

Between Elites and Society: The Politics of Territorial Splits in a Decentralizing Era, Case of Lebak District, Indonesia

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Abstract: *This article studies the political struggles of local society in South Lebak who want to split from Lebak District. The reasons are ineffective and inefficient public services, abundant natural resource potential, and political dynasty saturation. Therefore, they continue to negotiate their territorial areas. This article attempts to answer how territorial politics works in the process of territorial splits. The results reveal: first, the political elite used the issue of territorial splits for electoral matters. Second, territorial splits are motivated not only by a group of elites in South Lebak or local politicians, but also by the local people's desire for long-term prosperity and exceptionally effective and efficient public services. However, the interests of the local elite groups are more dominant. This study found that there is a link between the interests of society and the local elites.*

Keywords: *decentralization; election; elites; politics of territorial splits; South Lebak.*

Introduction

Territorial politics is a fluid concept. Based on the evolving socio-political context, experts have different interpretations of the term territorial politics. Most of the literature places territorial politics as an approach that explains international politics related to territorial issues in which it examines conflicts between countries, territorial border claims, and external fragmentation (Bell, 2017; Goemans & Schultz, 2017; Moore & Tomaney, 2019; Prins et al., 2017; Tillin, 2015). Some of the literature framing the concept of territorial politics

covers a more specific scope, namely fragmentation within the state itself (Zhang et al., 2019). This issue includes two points of view. First, territorial politics is related to the center-border relationship, which concerns social, economic and political affairs, and the second is the central-regional relationship on issues of locality and decentralization. (Bradbury, 2006; Jonas, 2020; Kimura, 2010; Nsamba, 2013; Tang & Huhe, 2016; Troconi, 2021).

As an impact of the emerging studies of decentralization after 1998, territorial politics became a study that

focused on internal fragmentation on a local issue. The relations between central and local, initially very hierarchical and rigid, have become more flexible by giving greater power and authority to the local to regulate government affairs at the local level (Eilenberg, 2009; Shoesmith et al., 2020;). This era has brought excellent political dynamics at the local level. The regulation and arrangement of institutions established by the central government have opened political space and opportunities for elites and local communities to strengthen their political positions and interests (Kimura, 2010; Hidayat, 2017; Vel, 2007).

One of the decentralization policy implications is the explosion of local demands for territorial splits (Awortwi & Helmsing, 2014). This phenomenon is based on the empirical fact that in the 1990s, Indonesia did not experience external collapse and fragmentation as happened in the Soviet Union, East Timor, and Yugoslavia. However, Indonesia experienced internal fragmentation, which portrayed how regional areas were divided into smaller territorial units resulting in new local government units (Kimura, 2010). These territorial splits are a phenomenon. They are trying to renegotiate the territorial boundaries of the local government. The implication is that there has been a very significant increase in new regional government administrations from 292 regions in 1988 to 497 in 2012. These unstoppable demands related to territorial splits have led the central government to impose a moratorium policy. Nevertheless, proposals for regional territorial splits have continued to flow until now.

Territorial divisions are more than just an administrative and geographically symbolic issue. This article refers to territorial issues as territorial politics in which there are institutions, actors, and power structures that represent the operation of the political system (Kimura, 2010). Territorial politics means having the right to manage local government affairs. Therefore, a territory will be closely related to competition and compromise between political actors and institutions. Territorial politics through territorial splits has strengthened spatial fragmentation and regional egocentrism (Firman, 2013).

Many experts produce territorial split studies. According to the existing literature, there are a variety of reasons for the emergence of territorial splits. There are two motives such as normative and political motives. The normative motive refers to the idealism of the goals which are often campaigned for such as making public services closer to society, bringing socio-economic welfare, conflict management due to heterogeneous socio-cultural conditions, and the desire of local communities to own their areas (Ayee, 2013; Borck, 2002; Grossman & Lewis, 2014; Pierskalla, 2016). The normative motive is attached to the public interest on behalf of the local society.

Meanwhile, political motives refer to the goals of political elites to gain or maintain access to power, such as exploitation of natural resources, hunting for rent, expanding patronage networks, and seizing political office (Agustino & Agus, 2010; Awortwi & Helmsing, 2014; Eilenberg, 2009; Smith, 2008). These political motives are an intermediary area

between the interests of the government and the citizens.

These two motives are difficult to separate explicitly. Often the two are coexistent. In many cases, the territorial split discourse brings together the elite's logic as an intermediary actor who seeks access to power and the public's logic as a social actor who wants prosperity. However, in many pieces of literature, it is stated that the interests of the elite tend to be more dominant, causing the failure of the new regions (Firman, 2013; Lentz, 2006; Pierskalla, 2016).

Territorial politics, the issue of decentralization, carries meaning in three dimensions (Kimura, 2010). *First*, the materialist dimension is related to material resource management for anyone who can manage and control it. When these material resources are not being distributed, it will create resentment, and local actors will feel marginalized by the government. This condition results in conflict and violence. *Second*, the cultural dimension is the emergence of territorial attachments, which is why it is primal. This dimension explains why and how attachments arise—symbolic entanglement used to mobilize and counter territorial claims against the state. *Third*, the institutional, territorial dimension has political value in political institutions where regional representation in the political system is institutionalized; territorial territory implies rights and authority over government affairs.

