such an identification.

### *Splits and rival parties*

From the very beginning of the era of *reformasi* in May 1998, PDIP was challenged for the leadership of the secular nationalist stream and for ownership of the Sukarnoist tradition. A large number of parties sporting titles with “nationalist” and “Marhaen” (a name invented by Sukarno to mean something like worker or proletarian) set themselves up in competition with PDIP. Along with these was also the remnant of the Suharto-sponsored PDI from which PDIP had split after the events of July 1996. These parties together received about 10 seats in the DPR and were never any serious challenge to PDIP.

PDIP, however, has been less successful in overcoming internal competition. It is a highly factionalised party with a large number of rival groupings and cliques centring on key personalities. There is nothing to distinguish these groups in ideological or policy terms, with their basis of existence being competition over patronage networks and for power and financial advantage. But like most parties in Indonesia, PDIP has a top-heavy internal structure that centralises a great deal of power in the Central Party Board (DPP) and a small number of executive bodies. If individuals or groupings fall out of favour with the central bodies there is a structural tendency for them to be either fall in line, accept political marginalisation or leave the party. These internal tensions have led a number of PDIP leaders to resign from the party and form rival organisations to contest the elections on a platform claiming to represent the real traditions of secular nationalism and/or Sukarnoism.

Both of Megawati’s sisters have formed rival parties, Rachmawati Sukarnoputri establishing the Pioneer Party and Sukmawati forming the Marhaenism Indonesian National Party. Both claim that Megawati and PDIP have betrayed their father’s legacy of representing the poor, the *wong cilik*, the *marhaen*. Rachmawati has been particularly critical of what she sees as Megawati’s closeness to the military. These parties, with their connections to Indonesia’s most famous family, have received quite a lot of attention in the local and international media, but they appear to have few organisational resources behind them and are unlikely to present any significant threat to PDIP.

Another nationalist splinter party is the Freedom Bull National Party (the bull is the favoured Sukarnoist party symbol), formed in 2002 by Eros Djarot, a former adviser and speechwriter to Megawati. Djarot was ousted from his position at a party conference in Semarang, East Java, in 2000 by Megawati’s highly influential husband, Taufik Kiemas. Reports said that Taufik wanted to remove Djarot’s influence over Megawati.<sup>27</sup> In addition, the old remnant PDI failed to meet the minimum level of parliamentary representation for eligibility to participate in the 2004 election and has rebadged itself as the Indonesian Upholding Democracy Party (PPDI).

These parties together may win a few percentage points of the secular nationalist vote, but it seems unlikely that any of them would individually obtain more than one or two

---

<sup>27</sup> Laksamana.Net, 9 December 2003.

seats in the DPR. Their performance will probably be, at best, little better than the nationalist splinter parties that contested the 1999 election.

## **Golkar**

### *History*

Golkar was moulded by Suharto into the political organisation of his regime, charged with the task of maintaining a channel of communication and control between the state and the population and ensuring that the state apparatus at all levels was committed to the political agenda of the regime. Dominated by the military, Golkar was a medium for the propagation of state ideology, as well as an instrument for distributing the patronage and developmental benefits that would guarantee loyalty, or at least acquiescence, amongst both the elite and the masses. It was formed in 1964 during the Sukarno regime as a coordinating body for organisations connected with the military and the government. The original name was the United Secretariat of Functional Groups (*Sekretariat Bersama Golongan Karya*) which was abbreviated to a typically Indonesian contraction of words to become Golkar. The post-Suharto Golkar Party never uses the original title because of its obvious associations with being an arm of the state apparatus.

The crisis created for Golkar by the end of the Suharto regime led many people to predict the demise of the party. Indeed, Golkar did suffer from the desertion of a large number of leading figures and, as mentioned, it was able to retain only around a third of the votes that it had received in Suharto-era elections. But the party possessed a number of critical advantages that enabled it to survive and prosper in an open democratic environment.

The most important of these was its country-wide organisational network and large number of experienced cadre with ties at the local level and with a reputation for delivering concrete developmental benefits to their localities. As a recent media commentary put it:

The Golkar political machine had authority for 32 years and rested on greater human resources, a structural party network down to the village level, the emotional connections of the bureaucracy and large-scale funds.”<sup>28</sup>

No other party was permitted to organise below the level of district capitals (ie. not in the towns and villages) and had none of Golkar’s access to state resources, both human and financial.

