

Jakarta gubernatorial Election 2017: Who Will Be Eliminated?

By Igor Dirgantara

Approaching the polls February 15, 2017, competition has been increasingly rigorous among the three candidates who are contesting in the Jakarta gubernatorial Election (Pilgub) 2017, namely, incumbent duet Basuki Tjahaja Purnama-Djarot Saiful Hidayat (Ahok-Djarot), Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono-Sylviana Murni (Agus-Sylvi), and Anies Baswedan-Sandiaga Uno (Anies-Sandi). Many said that the fight in Jakarta gubernatorial election this time is a 'proxy war' of the rivalry among the political elites Megawati Soekarno Putri, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Prabowo Subianto. Ahok-Djarot is supported by the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP), the People's Conscience Party (Hanura), The Functional Group Party (Golkar), and the National Democratic Party (Nasdem). Agus-Sylvi is supported by the Democratic Party, the United Development Party (PPP), the National Awakening Party (PKB) and the National Mandate Party (PAN). Whereas Anies-Sandi is supported by the Great Indonesia Movement Party (Gerindra) and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS). Presently, the Jakarta gubernatorial election is entering the stage of formal debate among the candidates that will begin on January 13, 2017. In the previous informal debate that was aired by some private televisions, the Anies-Sandi duet looked dominating over other candidates.

Predictably the Jakarta gubernatorial Election 2017 will take two rounds, because the winner is required to get 50%+1 vote. Agus-Sylvi, Ahok-Djarot, and Anies-Sandi are having equal opportunity to win and at the same also potentially to lose, or will not qualify for the second round. Support to the three pairs of candidates are still fluid and attitude of the voters tend to be still able to change until the end days before the voting day February 13, 2017. Supporting votes for the three pairs of candidates is nearly the same in number. Electabilities of the three pairs of candidates who will compete are still overlapping each others within the margin of error. Statistically, no certainty can be made on which pair of candidates will win.

Despite of Good Performance's of Ahok, Jakarta's Residents Want New Governor

From the results of survey conducted by SPIN (Survey & Polling Indonesia) during August-December 2016, it was revealed that Ahok is still considered by the public as the figure who best understands the problems in Jakarta (73%), compared to Anies (40%), or Agus (33%). The pair of incumbent governor Ahok-Djarot has had the advantage in selling the programs they have achieved.

On the other hand, his two contenders focused on issues that have not been covered yet by Ahok-Djarot. Anies-Sandi pairing, for example, developed issues of job availability, basic stuff price control, and clean water availability in Jakarta. These issues were raised as a criticism against Ahok's policies that were more physical, rather than human oriented. Anies-Sandi also intends to stop the policy on reclamation in Jakarta Bay which has been being contested by many environmental activists. Meanwhile, Agus-Sylvi's programs highlighted more the provision of financial assistance, such as the granting of Rp 5 million

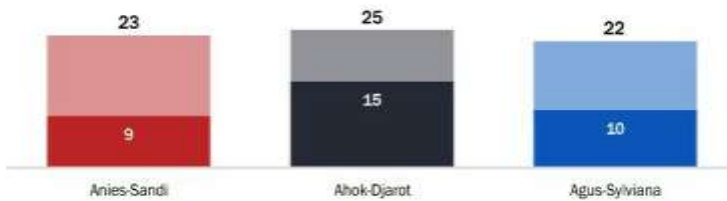
per poor family, or Rp 1 billion per RW (Rukun Warga) in Jakarta. It is obvious that the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election will be the momentum to evaluate the incumbent governor's performance and to draft the overall improvement.

Significantly, the trend of favorability to Ahok as the incumbent has decreased. Only as low as 30% believe that Ahok deserves to be re-elected Governor, while 55% want a new figure for Jakarta governor. Ahok's positive popularity is equal to his negative popularity. Negative sentiment against Ahok is also prevalent in various segments of Jakarta voters due to the alleged religious defamation case which has resulted in a commotion and protest by Muslim community. Presently, Ahok is the accused (defendant) on the religious defamation case before the court for quoting a Quranic verse in surah Al-Maidah 51 during his working visit in the Thousand Islands. As at January 10, 2017, the case of alleged religious defamation by Ahok was entering the fifth trial round.