Instead of analyzing and assessing regions that have succeeded in forming new territories, this article discusses the political dynamics in local society that are still struggling to form new autonomous

regions. Specifically, this article discusses society's struggle in South Lebak to form a new local government administration on behalf of the Cilangkahan Regency, separate from Lebak Regency, Banten Province. Since 1985, there has been a strong desire for a territorial split. However, the desire to form a new autonomous region has not been realized because of the complicated political negotiation process at the local level until the central government's peak issued a moratorium policy, namely delaying regions from implementing the territorial splits.

There are two general reasons for the encouragement of the formation of the Cilangkahan Regency. First, the desire to bring access to public services closer to society. Second, the Cilangkahan area has abundant natural resource potential compared to other areas in Lebak Regency. This situation continues to be exploited by the local Cilangkahan elite group to strengthen the desire to form a new government administration unit.

On the other hand, Lebak's local government is unable to develop the region and improve social welfare. The government's unsatisfactory performance is because the Jayabaya political dynasty controls Lebak Regency, which has succeeded in dominating the political and economic positions in Lebak. The implication is that it impedes elite replacement and the Jayabaya family's intertwined control of the political economy. Jayabaya represents the strength of local strong men who have been very influential in Lebak until now (Nur'aini, 2018; Susanti, 2020). The Jayabaya family's strength triggered a feeling of frustration and dissatisfaction

among the people of South Lebak, which accumulated into a desire to form a new autonomous region.

However, this effort was not easy because the Jayabaya family did not want to lose their territory. Moreover, the potential resources in South Lebak are extraordinary. This argument often leads to political friction between the South Lebak elite and the Jayabaya dynasty. However, in 2013, Jayabaya issued a political decision approving the formation of the Cilangkahan Regency.

Jayabaya's political decisions were not solely due to political pressure from the South Lebak elite but for the sake of electoral succession. The territorial split issue is understood to expand patrimonial networks to win votes to maintain power. The implication is that there is a tug of war between local elites and political interests. This article argues that electoral politics at the local level opens up space for negotiation and conflict. On the other hand, Cilangkahan Regency's formation is in the interests of the local elite and the will of the people in the South Lebak area who have long imagined prosperity. Therefore, there is an interplay of interests between society and local elites, who both meet in territorial splits. Society and local elites continue to negotiate the territorial boundaries of local governance. This article explores how territorial politics worked in the struggle for the formation of the Cilangkahan Regency.

Methods

This article uses qualitative research through descriptive analysis of a social phenomenon to examine how South Lebak wants a territorial split. We chose the case study approach to refine the

analysis. The case study approach is relevant because it can explore this unfinished issue of territorial splits from the beginning until now to get a complete picture of the social movement. In this case, we can also investigate why their struggle has lasted so long, comprehensively using several scientific proofs and reliable information sources. This approach takes certain cases that develop as socio-political phenomena to be explored in depth either through one or more cases with certain limitations using specific data collection involving various sources of information such as observations, interviews, or literature study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018)

The data collection process in this study uses primary data through in-depth interviews with people involved in this movement until now. We choose them based on how relevant the information is to answering our research questions. We also interviewed academicians to see how they look at this phenomenon. Meanwhile, secondary data collection through some literature studies, both obtained from books, journals, articles, print, and online media, can support discussions related to territorial politics of regional territorial splits. Secondary data is vital to strengthening the theoretical basis of analysis from information sources empirically in the field. Regarding data analysis, it starts with the process of preparing and organizing data, reading the entire text, describing data according to context, classifying data according to research needs, and interpreting data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018)

Result and Discussion

Socio-Political Settings of Lebak Regency: From Government Inefficiency to Dynastic Politics

Lebak is a region in the Banten Province. Lebak Regency has a reasonably large area, namely 3,305.07 km² (304,472 ha) or one-third of Banten Province and almost five times the area of the state capital DKI Jakarta Province. Rangkasbitung is the central government of the Lebak Regency. The area known as Bumi Multatuli consists of 28 districts divided into 340 villages and five sub-districts. The Lebak Regency is divided into four regions, each with its own set of topographic characteristics and potential. The difference in this area's topography is one of the Lebak Regency government's considerations in preparing regional development plans.

The North Lebak area consists of seven districts (Rangkasbitung, Cikulur, Cimarga, Warunggunung, Maja, Kalanganyar, and Curugbitung) as a trade and industrial area from upstream to downstream. The local government designed the West and East Lebak areas as hilly and mountainous areas for plantation and agricultural areas. Meanwhile, South Lebak is a region with distinct regional characteristics, as some of it is in the mountains and some is on the coast, making it ideal for development in agriculture, marine fisheries, tourism, and mining. The description of the Lebak Regency area is shown in the following table.

Tabel 1: Zones of the Lebak Area based on population, topography, and development projections

Lebak Area	District	Population (thousand)	Topography	Development Projections
North	Rangkasbitung	134,95	Lowlands to rolling hills	Trade and industry, including the agricultural product processing industry.
	Warunggunung	62,00		
	Cikulur	58,28		
	Cimarga	71,51		
	Maja	59,71		
	Curugbitung	36,53		
	Kalanganyar	38,83		
	Cibadak	70,84		
South	Malingping	71,08	Mountains and Sea	Agriculture, food crops, marine fisheries, mining, tourism
	Wanasalam	58,13		
	Cijaku	30,59		
	Panggarangan	38,54		
	Bayah	45,44		
	Cilograng	35,22		