In some regions more than others, such advantages enabled Golkar to overcome the stigma of association with Suharto. In areas outside Java, especially in the underdeveloped eastern part of the country, Golkar received much of the credit for the economic development fostered under the New Order. Many people in these regions were

---

<sup>28</sup> *Kompas*, 5 February 2004, p. 11.

“generally apolitical, information-poor and escaped media attention”.<sup>29</sup> In many areas outside Java, Islamic modernist parties such as Masyumi had been strong in 1955, but were severely disrupted under both the Sukarno and Suharto regimes. The modernist political stream in general has found it most difficult to rebuild organisational unity since 1998. Golkar has benefited from the disunity and, paradoxically, this secular, Jakarta-centred party has captured the vote of many Muslims in non-Javanese regions. Golkar was also boosted by particular local factors such as former President Habibie’s being a native of South Sulawesi. As elaborated in the first section of this paper, Golkar’s regional strength has allowed it to win a disproportionately large number of parliamentary seats.

### ***Ideological Outlook***

Golkar, like PDIP, identifies itself as a secular party. It does so less in the sense of advocating a separation of religion from politics and more in the sense that it does not base itself on a particular religion. From time to time during the New Order, Golkar leaders cultivated close relations with Islamic figures and institutions and pro-Islamic factions within the party emerged as powerful elements in the party in the final years of the New Order, particularly those associated with former President B J Habibie. As mentioned above, Golkar has succeeded in supplanting older Islamic parties amongst certain parts of the Islamic constituency. Nevertheless, Golkar does not overtly associate itself with Islamic symbolism and, particularly in Christian areas in eastern Indonesia, emphasises its history of support for religious tolerance and inclusiveness.

It could be said that Golkar’s core ideological position is *pembangunan* or development. Golkar is the party that has the most overtly instrumentalist approach to politics, emphasising its success in bringing economic and social development to the country. Although the party makes great effort to distance itself from the abuses of the New Order and to insist that it is a remade organisation committed to reform and democratisation, it is still keen to be associated with the economic progress achieved under the Suharto regime. As suggested above, Golkar portrays the governmental experience and administrative expertise amongst the party’s leaders as providing the most effective instrument for restoring economic growth and re-establishing security and stability throughout the country.

Golkar represents an attempt to supersede the traditional politics of *aliran* and to build a coalition of support across established social divisions. The advocacy of development, security and effective government is the means by which the party is attempting to supplant the other parties’ appeal to loyalties generated by religious and other primordial affiliations. Golkar leaders also make a point of arguing that their party represents the “centre” of Indonesian politics, a balance between the “left” of PDIP and the “right” of the Islamic parties. It is also interesting to note that there is some feeling within the Golkar leadership that it does not want the party “to be just another *aliran*”, but to replace the existing mode of doing politics.<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> Alfitra Salam, *Kompas*, 5 February 2004, p. 11.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Golkar DPR Member, Jakarta, February 2004.

### *Splits and Rivals*

Golkar has suffered a number of desertions from its ranks for similar reasons to the splits that have affected PDIP: personal and political rivalries and undemocratic internal party structures. Following Suharto's resignation in May 1998, the long-standing factional rivalries in Golkar came quickly to the surface as the hostile groupings in the party battled for control of the organisation. B.J. Habibie was in the strongest position because he held the Presidential office and was Suharto anointed successor. Representing a more Islamic wing of the party, he joined forces with Akbar Tanjung and defeated a contending leader of the secular elements in the party, former Defence Minister and Armed Forces Commander Edi Sudrajat, for leadership of the party. Excluded from control of the party machine, Sudrajat departed from Golkar and established the Indonesian Justice and Unity Party (PKPI).

Also losing out in the battle for control was a former close associate of Suharto's, former Army Chief of Staff Raden Hartono. Hartono decided to set up the Concern for the Nation Functional Party (PKPB), a name containing the word "karya" or "functional" on which the name Golkar is based. Hartono's close links with the Suharto family was reflected in his joining forces with the eldest daughter of Suharto, Siti Hardiyanti Rukmana, better known as "Tutut". Tutut has been put forward as the party's presidential candidate. A further split from Golkar was led by Yapto Sulistio Soerjosoemarno, a former leader of the Golkar youth wing Pemuda Pancasila who is also well-connected in the military, his father having been an officer. His factional connections were with the organisation of retired officers' families (FKPPI) which was losing out in the internal jockeying with Islamic circles within Golkar. Yapto founded the Pancasila Patriot Party.