SUPPORT STILL SOFT; ELECTION FLUID

How certain are you that you will vote for the candidate you marked for the gubernatorial election? Are you very certain, somewhat certain, just a little certain, or not certain at all?

Darker = Very/somewhat certain
Lighter = Just a little/not certain at all

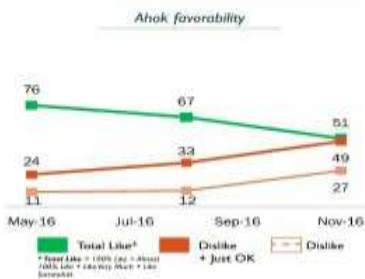
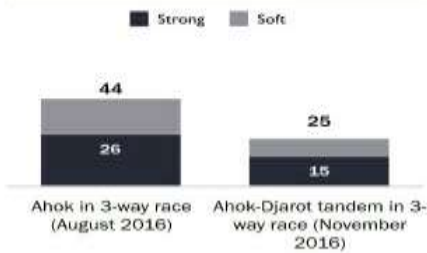


• Ahok has hit his floor; Ahok's "strong" support from August = 26%

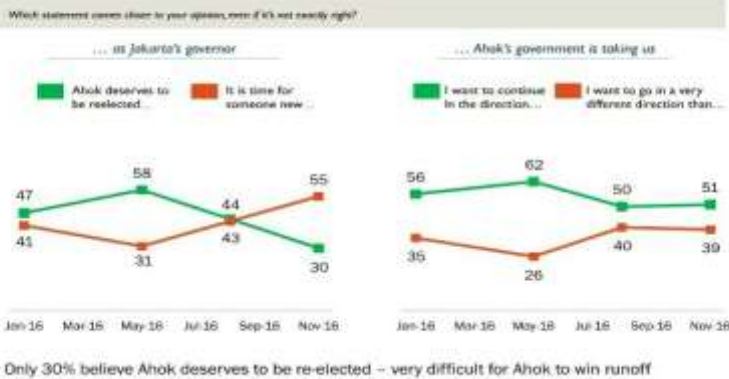
AHOK HAS HIT HIS FLOOR

Although the Jakarta Governor election is not until February 2017, if the next Governor's election were held today, for which candidate ticket would you vote, if the choices were the names on this card?

What phrase best describes how you feel about [figure]: 100% Like, Almost 100% Like, Like Very Much, Like Somewhat, Just OK, Dislike Somewhat, Dislike Very Much, 100% Dislike



CHANGE IS ABOUT AHOK AS A LEADER...NOT DIRECTION



551 COMMENTS HURT

Recently Ahok was under fire for making a comment about Surah al-Maidah Verse 51 in the Koran deceiving waters. He has since apologized. Did you hear about this?

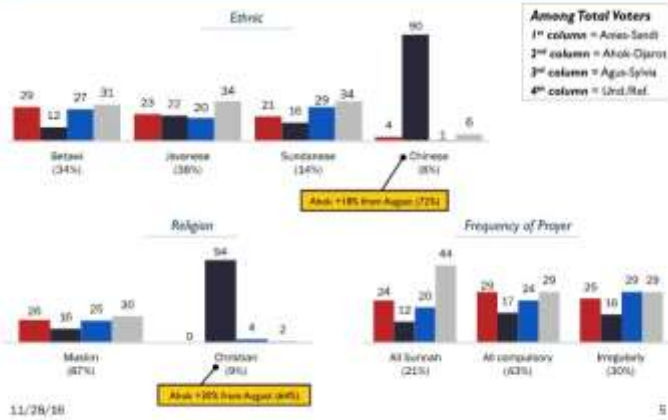
And does Ahok's recent comments on the Koran make you support the Ahok-Djarot tandem more, oppose it more, or has no impact on your feelings towards the tandem?