	Cibeber	56,72		
	Cigemblong	21,59		
	Cihara	33,17		
East	Cipanas	51,04	Hills and Mountains	Agriculture and farming
	Muncang	37,28		
	Sobang	31,26		
	Leuwidamar	54,46		
	Sajira	55,83		
	Bojongmanik	24,57		
	Lebakgedong	21,86		
	Cirinten	29,16		
West	Cileles	54,44	Forests and mountains	Plantation and agriculture
	Gunungkencana	38,33		
	Banjarsari	65,45		

Source : (BPS Kabupaten Lebak, 2021)

Sociologically, the people in Lebak are homogeneous and inhabit areas with rural characteristics. Due to the topographical conditions dominated by mountains, hills, and parts of the lowlands, most people work in the informal sector as farmers. The majority religion is Islam. Due to the characteristics of a homogeneous society, political issues in the name of identity are minor concerns for elites and political parties, including not being a commodity for the emergence of the idea of regional territorial splits.

The Human Development Index (HDI) shows that development in Lebak is slow. The HDI in Lebak has increased every year. However, the increase is not significant. It will only be occupied by 63 people in 2020. This figure slightly increased from 63.88 in 2019 (BPS Kabupaten Lebak, 2021). Compared with the nearest district/city in Banten Province, Lebak Regency occupies the

region's first position with the lowest growth rate. Lebak Regency was also awarded the title of a disadvantaged area in 2015 based on Presidential Regulation Number 131 of 2015 concerning the Stipulation of Underdeveloped Areas in 2015-2019. Ironically, Lebak regency is geographically close to the state capital, DKI Jakarta, 98 km at a standard distance of about 2-3 hours.

The people in Lebak Regency categorized as inferior in 2020 reached 9,24% or as many as 120,83 thousand people. This fact places Lebak Regency as the second most impoverished area in Banten Province after Pandeglang Regency. The education portrait in Lebak Regency reveals that in 2017 (before 2018's general election), the average length of schooling for residents in Lebak ranged from the number 6,20. This portrait means that most people have attended elementary school even though

the Lebak government targets the school year expected to reach 11.92 or equivalent to a high school graduate, equivalent to the central government program related to the 9-year compulsory education elementary to high school levels.

Meanwhile, the average life expectancy can indicate a health problem. In 2017, the life expectancy of the Lebak people was 66.59 years old, which is lower than the national average of 70.1 years. This description explains that the development conditions in Lebak Regency are slow.

The Jayabaya Dynasty which controls the Lebak Regency has been in power for more than fifteen years in the political field. Mulyadi Jayabaya is a businessman and a politician from the PDIP party who succeeded in becoming the Regent of Lebak for two periods (2003-2013). His daughter, Iti Octavia Jayabaya, has continued his political position at the second term was elected by the Regent (2013-2018, 2018-2023). Jayabaya's political leadership can build political networks based on a family basis, where many of their family members occupy strategic political positions in both the legislative and executive arenas at the local and national levels.

Also, the Jayabaya dynasty controlled the Lebak economic arena, which had many company owners. Most majority-owned companies are engaged in mining and construction connected to Lebak government projects (Nur'aini, 2018). In short, the Lebak political economy stage was neatly and structured under the control of the Jayabaya family. Jayabaya represents the face of local strongmen and oligarchs who live at the local level. Its position is getting stronger

in line with the rollout of the decentralization design that carries the spirit of autonomy at the local level (Susanti, 2020; Zahrawan, 2018)

The Jayabaya family, who controlled the local political scene in Lebak, hampered the mechanism of democratization. The circulation of power is blocked because it only connects to specific groups, such as the Jayabaya family. The implication is that the public cannot access the arena of political office in a free and fair manner. Jayabaya's strong political dominance, for example, can be seen in the electoral contestation. Only a single candidate pair attended The 2018 Lebak local election, namely Iti Octavia Jayabaya, who also succeeded in buying up all the political parties. This condition has triggered the saturation of some community groups in Lebak with the political existence of the Jayabaya dynasty (Hakiki, interviewed on June 10, 2020).

Based on the explanation in this section, the conclusion is that Lebak Regency has two problems in general. First, local governments' performance is not optimal, causing the flow of regional development and community welfare to be not optimal. Second, the situation was exacerbated by Lebak's control of the Jayabaya political dynasty, which had implications for delays in the local level's democratization mechanism. For some social groups who want to see a change in the agenda, these two conditions cause frustration, boredom, and disappointment. One of the expressions of this disappointment is the demand for a regional territorial split in the South Lebak area.

Voices from South Lebak: Demands for Territorial Splits

The issue related to territorial splits arose in the South Lebak area, which wanted to separate from the Lebak Regency. If traced in-depth, the echo of the desire for territorial splits has long been since Suharto's New Order regime in power. However, this desire was dimmed because the local elites in Banten agreed to focus on fighting for Banten Province's formation, separate from West Java. In 2000, Banten officially became a new autonomous region. As a result, the concept of opening the taps of decentralization and territorial autonomy through a transfer of power from the center to the locals is critical.