Some observers have suggested that Hartono and Tutut's wealth and connections in the bureaucracy, the military and former Golkar networks could enable them to make some inroads into Golkar electoral support. Hartono has claimed that he formed the party on the advice of Suharto and is possibly hoping to capitalise on nostalgia for the Suharto regime that has been growing in the lead up to the election. The combined vote of the Golkar splinters may hinder the party's ambitions to equal or overtake PDIP's share of the vote in the DPR election.

## **National Awakening Party (PKB)**

### *History*

The National Awakening Party (PKB) is one of the few major parties created after the fall of Suharto in 1998, but it is generally regarded as the inheritor of the traditions of NU

as a political party. It relates to the same Islamic traditionalist constituency as NU and was formed largely on the initiative of the NU leader Abdurrahman Wahid. NU had been pushed into the forced amalgamation of Islamic parties that became PPP in 1973, but Wahid withdrew NU from active participation in formal party politics in reaction to Suharto's meddling in the affairs of the party.

In 1998, Wahid decided to revive NU's party political activity, but by this time many NU leaders had become individually involved in Golkar and some had stayed in PPP after NU's formal withdrawal. Unable to draw all elements of NU behind it, PKB was formed instead as a party that attempted (largely unsuccessfully) to also draw non-NU forces into its camp.

### ***Ideological Outlook***

PKB is strongly identified as an Islamic party, but it makes some effort to be seen as a party that is non-sectarian and open to membership and leadership by non-Islamic elements. In a few areas in eastern Indonesia PKB has a Christian leadership. It is also a party which has had a tradition of cooperation with secularist organisations, both in the political and non-political spheres. Its official ideological basis is not Islam but *Pancasila*, the "national ideology" originally formulated by President Sukarno but also taken up by the New Order as a way of enforcing political uniformity.<sup>31</sup> Despite its authoritarian origins, *Pancasila* has continued in the post-Suharto era to be seen as a unifying statement of commitment to Indonesia as a united multi-religious state.

Like the other parties, PKB's policy statements in the lead up to the election do not consist of anything more than highly general statements of principle. The party's few distinguishing stances include its commitment to the concept of a "people's economy" as a way to spread the benefits of economic recovery. Both PKB as a party and Abdurrahman Wahid during his time as President have emphasised this idea, but little or no work has been done to give it concrete substance in policy terms. PKB has also stressed its support for the work of non-government organisations (NGOs) in both facilitating economic and social development and in maintaining the momentum of democratic reform. Many NGOs were deeply surprised when Wahid attempted to defend his presidency in 2001 by issuing a Presidential Decree dissolving parliament. The decree, of highly questionable legality, was ignored by the DPR and MPR.

PKB's experience as the party of the President during the dismissal of the Wahid administration has given it a slightly "outsider" character. Many within the party consider that there was a conspiracy of the powerful elites against Wahid and this has made the party open to the participation of some individuals who are critical of existing

---

<sup>31</sup> The five principles of *Pancasila* are: Belief in One God, Humanity that is just and civilised, Unity of Indonesia, Democracy guided by the wisdom of representative deliberation, Social justice for all Indonesians.

governmental institutions and their perceived abuse by elements from the New Order and others opposed to thorough reform.<sup>32</sup>

### ***Splits and Rivals***

PKB has been relatively free of the internal ructions that have marked most of the other major parties. The one important exception occurred during the confrontation between parliament and presidency that led to the replacement of Abdurrahman Wahid as President in July 2001. In the various votes that took place during that crisis only PKB and one small Christian party (PDKB) supported Wahid. But one important leader of the party, Matori Abdil Djalil (Vice Speaker of the MPR) failed to take Wahid's side, a move that led to a heated division in the party and the creation of rival organisations claiming the PKB name. Matori's group failed to win significant support over the pro-Wahid group led by the Foreign Minister in Wahid's cabinet, Alwi Shihab. The party formed by Matori failed to win recognition by the Election Commission (KPU) for eligibility to contest the DPR election.