* "More support" concentrated among Christians and Chinese

Despite, in one side, majority of Jakarta people being rational voters, but on the other hand they are in fact unable to escape from the political choice based on primordialism. The anti-Ahok struggle is stronger due to the religious motive. Ahok is at a disadvantaged position because he comes from minority ethnic and religion. Ahok is now in trouble with a sensitive issue of religious defamation. His status as the accused becomes a psychological barrier for the public from reelecting him. Primordial identity has been used for political benefit and gaining support. Ahok's weakness is none of Muslim-based parties supports him. However, for Ahok's supporters, he was merely a victim of religion politicization. Although it is possible, but somewhat difficult, for Ahok to rebound his electability within this remaining one month.

SOME TRIBALISM EMERGES



VOTERS GIVE BOTH ANIES AND AGUS A CHANCE

Even though you are not currently supporting the [below] ticket in the next gubernatorial elections, what are the chances you might support [ticket] in the next gubernatorial election?



- Both Anies-Sandi and Agus-Sylvi have enough "Fair" chance voters to get them to ~50%.
- Ahok needs to persuade his "small chance" voters to break the 50% threshold.
- In the 2nd round against Ahok, Anies-Sandi have a 26% "base"—9% strong support + 17% no chance Ahok.

In contrast, Anies Baswedan is seen as a figure who is more caring to the Jakarta people (57%), than Ahok (52%), or Agus (47%). Anies is also considered more as representing the entire strata of Jakarta people (52%), compared to Ahok (41%), and Agus (39%). Jakarta's public is indeed expecting a new leader who has respect and integrity, represents all strata of the Jakarta people, capable of creating jobs, and has the ability to improve education of his residents.

Agus Harymurti Yudhoyono is today very popular as a candidate for Jakarta Governor. His personal branding as a young man and handsome has heavily attached in Jakarta's people. By hearsay, human is an *eye animal*. A candidate who is physically attractive may earn 3 times more votes, particularly from the first-time and female voters segment. This is because the

first impression that begins from physical appearance of someone is usually difficult to change. Theoretically, one's first image is usually based on visual aspect. Furthermore, human's mind is limited, thus the voters' perception tends to be filtered by a physiological filter. This is the advantage of Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono that is also possessed by Sandiaga Uno.

This differs with Ahok who has controversial leadership style in the public eye. The voters in Jakarta presently give Anies Baswedan and Agus Harimurti an opportunity to be the new governor of Jakarta. However, Anies Baswedan is very vulnerable to be rushed by negative religious issues, such as allegation as a follower of Shia or Liberal Islam. Whereas Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono is deemed lack of experience and as a part of a political dynasty or a son of former President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

Closing Remark

In 2017, the Jakarta people will predictably have a new Governor on February 15. He will be either Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono, Anies Baswedan, or Djarot Saiful Hidayat. This means, if the incumbent Ahok-Djarot pair even wins, there will be very little chance for Ahok to be the Jakarta Governor for the second period because of his accused status and potential imprisonment related to the religious defamation proceeding to which he is now subjected. Ahok will remain able to survive if there is a gigantic power intervening his case. However, this may trigger a national political uproar that is even greater. Jakarta Gubernatorial Election 2017 indeed correlates with the process and decision of Ahok's court trial that is still current.

Approaching the voting day February 15, 2017, each of the candidates will be campaigning more actively to grab undecided votes and swing voters, particularly of first-time voters, Muslim voters, Javanese voters, and the urban middle class. In the capital Jakarta, social media can be used as a tool to grab supports and influence these voters. However, undeniably, the Ahok's religious defamation case indeed gave benefit and opportunity to Anies-Sandi and Agus-Sylvi pairs to win on the Jakarta gubernatorial election on February 15, 2017. Even if Ahok loses the election, the public will still look at Ahok's performance that has been deemed good as a work barometer for anyone who will succeed him, no matter whether he is a polite Muslim or not.

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