This era became a momentum for the community at the local level to demand territorial splits based on dissatisfaction and disappointment during the 30 years of the New Order regime in power. The territorial splits often arose during the New Order, but due to the centralized political system, the approval mechanism for forming new autonomous regions was top-down, highly biased towards the central government's interests. In contrast to the reform era, which introduced democratization at the local level, the mechanism for forming autonomous regions was more bottom-up (Firman, 2013)

Not long after Banten Province became a new autonomous region, old aspirations related to forming a new district separate from Lebak Regency surfaced. The South Lebak community group's desire seems to be a fixed price. The South Lebak area covers 10 districts, namely Malingping, Cigemblong, Banjarsari, Cihara, Ciligrang,

Panggarangan, Wanasalam, Cijaku, Cibeber, and Bayah. The area of South Lebak reaches 1,488.44 km² or about 48.89% of the area of Lebak Regency. Meanwhile, the population will be 420,129 in 2020, accounting for approximately 33.89% of Lebak's total population. This data shows that the South Lebak area can expand because of its comprehensive area of coverage and a relatively large population.

There are at least several reasons why aspirations for territorial splits have never died out. For starters, the local community group wishes to be closer to public services. As it is known, Lebak Regency includes a huge administrative area in Banten Province. This vast area causes the public service work process to be less than optimal. For example, to take care of a resident administration service, the people of South Lebak have to go to Rangkasbitung (the center of the Lebak Regency government) at a distance of about 3-4 hours. Even though not all people have vehicles, at the same time, the condition of the infrastructure connecting the South Lebak area to Rangkasbitung is terrible.

Meanwhile, because they were unable to complete the management of the resident administration services in one day, they returned to Rangkasbitung. Inefficient public services cause people to sacrifice time and money. To initiate this, they collectively asked for help from village officials and even brokers to take care of this administration by providing a sum of money as a form of remuneration. Because of this condition, the people of South Lebak want to secede from the Lebak Regency. When South Lebak becomes a new district, the public service

process becomes practical and more accessible because it can cut the distance felt so far. This information was revealed by one of the informants as follows:

"We complained about the resident administration because of the distance. Even people who want to make ID cards and other documents have to pay 100-150 thousand. Otherwise, they do not give them up. Though it is free, we understand that it is free, but if they asked to be taken care of by the village, they have to pay. We prefer to pay instead of taking care of ourselves to Rangkasbitung because the costs can be much more significant for costs and food. Therefore, if the southern region is expanded, at least access to services could be closer." (Subadri interviewed on August 30, 2020).

Second, South Lebak wishes to secede from Lebak Regency because the southern region has greater natural resource potential than the rest of Lebak. From Malingping to Bayah, the sea's marine and fishing sector stretches. Tourism objects use beaches with beautiful panoramas. Apart from the South, other areas in Lebak have no sea. The South also has a natural potential for oil palms, rubber, and mining activities in its plantations and mountains. However, this extraordinary potential is not directly proportional to the increase in the development and the welfare of the South's people. The picture that appears is that of slow development with poor infrastructure and a low quality of human resources.

This condition caused disappointment for the people in South Lebak. They imagined welfare and

economic development by separating themselves from the Lebak Regency. When South Lebak succeeded in forming an autonomous region, the community had greater power and authority to manage and utilize existing natural resources. The local government is considered unsuccessful in optimizing the potential of natural resources in the South and has even served as an exploitation arena for the political interests of the Jayabaya Dynasty. As the informant stated below:

"Why do we want territorial splits? Because the condition of natural resources in the South is quite promising, such as coal, gold, sea, and sand. We hope that with the territorial splits, the South can be more developed and independent. Because in the past, development and the economy in the South were still very backward. The road infrastructure is deplorable." (Rifa'i interviewed on August 30, 2020).

Third, the saturation of the Jayabaya dynasty's politics has also become the reason for the emergence of territorial splits. As mentioned in the previous discussion, the Jayabaya family has controlled the Lebak political scene for more than 15 years. This phenomenon has resulted in delays in the rotational process of political leadership in Lebak. Simultaneously, the Jayabaya family's leadership has proven not to have made a significant difference to the development and welfare of the people of Lebak, including the Southern region (Interview with Hakiki, June 10, 2020)

Although basically, the political dynasty is not the main reason for the

emergence of territorial splits, this issue contributes to strengthening territorial splits by creating a narrative that the marginalization and underdevelopment felt by the South are inseparable from dynastic political factors. Besides, there is the fact that the Jayabaya family did not show support for the territorial split issue, which triggered disappointment in the people of South Lebak.

These three reasons are normative reasons that often stick out behind the idea of territorial splits. The normative reason represents the public's will to want a territorial split's ideal goal, namely better changes through new administrative regions. Marginalized groups of people in existing administrative units tend to want jurisdictional boundaries (Grossman & Lewis, 2014). However, the issue of territorial splits also has power-oriented political interests that are often fought by local elites.

The interests of the local elites in South Lebak through territorial splits are to open up new spaces of power, including maximizing access to the political economy in the newly formed territorial areas. Many politicians, party officials, council members, and local business people were involved in the territorial split of drivers in the South Lebak area. The implication is that territorial splits bring together several interested actors who link the public and the elite's interests. Both of these interests coexist with one common goal, namely the will to separate from the Lebak district by forming a new administrative area.

Territorial Politics: The Ups and Downs of the Struggle for Territorial splits

The territorial political dimension (material, cultural, institutional) can be present continuously in conflict, contestation, and cooperation (coalition) between political actors and institutions. The case of the Lebak district is unique because the issue of regional expansion is fluid. It is conflictual at times, but cooperative at others, as actors and political institutions pursue specific political interests. We argue that electoral politics is the context that explains why demands for regional expansion can be dynamically conflictual and cooperative.