### **United Development Party (PPP)**

The United Development Party (PPP) was a forced amalgam of Islamic parties created by the Suharto regime in 1973 and one of the three legal parties during the New Order. As mentioned above, these parties were always kept under close government control and PPP was never in a position to be a real opposition party, but it did sometimes act as a medium for the expression of Islamic concerns with the regime. Voting for the party was one limited way in which *santri* Muslims could express their identity. In regions of particular Islamic strength Golkar was forced to campaign particularly vigorously in order to win the majority of votes that it assumed was its right as the government party. In a few instances, PPP actually defeated Golkar in strongly Islamic provinces such as Aceh and sometimes seriously challenged Golkar's electoral dominance in West Sumatra, South Sumatra, East Java and South Kalimantan.

PPP was seriously weakened when Abdurrahman Wahid withdrew NU's official participation from the party in 1984 and most NU leaders also resigned. Having received 28% of the vote in the 1982 election, it was reduced to 16% in 1987 and 17% in 1992. Nevertheless, PPP survived the transition from being a regime-sponsored party to a democratic party after 1998 because it retained some standing as a voice of Islamic interests and because a range of both modernist and traditionalist Islamic leaders who had participated in the party during the Suharto era decided that it was in their best interests to stay with the party rather than find a place in the new Islamic parties that were formed in 1998.

### ***Ideological Outlook***

---

<sup>32</sup> See Wimar Witoelar, *No Regrets: Reflections of a Presidential Spokesman*, Equinox, Jakarta, 2002. Witoelar was the press spokesman for Abdurrahman Wahid and considers that Wahid was unseated because he challenged the power of the political elite.

PPP is the only one of the five major parties that officially states that its ideological basis is Islam, unlike the other four who state that they are based on *Pancasila*. As usual, the implications for this position are not spelt out in the details of a policy platform. The most significant example of this ideological position in action was during the 2002 MPR debates on constitutional reform when the question of whether to include what is known as the “Jakarta Charter” in the amended Constitution. This is a seven-word phrase (deleted from the original draft of the 1945 Constitution) that would introduce the obligation for Muslims to perform Islamic law, a provision generally interpreted to mean that the state would have the duty to enforce the practice of Islamic law amongst Muslims.

Although the implications of this clause for policy have never been detailed, its introduction could have had a major impact on areas such as education and justice and on issues such as the enforcement of Islamic practices including fasting, prayers, dress codes and so on. There were some doubts about many PPP leaders commitment to this initiative, but the party’s support for the change (along with PKS and PBB) reinforced its image of identification with a strictly Islamic outlook. The PPP leader (and current Vice President) Hamza Haz also attracted considerable domestic and international attention by his statement in 1999 that a woman should not become President. The party’s religious outlook has also led it to take a prominent profile in arguing for an increased emphasis on religious education in schools.

### ***Splits and Rivals***

The fall of the New Order allowed the highly fissiparous tendencies in the modernist stream to come to the surface. Although PPP hoped to draw most of this community under its influence, it was only partially successful. Apart from the creation of PAN (discussed below), PPP has also been faced with competition from a number of small Islamic parties. The most important of these is the Crescent and Star Party (PBB), a party that explicitly attempted to recreate the Masyumi tradition of Islamic political unity. PBB failed in this ambitious undertaking, but continues as a rival for the Islamic modernist constituency. PBB received just 1.9% of the vote in 1999, but is led by the prominent figure and current Minister for Justice, Yusril Mahendra.

After the initial manoeuvring that accompanied the upheaval of May 1998, PPP has suffered only one further significant split. This was the departure from the party of the popular Islamic preacher (often appearing on religious television broadcasts), Zainuddin M.Z., a figure who is a good example of the flexible affiliations of some Indonesian politicians. Zainuddin had campaigned in favour of Golkar in the 1997 election, but joined PPP after the fall of Suharto. Following an unsuccessful effort to oust the current PPP leader, Hamza Haz, Zainuddin and a group of followers, who had also been close to Suharto, resigned from the party and established PPP – Reform in early 2002. Provisions of the electoral law forced a change of name to Reform Star Party (PBR).

## National Mandate Party (PAN)

### *History*

The National Mandate Party (PAN), along with Abdurrahman Wahid's PKB, was the other major party formed after the fall of Suharto in 1998. PAN was established by Amien Rais, the leader of the mass Islamic modernist organisation, Muhammadiyah. Amien was initially offered the leadership of first PBB and then PPP. He "was seen as one of the few leaders who could unite some of the more disparate elements of modernist politics".<sup>33</sup> Amien declined the offers, however, and formed his own party in an attempt to gain leadership of the modernist community while, at the same time, attracting a broader constituency, especially amongst the more liberal and secular-minded urban middle class. Amien had been strongly identified with the student-led pro-democracy movement that had played an important role in the downfall of Suharto.

### *Ideological Outlook*

PAN's primary constituency is within the Islamic modernist community, in competition with PPP, as well as with the smaller Islamic modernist parties like PKS and PBB. But because the party was formed as an attempt to build a wider basis of support, its official position is that its ideological basis is *Pancasila*, not Islam. During the 1999 election, Amien attempted to build on his image as a modern reforming leader combining Islamic credentials with an inclusive and tolerant attitude towards all communities. PAN was formed with the involvement of a number of non-Islamic figures, including some ethnic Chinese Christians.

PAN's 1999 election performance, however, was far below the party's expectations. This was possibly because Amien was unable to shake off an earlier image of association with fundamentalist Islamic positions. But it is probably more that the Indonesian electorate was still firmly tied to long-standing identities and that although a newer liberal-minded educated urban constituency has emerged in recent years, it is still relatively small in electoral terms. After 1999, Amien appeared to react to PAN's disappointing result by returning to his core constituency and was heavily criticised for moves such as addressing a mass rally in early 2000 in support of a fundamentalist Muslim campaign against Christians in Maluku. While Amien appears to have backed away from such actions, PAN has lost a number, though not all, of its non-Islamic leaders.

The position taken by PAN during the debate on the Jakarta Charter (discussed in the section on PPP above) was indicative of the party's attempts to straddle the competing pressures from its two target constituencies. The leaders of PAN in the MPR opposed the inclusion of the Jakarta Charter in the Constitution, but supported an alternative proposal

---

<sup>33</sup> Greg Fealy & Bernhard Platzdasch, "The Masyumi Legacy: Between Islamist Idealism and Political Exigency", in Damien Kingsbury, Arief Budiman and Richard Chauvel (eds.), *The Dynamics of Political Islam in Indonesia*, Monash Asia Institute, 2004.

that would have imposed an obligation on all religious groups to practice their various religious obligations. In doing so PAN hoped to distance itself from the idea that Islam had a special status above other religions in Indonesia, while also maintaining its image of a party that supported religious piety and observance.

In keeping with the image of Amien Rais as a reformist, PAN has emphasised its support for continuing political reform, especially on the issue of the withdrawal of the military from politics and an end to the military's "dual function" role. The party has also presented itself as particularly concerned to eliminate corruption. Once again, these are issues that unite the Islamic constituency with liberal-minded middle class voters. Political reform and ending corruption are key concerns of many in the middle class, while Islamic voters are attracted to a moral condemnation of corruption and to reforms in the state apparatus that would end what they see as long-standing anti-Islamic measures. In particular PAN stresses the importance of reforming the military to make it a conventional external defence force rather than a mechanism of internal social control. During the New Order the military were particularly suspicious of political Islam as a subversive force and were quick to suppress any organisation or movement they perceived as spreading Islamic extremism.

### ***Splits and Rivals***

PAN has not gone through any major splits, but it has suffered a drift of non-Islamic leaders from its ranks. Since it presented itself as an inclusive alliance of Islamic and non-Islamic forces, this has been a major failing for the party. PAN's main rival for the modernist Islamic constituency is the Justice and Welfare Party (PKS), particularly amongst students and educated middle class Muslims. PKS comes out of a very similar milieu as PAN and has a reputation for being a well-organised and disciplined party, features that stand out amongst the low level of internal efficiency amongst most Indonesian parties. PAN and PKS cooperated in the DPR by operating in the same parliamentary fraction (*fraksi*) or caucus. Notwithstanding the capacity of the two parties to work together, they are clearly competing within a similar social and cultural community and if (as widely predicted) PKS benefits in electoral terms from its superior organisational machine, the increased vote is likely to come from former PAN voters. PBB could also be seen as jostling for largely the same pool of votes as PAN.

## **Conclusion**

The parliamentary and presidential elections in 2004 represent a further step towards the consolidation of democratic politics in Indonesia, as well as the launching of a new system for electing the parliament and the President. The elections are an affirmation that the country is unlikely to revert to authoritarian rule, but they are also a new venture into developing and refining a particularly Indonesian version of democratic politics.