Following the success of Banten as an autonomous province separate from West Java in 2000, people in South Lebak carried out consolidation and the formation of movement organizations to show their seriousness to the government regarding the desire to form a new administrative area. At first, Malingping Regency was a candidate for the new Regency in South Lebak, which is administratively one of the sub-districts in South Lebak. However, over time, there was a change to Cilangkahan Regency. Starting in 2000, the formation of the KPKM (Committee for the Establishment of Malingping Regency) declared Malingping Regency's formation, but this movement was not massive. We can consider it a political movement because of the support of the Governor of West Java, Nuriana, who did not want Banten to become a province. The implication is that this movement gradually fades and vanishes (Massaputro, 2015).

Responding to this, youth groups in South Lebak organized a grand consolidation in 2002, resulting in the

South Banten Youth Association Communication Forum (FK-PPBS). This forum declared the division of South Lebak under the name South Banten Regency. However, the existence of this youth union group has also disappeared over time. As if it had never gone out, the group that voiced the territorial split again appeared in a different container. The South Lebak Community Association (PKKL) involves youth and community leaders in several areas of South Lebak, such as Cibeber, Cilograng, Panggarangan, and Bayah Districts. This movement also did not become the locomotive of regional territorial splits in the South (Massaputro, 2015).

The struggle over territorial splits in the Lebak Regency has found a steep road. Government Regulation number 78 of 2007 concerning Procedures for the Establishment, Merger, and Abolition of Regions states that at least three conditions must be met: administrative, technical, and regional physical requirements. To form a new district, they need the administrative requirements referred to obtain approval from the local representative, and the Regent, the Provincial representative, and the Governor also need a minister's recommendation. This condition often becomes a political arena because it involves political negotiations between local people who want territorial splits and political officials in the regions.

While the technical requirements refer to the region's actual conditions, such as economic capacity, regional potential, socio-culture, socio-politics, population, area size, defense, security, financial capacity, the level of community welfare, and the range of administration

control, the technical requirements also must be based on academic regional studies. Meanwhile, regional physical requirements include area coverage, the capital city, government facilities, and infrastructure.

The efforts to fulfill administrative requirements are not easy because they need to be supported by political capacity to lobby political officials in the regions (including central) to change regional jurisdictional boundaries (Pierskalla, 2016). The existing conditions show that the collective movement of people in the South Lebak is still fiercely weak. The fact is that the Lebak Regent did not want these territorial splits. For example, Mulyadi Jayabaya, for example, refused when he was officially appointed Regent of Lebak in 2004, never approving the territorial split of South Lebak.

Uncertainty about territorial splits, local people, and youth groups held up consolidation again in 2004. It seems that this effort is starting to find concrete steps because various meetings continued until 2006. On June 3, 2006, the grand meeting at Villa Suma Bayah brought various figures, such as youths and students in South Lebak, especially from 10 districts. The result of this meeting was the formation of the South Lebak Action Front (FALS). FALS intends to stage a protest in front of the Lebak Regency Representative Building, urging the Lebak government to accept territorial splits as an administrative requirement. This action has the name of "South Lebak Community Solidarity Action," held on July 3, 2006. The three demands of FALS are (Massaputro, 2015) :

1. Urge members of the Lebak Regency Representatives (DPRD Lebak) who

- come from Electoral Regions IV, V, and VI to fight together with the people of South Lebak to make Lebak South Region a Regency;
2. Demand the Lebak Regency Representative to form a Special Committee for the Establishment of a Regency in the South Lebak Region no later than one month;
 3. Requesting the Regent of Lebak to recommend/propose the Regency of Southern Area Lebak immediately

Figure 1. Demonstration Action of People in South Lebak



Source : (Liputan6.com, 2007)

Thousands of people in South Lebak attended this demonstration. They came to the Lebak Representative building in Rangkasbitung in dozens of trucks and minibuses. They demanded that the Local Representatives and the Regent, Mulyadi Jayabaya, immediately agree to expand the South Lebak area. At the time, representatives from all factions of the Lebak Council agreed to the demand. However, Mulyadi Jayabaya still refused. He said that South Lebak was not ready to be split. This argument triggered the anger of the participants in the action. They attacked and damaged the Regent's pavilion (Liputan6.com, 2007)

After the action, FALS has held various meetings and consolidations to

intensify pressure on the Lebak government. On one occasion, FALS succeeded in bringing many influential actors to South Lebak, such as community leaders, clerical leaders, politicians, bureaucrats, village heads, youths, and students. The meeting aims to unite various organizations and movements with the same goal, the desire to separate from Lebak Regency. This effort was successful because it could integrate existing organizations such as HIMBAS, IMABAS, KPKM, PMLK, FKPPBS, and FORKOMBAS. The implication is that the same movement organizations that previously operated independently and were fragmented have merged into one large and solid force under one umbrella

movement, namely the Coordination Agency for the Establishment of the Cilangkahan Regency (Bakor PKC).

Bakor PKC became the leading platform for the territorial split movement based on the South Lebak Citizens' Conference results, attended by various elite and community leaders held on 12-13 August 2006 in Cipayung. This achievement is a result of the progress of Team Eleven, which FALS formed. They are Ahmad Hakiki Hakim, Edi Rafiudin, Agus Suryadi, Dase Erwin Juansah, Ari Pramudia, Erwin Salfariansa, Bibih Ibrahim, Aris Dian Rifai, Dedi Kurwara, Rudi Hartono, and Asep Rizal Utama (Massaputro, 2015).