The reforms to the electoral system introduced since 1999, including the introduction of direct presidential elections, a changed voting system for the parliament (DPR) and the creation of a new regional assembly (DPD), are important refinements to the

constitutional and legislative framework of democratic politics in Indonesia. Like all electoral processes, the new system is not entirely neutral in its political effects and could have an impact on patterns of voting, on which parties emerge as the winners and the losers and on how the parties structure themselves internally.

The reforms have been engineered in a way that perpetuates the highly centralised control of political parties by existing elites while apparently offering increased choice for voters, a choice which is in some ways illusory. Direct presidential election may eventually force the parties into presenting a clearer choice (and may influence voters to demand a real choice), but the existing party leaders have made every effort to create a system that maximises their influence. The establishment of the DPD could introduce a new voice of regional representation into central legislative processes in Jakarta, if only an advisory one. But once again it is difficult to see how the DPD's system of election of individual candidates will actually overcome the dominance of existing parties, given the parties' access to resources and networks of patronage and influence. It will be surprising if more than a small minority of DPD candidates are elected without the implicit support of a party.

Perhaps the most predictable political outcome of the changes to the DPR electoral system will be to eliminate most of the very small parties in the parliament. In addition, the new system eliminates most of the ways in which certain Islamic parties were able to win a disproportionately high number of DPR seats in the 1999 election. Unless the Islamic parties are able to win a major increase in their vote in 2004, there could be a significant shift away from the Islamic parties (especially the smaller ones) in favour of the two big secular parties, PDIP and Golkar. This would in turn reduce the capacity of the Islamic parties to bargain for a prominent position on a strong ticket in the presidential election. The longer term effect might even be to increase the splintering of an already fragmented political Islam in Indonesia.

Since these will only be the third democratic elections in the country's half-century of post-independence history, the patterns of electoral behaviour amongst Indonesian voters are still in the process of formation. We have seen that there was a remarkable continuity in voting patterns between the 1955 and 1999 elections, but it remains to be seen how long such continuity will be maintained. Many observers have been surprised at the extent to which *aliran* politics have survived the huge economic and social changes that Indonesia has experienced in the last few decades. One assumption underpinning much of the academic and other commentary has been that *aliran* politics would decline over time and that such a change was not only inevitable but desirable and somehow represented progress towards a more "modern" political culture. Even party political figures often see the existing political culture of "primordialism" as a sign of Indonesia's lack of modernity, even as they continue to campaign in this mode because they feel there is other route to power in Indonesian politics.<sup>34</sup>

On the evidence so far, however, the future character of electoral politics in Indonesia is very much an open question. There is little sign that the electorate as a whole is deserting

---

<sup>34</sup> Interview with a leading Golkar DPR Member, Jakarta, March 2004.

the existing parties or starting to vote in such a way that would transcend *aliran* politics or which would force the parties to begin developing coherent policies and to offer the voters a clearer choice of policy alternatives. The only possible exception to this is Golkar because it is the only major party that is not directly descended from one of the parties of the 1950s and does not present itself as the primary voice of a particular *aliran*. Golkar projects an image of a party that is able to transcend traditional social divisions and is able to offer a practical record of governmental efficiency and economic development. On the other hand, Golkar has, in common with the other major parties, also failed to give serious attention to moving from the presentation of a party image to the development of a detailed policy platform on economic issues such as employment and inflation, social issues such as health and education or the continuing need for reform of state institutions such as the military, the judicial system and the civil service.

It is interesting to note that two of the major Islamic parties, PAN and PKB, do not explicitly name themselves as Islamic parties and have made some attempt to attract non-Islamic figures to their ranks, but such efforts have done little to spread their influence outside their core Islamic constituencies. This does at least show that there is some perception of the desirability of breaking out of *aliran* politics within the Islamic community. Once again, however, such efforts have not extended beyond symbolism and the recruitment of influential figures, with policy development having little or no place in the attempts to broaden the parties' appeal.

Ultimately, the parties will not fundamentally change their modes of organisation and campaigning unless they are forced to do so by marked changes in the way the Indonesian people vote. Only if people as individual voters and as part of organised movements and pressure groups begin to challenge the highly elitist manner in which politics are conducted will the party leaders feel an incentive to reform their party machines. For observers of Indonesian politics, the advent of changes to the electoral system and the country's second post-New Order election will be a critical opportunity to closely monitor signs that such challenges are beginning to emerge. Indonesia has taken great strides towards the consolidation of democratic institutions in recent times, but the infusion of a culture of popular participation and accountability has only just begun.

## Appendix 1: 1999 Legislative (DPR) Election Results

(with seats calculated according to strict proportionality in brackets\*)

Party	% Votes	No. Seats (proportional)	No. Votes (millions)
<b>Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (PDIP)</b> Indonesian Democratic Party -Struggle	33.7	153 (162)	35.71
<b>Partai Golkar</b> Golkar	22.4	120 (107)	23.74
<b>Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB)</b> National Awakening Party	12.6	51 (61)	13.34
<b>Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP)</b> United Development Party	10.7	58 (51)	11.33
<b>Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN)</b> National Mandate Party	7.3	34 (34)	7.53
<b>Partai Bulan Bintang (PBB)</b> Crescent Star Party	1.8	13 (9)	2.05
<b>Partai Keadilan (PK) (now PKS)</b> Justice Party	1.3	7 (7)	1.47
<b>Other Parties (14)</b>	6.35	26 (31)	
<b>Total Elected Seats</b>		<b>462</b>	
<b>Tentara Nasional Indonesia (TNI) (appointed seats)</b>		38	
<b>Total Seats in Parliament (DPR)</b>		<b>500</b>	

\* The figures in brackets represent a hypothetical calculation of the seats each party would have won if strict proportionality had been applied. The figures were arrived at by dividing the percentage of each party's vote into the 462 seats. This produces a remainder of 18 seats that would go to the parties that did not actually win seats in the 1999 election. These seats were proportionally distributed to the parties that did win seats.

## **Appendix 2: Election Dates**

April 5	DPR elections
April 21-28	DPR election winners announced
May 19	Presidential and vice presidential candidates announced
June 1 - July 1	First round campaign for presidential and vice presidential election
July 5	First round presidential and vice presidential election
July 26	First round winners announced
July 30 - August 5	Second round presidential and vice presidential candidates announced
Sept 14-16	Second round campaign for presidential and vice presidential election
Sept 20	Second round presidential and vice presidential election
Oct 5	Second round winners announced
Oct 20	President and vice president inaugurated for 2004-2009 term.

### **Appendix 3: Examples of the advantage to candidates on the party list over candidates with a high personal vote**

#### **Example 1:**

Party A receives 150,000 votes in an electoral district

The quota for that district is 50,000 votes – therefore Party A is allocated 3 seats

Candidates 1–3 on the party’s official list (the top 3) receive 5,000 individual votes each  
Candidate 4 on the list receives 49,000 individual votes (ie. just under the quota)

The party receives 64,000 party list votes (ie. votes for the party symbol alone, without indicating a preference for an individual candidate).

Candidates 1–3 will be elected, even though they received far fewer individual votes than Candidate 4. Thus, all the party votes are allocated to the three candidates who were nominated for the favourable positions by the Central Party Board, plus they receive all of Candidate 4’s individual votes.

#### **Example 2:**

Party B receives 50,000 votes in an electoral district.

The quota for that district is 50,000 votes – therefore Party B is allocated 1 seat.

The party receives 1,000 party list votes.

Candidate 1 on the party list receives no individual votes.

Candidate 4 on the party list receives 49,000 votes (ie. just under the quota).

Candidate 1 is elected, despite having receiving no individual votes and the party list vote receiving very few votes. Again, all of Candidate 4’s votes are allocated to the candidate on the top of the party list.

## Appendix 4: The 1955 Election Result

Political Party	Valid votes	Valid votes (%)	Parliamentary Seats	Parliamentary Seats (%)
PNI	8 434 653	22.3	57	22.2
Masyumi	7 903 886	20.9	57	22.2
NU	6 955 141	18.4	45	17.5
PKI	6 176 914	16.4	39	15.2
PSII	1 091 160	2.9	8	3.1
Parkindo	1 003 325	2.6	8	3.1
Partai Katholik	770 740	2.0	6	2.3
PSI	753 191	2.0	5	1.9
Murba	199 588	0.5	2	0.8
Others	4 496 701	12.0	30	11.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>37 785 299</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Source: Ricklefs, M. C., A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1200 (3rd edition). Standford, CA: Standford University Press, 2001.*