The following agenda is to hold a meeting to organize the Bakor PKC's management and establish the basic rules. On August 28, 2006, they formed the management structure, namely Cecep Purwadinda as Chairman of the Advisory Council, Didi Supriadi as Chair of the Expert Council, Hifni Nawawi Chair of the Executive Board, and Ahmad Taufik as General Secretary. The Bakor PKC also has a management structure covering all sub-districts in South Lebak.

Their struggle reached a climax on September 16, 2006, when a declaration of the establishment of the Cilangkahan District was made for the first time at Malingping Square. A political speech followed the declaration. They also provided them with blank banners. This banner was signed by thousands of people who were present in various elements of society as a form of full support for the division (Massaputro, 2015).

They continue to pursue political work, and all the officials have taken a role. In this regard, at least three things that the

Bakor PKC is working on are preparing vacant land in the Malingping area to become the center of government for candidates of the Cilangkahan Regency. Second, the Bakor PKC administrators went to socialize and seek support from the wider community. This evidence shows the success of getting signatures of support from South Lebak village officials, community organizations, youth organizations, and religious leaders. Several politicians who are members of the Lebak Council Representatives also provide support as a form of political commitment.

Third, conduct academic studies to complete the technical requirements. In this case, they collaborated with Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University and STPDN to conduct research related to Cilangkahan Regency. The results of a study from the two higher education institutions show that the candidates for Cilangkahan Regency deserve to form a territorial split (Interview with Harris on August 18, 2020).

Then, they submitted the study's results to Mulyadi Jayabaya on January 9, 2007. However, Mulyadi Jayabaya still annulled the results of the study. At the very least, the Bakor PKC Team has the technical requirements in place. Administrative requirements are difficult to meet because they involve political decisions made by various political institutions. The South Lebak community groups are trying to redefine the territorial boundaries of the local government. They tried to make a demarcation line because the South Lebak area was no longer part of the Lebak Regency area.

When South Lebak was still a part of the Lebak Regency government's territorial power, southern community groups were unable to fully manage regional potential and government affairs. Thus, they attempted to separate from Lebak to form a new government administration to claim power and authority over managing their areas defined through territorial boundaries, consisting of 10 Districts.

Electoral Politics: Elite Political Negotiation Room

The administrative requirements are challenging to fulfill. The tug of war between political interests of local community groups and the elite is one reason why the struggle to form a new autonomous region has been very tough. The climax of the problem lies in the Lebak Regent's hands, who has the authority to issue his approval for territorial splits. This decision is an absolute requirement that the Bakor PKC must fulfill.

Since the beginning, Mulyadi Jayabaya, who served as Regent of Lebak, refused to separate South Lebak from Lebak Regency. Mulyadi Jayabaya's political stance is very reasonable because if South Lebak succeeds in forming an autonomous region, it will indirectly reduce the reach of its territorial power. The potential for abundant natural resources in the South Lebak region compared to other areas has been also considered in Jayabaya's refusal.

Even though they constantly fought for the Lebak Regent's agreement regarding the division, they also continue to bring political negotiations against other political actors at the local level, such as the local council representative's

political decisions Banten Governor. They obtained the political decision regarding approval for territorial splits earlier. Since February 13, 2007, the entire faction of the Lebak Council of Representatives has issued a decree approving the territorial split of the South Lebak area (Massaputro, 2015).

They are very reasonable because, since the beginning of the emergence of the territorial split movement, several Lebak Council Representative Members have been involved in the movement's agenda and are trying to present an image to the people of South Lebak that they are committed to helping with the formation of new district candidates.

Their interests are related to the electoral succession, especially those from the South Lebak constituency. During the electoral campaign, their support for gaining the sympathy of the Southern community was converted into political support. Also, political attitudes show support for territorial splits to build and maintain patronage networks to expand power in new administrative areas (Awortwi & Helmsing, 2014).

They even took the initiative to form a Special Committee related to territorial splits and budgeted funds from the Lebak Regional Budget to conduct a feasibility study (Massaputro, 2015). The council members' inherent political interests are why the Bakor PKC's approval for territorial splits was easier to obtain.

The same thing also happened to the Banten Council Representative as the second political institution to issue a decree regarding the approval of the territorial split of South Lebak in 2010. The council members especially come

from the Lebak Electoral District, such as Ade Hidayat (Deputy Chairman of Commission III). The implication is that the political negotiation between the Bakor PKC and council members to get territorial split has become more accessible because political actors have supported them through lobbying. Establishing regional jurisdictional boundaries requires political capacity to lobby politics (Pierskalla, 2016). This fact also strengthens Kimura's thesis that territorial splits often involve territorial coalitions between groups or local elites who want territorial splits and political actors (Kimura, 2010).

The meeting took place in the electoral arena. The importance of the succession of electoral contestation for political actors or party politicians facilitates the negotiation process of territorial splits. In other words, the practice of bartering votes occurs. In the run-up to the elections, political elites (candidates or parties) in general will campaign on the promise of regional territorial splits. Before the 2004 election, they formed 87 of 88 of the new regions before the election (2002-2003) and one region. The same pattern occurred before the 2009 election, namely with 56 new autonomous regions, 55 regions were ratified during 2007-2008, while one new autonomous region was in 2009. Likewise, with the 2014 election, they recorded the ratification of 15 new autonomous regions throughout 2013 (kppod.org, 2014). South Lebak itself, which proposed the formation of the Cilangkahan Regency, is one of the 22 proposed territorial splits that have entered the central parliament. However, the desire for territorial splits in South Lebak has not yet been flourishing

because it has been hampered by the central government's moratorium policy since 2014 to stem the proliferation of proposals for territorial splits.