[http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Indonesian/Indonesian\\_Elections/Election\\_text.htm](http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Indonesian/Indonesian_Elections/Election_text.htm)

## Appendix 5: Election Results (1971-1997)

Political Parties	1971		1977		1982		1987		1992		1997	
	Votes %	Seats	Votes %	Seats	Votes %	Seats	Votes %	Seats	Votes %	Seats	Votes %	Seats
<b>Golkar</b>	62.8	236	62.1	232	64.3	237	73.2	299	68.1	282	74.5	352
<b>PPP</b>			29.3	99	27.8	94	16.0	61	17.0	62	22.5	89
- NU	18.67											
- Parmusi	5.36											
- PSII	2.39											
- Perti	0.70											
		94										
<b>PDI</b>			8.6	29	7.9	29	10.9	40	14.9	56	11.9	11
- PNI	6.9											
- Parkindo	1.34											
- Partai	0.09											
- Murba												
- IPKI	0.62											
- Partai	1.10											
<b>Katolik</b>		30										

\*The number and composition of the DPR and MPR members underwent changes throughout the period of 1982 to 1999.

(a) In the 1982 election, 360 of 460 members of the DPR were directly elected. The other 100 were appointed members from the military. MPR had 920 members which consisted of 460 DPR members plus 460 appointed members (appointed representatives from regional and functional groups).

(b) In the 1987 election, the number of DPR members was increased to 500 with 400 directly elected and 100 appointed military representatives.

(c) In 1997, the number of DPR's members remained 500, but the number of directly elected members increased to 425 while the military representatives was reduced to 75. The MPR's members however increased into 1,000 with the composition of 500 DPR members and an addition of 500 members from various groups appointed by the president.

### References:

Karim, M. Rusli. *Pemilu Demokratis Kompetitif*. Yogyakarta: PT. Tiara Wacana Yogya, 1991.

Liddle, R. William. *Pemilu-Pemilu Orde Baru, Pasang Surut Kekuasaan Politik*. Jakarta: LP3ES, 1992

Ricklefs, M.C. *A History of Modern Indonesia Since c. 1200* (3rd edition). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001.

Source: [http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Indonesian/Indonesian\\_Elections/Election\\_text.htm](http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Indonesian/Indonesian_Elections/Election_text.htm)

## Glossary

DPD	Dewan Perwakilan Daerah	(Regional Representative Assembly)
DPR	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat	(People's Representative Assembly)
DPR – I	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat – Tingkat I	(People's Representative Assembly – Level I (Provincial Level))
DPP	Dewan Pimpinan Pusat	(Central Leadership Board)
DPR – II	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat – Tingkat II	(People's Representative Assembly – Level II (District Level))
GAM	Gerakan Aceh Merdeka	(Free Aceh Movement)
KPU	Komisi Pemilihan Umum	(General Elections Commission)
MPR	Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat	(People's Consultative Assembly)
NU	Nahdlatul Ulama	(Council of Islamic Scholars or Awakening of Islamic Scholars)
OPM	Organisasi Papua Merdeka	(Free Papua Organisation)
PAN	Partai Amanat Nasional	(National Mandate Party)
PBB	Partai Bulan Bintang	(Crescent & Star Party)
PBR	Partai Bintang Reformasi	(Reform Star Party)
PDI	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia	(Indonesian Democratic Party)
PDIP	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia – Perjuangan	(Indonesian Democratic Party – Struggle)
PDKB	Partai Demokrasi Kasih Bangsa	(Democratic Love the Nation Party)
PK	Partai Keadilan	(Justice Party)
PKB	Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa	(National Awakening Party)
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia	(Indonesian Communist Party)

PKPB	Partai Karya Peduli Bangsa	(Concern for the Nation Functional Party)
PKPI	Partai Keadilan Persatuan Indonesia	(Indonesian Justice & Unity Party)
PKS	Partai Keadilan Sejahtera	(Justice & Welfare Party)
PNI	Partai Nasional Indonesia	(Indonesian National Party)
PSII	Partai Syarikat Islam Indonesia	(Indonesian Islamic Party)
PPDI	Partai Penegak Demokrasi Indonesia	(Indonesian Upholding Democracy Party)
PPP	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan	(United Development Party)
PSI	Partai Sosialis Indonesia	(Indonesian Socialist Party)
SNTV	Single Non Transferable Vote	