Regional heads also use electoral politics as a negotiation territory. During Jayabaya's two terms as Regent of Lebak Regency (2003-2008 and 2008-2013), he always refused to approve a new autonomous region in South Lebak. However, Jayabaya's political stance began to waver. In 2013, Jayabaya stated that he fully supported the establishment of the Cilangkahan Regency. This phenomenon triggered the joy of several community groups in South Lebak because, with a letter of approval from the Lebak Regent, the regional territorial split's administrative requirements were completed. The negotiation process only happened with the Regent. In contrast, they need a long time to get political decisions from Lebak Council Representative.

In 2013, Lebak Regency held a Local Election. Simultaneously, Mulyadi Jayabaya's term had ended, and he was unable to run again. To maintain the dominance of political power in Lebak, Jayabaya encouraged his daughter, Iti Octavia Jayabaya, to be the Regent of Lebak for the 2013-2018 period. Therefore, Jayabaya's political decision, which supports the South's territorial split, is very reasonable. The issue of division is one of Iti Octavia Jayabaya's campaigns to win the voters' sympathy in the South Lebak area. As revealed by one of the informants:

"The Jayabaya family promised, especially Iti Octavia Jayabaya campaigned in Malingping Square,

South Lebak area that if she became a Regent, South Lebak would be made into a new district.” (Subadri interviewed on August 30, 2020).

The results of the 2013 Lebak regional election successfully led Iti Octavia Jayabaya to become the Regent of Lebak while at the same time emphasizing the domination of the Jayabaya dynasty's political power. Her campaign for territorial splits has won the sympathy of voters in the South Lebak. However, during Iti Octavia Jayabaya's first term as Regent (2013-2018), South Lebak was not successfully developed. This reality brought disappointment as well as the saturation of the community for the Jayabaya family. The consequences are already being felt in the 2018 local elections. When Iti Octavia Jayabaya ran again as a candidate for Regent of Lebak, the resistance vote from the South was quite significant, as evidenced by the acquisition of empty boxes. Even as many as four villages in the Malingping area managed to win empty boxes.

Only one candidate, the incumbent, attended the local election in 2018. Many political elites in the South move empty boxes to mobilize the masses to choose empty boxes over candidate pairs. For example, in Hakiki Hakim's work, he acts as the chairman of the movement of empty boxes in Lebak, known as Bajukoko (*Barisan Juang Kotak Kosong*). Hakiki comes from South Lebak and is actively involved in the Bakor KCP organization and agenda. Although the election result elected Iti Octavia Jayabaya as Regent of Lebak for the second period (2018-2023), the empty box's votes in South Lebak were quite significant compared to other areas

in Lebak. This reality is an expression of disappointment and protest against the politics of the Jayabaya dynasty, which is considered to not have a firm commitment to fighting for the territorial split of South Lebak.

The electoral political arena, as a space for negotiation and a tug of war of interests, explains why the process of forming a candidate for the newly autonomous region of Cilangkahan Regency has a long way to go, despite the desire for territorial splits dating back to the New Order era. The issue of territorial splits continues to be well maintained and managed by the elite to get political benefits. This issue includes forming elite political attitudes in responding to the territorial split discourse.

The implication is that the struggle to form the Cilangkahan Regency has not been successful until now because the dynamics and political processes developed are pretty complex, especially in fulfilling administrative requirements requiring the political elite's approval. Meanwhile, when all local political elites have approved it, the central government has already issued a moratorium policy.

As a result of the moratorium policy, the elites in South Lebak required a political negotiation process at the national level. In 2015, they visited the Indonesian parliament to urge the moratorium to be stopped immediately and support Cilangkahan Regency's formation. Meanwhile, they are also doing political lobbying even though they have not yet found satisfactory results. Despite the moratorium, concentration will continue to become a political commodity whenever national politicians take advantage of electoral politics.

Ma'ruf Amin, a vice-presidential candidate in the 2019 presidential election, visited the South Lebak area during the campaign period promising to help form the South Regency (Alinea.id, 2018). However, after the election, the moratorium was still enforced even according to Ma'ruf Amin's decision, the vice president was elected. This phenomenon further confirms that the political elite uses the issue of concentration for electoral interests.

Territorial Splits for whom? Linkage of Society and Elites Interests

South Lebak's desire to separate from the Lebak Regency linked many interests because it involved various actors. Three interests also represent the actors or groups involved. First, the public interest in South Lebak seeks the efficiency of public services and equitable development by maximizing natural resource management in South Lebak, with community support in fighting for territorial splits, including participation and involvement in every agenda organized by groups. Such as the agenda of the candidate formation's declaration for the Cilangkahan Regency and demonstrations attended by thousands of people.

Second, the interests of the South Lebak elite who are fighting for territorial splits. Their interest is access to power. The formation of new administrative areas will have implications for opening up new power spaces. The new territory becomes a political arena for political elites or parties to do acrobatics in expanding power. On the other hand, territorial splits are also an opportunity for them to strengthen their bargaining politics so that

their position as a driver of territorial splits can provide political benefits.

For example, some Bakor PKC administrators are party administrators and members of the council. Like Eri Djuhaeri, an elite from South Lebak who served as Chairman of the Bakor PKC had been a Banten Council Representative member. Hakiki Hakim, the Bakor PKC activist, was a candidate for the 2018 Lebak regional election despite failing. Usep Setiana ran for a seat on the Lebak Council as a member of the Nasdem party. Likewise, many other Bakor PKC activists became involved in practical politics simultaneously to fight for territorial splits.

Third, the political elite's interest in the Lebak Regency maintains patronage networks and maintains power by taking advantage of the territorial split issue for electoral succession. They are council representatives as well as the head of the Lebak district.

The three actors and their inherent interests have implications for political relations, which refer to two things: first, the tug of war between the elites' interests related to the territorial split issue and meeting in the electoral arena. Second, territorial splits are the interest of a group of elites and the will of the people in the South Lebak area who have long imagined prosperity. As a result, there is a clash of interests between the community and local elites, which collides with territorial splits. Communities and local elites continue to negotiate the territorial boundaries of local governance. This argument was revealed by one of the informants as follows:

"The general public wants a territorial split so that public services are more effective and efficient. Regardless of this issue, movers have another goal of pursuing power or becoming bureaucrats when they have already been expanded; that is their matter. We simply want the process of resident administration to be as close as possible. The rest of us will not get anything. Maybe it will benefit those who are intelligent and educated more." (Interview with Subadri, August 30, 2020)

The same thing was stated by Haris as follows:

"According to my observations, territorial splits in South Lebak were caused by public encouragement, even though many South people did not understand the territorial split issue. When we discussed it with activists in South Lebak, their enthusiasm was very passionate about this issue. Also, the local elites there support on the grounds of service. So, in short, the desire for territorial splits is the public's desire, but the elite's interests are more dominant than the public's. For example, I often talk with people in several Southern areas, and they say they agree that they want territorial splits. However, when asked why they agreed, they also did not understand. They believe that people are small, whether they want to be or not; what matters is that they can eat, their children can attend school, and the community is healthy. That's all." (Interview with Harris, August 18, 2020).

Referring to various informants' statements confirms that there are many interests to be achieved from the

territorial splits of South Lebak, even though elite interests are more dominant than public interests. This argument also confirms that territorial splits are present because normative (idealistic) factors refer to society's logic of wanting change, and pragmatic factors refer to the elite's power-oriented logic.

The assessment and evaluation of whether the territorial splits were successful or not has failed because the Cilangkahan Regency has not officially become an autonomous region. However, much of the literature mentions the failure of development in newly expanded areas because it benefits a few elites, while the marginalized interests of people who expect prosperity (Agustino & Agus, 2010; Eilenberg, 2009; Firman, 2013; Lentz, 2006).

In this context, there are at least two possibilities that occur when the South Lebak region succeeds in dividing itself into Cilangkahan Regency: First, the results of territorial splits only benefit a handful of elites in South Lebak who have been actively fighting for territorial splits since the beginning, and they can be seen by the many Bakor PKC activists who are involved in the arena of power, such as being involved in parties, government bureaucracy, and becoming politicians. The implication is that the territorial splits areas will open up opportunities for the emergence of new oligarchic rulers.

Second, South Lebak remains under the domination of the Jayabaya dynasty's political power because Jayabaya's political power is still challenging to dismantle so far. There is no alternative power that can match it (Nur'aini, 2018; Zahrawan, 2018). On the

other hand, the existence of civil society in Lebak is still fragile.

This discussion re-emphasizes the tug of war between actors involved in the issue of regional expansion. Elite groups and society suffocate each other. As a result, the struggle for regional expansion has become a struggle that has become unfinished. The actors involved will continue to compete with each other.

Conclusion

South Lebak community groups continue to negotiate territorial jurisdictions to form new local government administrative areas. Regional expansion emerged as a response to the process of territorial change that occurred in Indonesia as an implication of the opening of the taps of democratization and decentralization after the collapse of Suharto's authoritarian regime. These conditions open up opportunities for local political actors to renegotiate their administrative areas of government. Forming a new local government means having the authority to manage government affairs independently, including exploiting the resources contained therein. In other words, democratization and decentralization become a context that explains how territorial politics works in regional expansion.

The struggle for South Lebak to separate from Lebak Regency is not over because a moratorium policy hit it. However, at the very least, the political negotiation process involving various political actors and institutions at the local level has been completed, as evidenced by obtaining approval for territorial splits. Nevertheless, the struggle to get this

agreement is full of complex political dynamics that link various interests because it involves many actors.

This article produces two findings: First, territorial splits are frequently used by political elites to advance their own electoral interests. In other words, electoral politics opens up space for negotiations between elites regarding territorial splits through the exchange of political benefits. For politicians, territorial splits build and maintain loyalty and patronage networks to gain electoral support. Meanwhile, for the South Lebak elite group, political negotiations with politicians were built to facilitate territorial split efforts.

Second, territorial splits are not solely the interest of a group of elites in South Lebak or politicians at the local level but also the will of the people in the South Lebak area who have long imagined prosperity, incredibly effective and efficient public services. However, this article finds that local elite groups' interests are more dominant than the public's. Therefore, there is a link between the community and local elites' interests, brought in territorial splits. The elite groups and the people of South Lebak continue to negotiate the local government's territorial boundaries.

These studies show two different interests among actors, namely the interests of the elite who try to pave the way for the power and interests of a society that imagines improving the quality of public services and increasing welfare. We argue that regional expansion brings together several actors, namely the elite and local society, but the interests of the elite are more dominant than society.

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