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Coalition Consolidation and the Effectiveness of the Gerindra Party's Political Machine in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Election

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia's 2024 simultaneous regional elections provided the Gerindra Party with an opportunity to translate Prabowo Subianto's presidential electoral victory into political gains at the regional level. This study examined Gerindra's electoral performance and investigated how coalition consolidation, candidate recruitment, and presidential coattail effects influenced its regional electoral campaigns. Employing a descriptive qualitative research design, the study analyzed official election documents, independent election monitoring reports, media coverage, and relevant academic literature. Data analysis involved data reduction, data presentation, and interpretation, while source triangulation was employed to corroborate reported electoral outcomes. The findings indicated that Gerindra-backed candidates won the Central Java gubernatorial election and 27 of the province's 35 district and municipal elections. Nationally, the Advanced Indonesia Coalition Plus (Koalisi Indonesia Maju Plus, KIM Plus) secured victories in four of the 37 gubernatorial elections without support from parties outside the coalition, while broader electoral alliances involving KIM Plus and other political parties won 29 contests. However, the defeat of the KIM Plus-backed ticket in Jakarta demonstrated the limitations of national coalition strength in determining regional electoral outcomes. The findings suggested that presidential electoral momentum provided Gerindra with opportunities to promote policy alignment between national and regional governments, while flexible coalition arrangements and the recruitment of locally competitive candidates contributed to its regional electoral success. The study concluded that Gerindra's ability to translate presidential electoral momentum into regional victories depended on local political dynamics, coalition configurations, and candidate competitiveness.

INTRODUCTION

The 2024 simultaneous regional elections marked a significant milestone in Indonesia's democratic development (Raharjanto et al., 2026). For the first time, regional head elections across provinces, regencies, and cities were held simultaneously, approximately nine months after the presidential and legislative elections on February 14, 2024. The General Elections Commission (Komisi Pemilihan Umum, KPU) scheduled voting for November 27, 2024, covering 545 administrative regions, comprising 37 provinces, 415 regencies, and 93 cities. The relatively short interval between the national and regional elections created an opportunity for political parties and coalitions to consolidate their electoral positions and translate national political momentum into regional electoral gains.

Among the participating political parties, the Gerindra Party occupied a distinctive position in Indonesia's political landscape. In the 2024 legislative election, Gerindra secured 20,071,345 valid votes and obtained 86 seats in the House of Representatives (Dewan

Perwakilan Rakyat, DPR), ranking third behind the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan, PDI-P), which secured 110 seats, and the Golkar Party, which obtained 102 seats (Komisi Pemilihan Umum, 2024). Despite ranking third in legislative representation, Gerindra's chairman, Prabowo Subianto, won the 2024 presidential election in a single round. This contrast between the party's legislative standing and its leadership's success in the presidential election raised an important question regarding whether national executive electoral success could be translated into stronger political representation and electoral performance at the regional level.

The results of the 2024 simultaneous regional elections indicated substantial electoral gains for Gerindra and its supported candidates. Gerindra-affiliated candidates secured gubernatorial victories in West Java, Central Java, and Banten, three provinces with some of Indonesia's largest voter populations (GoodStats, 2024). Additional victories were recorded in North Sumatra and North Sulawesi, regions historically associated with strong electoral support for PDI-P (Republika, 2024a). Particularly notable was Gerindra's performance in Central Java, a province traditionally regarded as a PDI-P stronghold and commonly referred to as the kandang banteng (bull's stronghold). In this province, Gerindra-backed candidates won 27 of the 35 regency and municipal elections (Republika, 2024b). These outcomes suggested that Gerindra's regional electoral performance extended beyond areas traditionally associated with its political support.

Existing academic literature on Indonesian political parties has predominantly examined clientelism, vote buying, and democratic backsliding (Aspinall & Berenschot, 2019; Berenschot, 2018; Fossati et al., 2020; Mietzner, 2018; Muhtadi, 2019; Power, 2018). However, comparatively limited attention has been devoted to the mechanisms through which political parties supporting a successful presidential candidate translate national electoral momentum into regional political influence, particularly following the 2024 simultaneous regional elections. This gap highlighted the need to examine the organizational strategies, coalition arrangements, and candidate recruitment processes that shaped regional electoral outcomes. Accordingly, this study focused on the Gerindra Party as a case through which to investigate the relationship between presidential electoral success and regional political consolidation.

Based on this background, the study addressed two principal research questions: (1) How did the Gerindra Party perform in the 2024 simultaneous regional elections? and (2) What factors contributed to the effectiveness of Gerindra's political organization and electoral machinery in securing regional electoral victories? Specifically, the study aimed to map Gerindra's electoral performance, examine its coalition-building strategies and candidate recruitment practices, and assess the implications of its regional electoral achievements for central–regional political relations and Indonesia's party system. Theoretically, this study sought to contribute to the literature on presidential coattail effects within coalition-based presidential systems (Borges & Turgeon, 2019; Chaisty et al., 2018; Mietzner, 2023). Practically, the findings were expected to provide insights into the organizational and coalition dynamics associated with regional electoral performance in Indonesia.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design to examine electoral performance patterns and the factors contributing to the Gerindra Party's electoral success in the 2024 simultaneous regional elections. The analysis focused on interpreting political dynamics rather than statistically testing causal relationships. Secondary data were collected and classified into three categories:

Official information issued by election organizers and state institutions

Which includes the existence of KPU Decrees Number 1205 and 1206 of 2024 related to the results of the 2024 Legislative Election, data on the determination of the 2024 Regional Election candidates, and the Decision from the Constitutional Court Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024 regarding the threshold for the candidacy of regional heads.

Monitoring documentation and coverage from reliable media

Includes a report from a Voter Education Network for the People (JPPR) regarding the existence of a mapping with a coalition victory referring to the final recapitulation count of the KPU at a regional level, along with news from several news agencies Antara, Republika, Bisnis Indonesia, and Kompas.

Academic references

In the form of reputable journal articles and scientific books in a 2016–2026 issue that has discussed political parties, elections, and the democratic era in Indonesia.

The process of data processing is carried out in three phases that refer to an interactive analysis model, namely in data shrinkage, presentation of data through a table and narrative description, and ends with the formulation of a conclusion. The credibility of the data can be maintained by applying a triangulation of sources, namely by matching a statement from the party to the formal recapitulation figure data and documents from the supervisor independently. The statement of victory that only relies on an internal claim of the party is positioned as a claim, not an absolute representation of facts.

This study has certain limitations. The first point is that the quick count data is used for a certain region when this recapitulation has been definitively not accessible from existing sources. The second point is that the party affiliation of a number of regional heads is very flexible, considering that there are candidates who enter the Gerindra camp right before or after the nomination process. The third point is that this study does not only use direct voter survey data, so the argument about voter tendency is inferential.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gerindra's Electoral Trajectory: From New Party to Presidential Party

Gerindra is one of the parties with the most consistent growth in the Reformasi era. Founded in 2008, the party increased its votes and seats in every legislative election.

Table 1. Gerindra Party Votes and Seats in the House of Representatives, 2009–2024

Pemilu	Suara Sah	Persentase	Kursi DPR
2009	4.642.795	4,46%	26
2014	14.760.371	11,81%	73
2019	17.594.839	12,57%	78
2024	20.071.345	13,22%	86

Source: Processed from the Decisions of the KPU (2014, 2024) as reported by Antara (2014), Kontan (2024), and Bisnis.com (2024a).

The data in Table 1 shows an increase of 8 DPR seats for Gerindra in 2024 when compared to the 2019 gain. This increase in the number of seats is in line with Prabowo's success in winning the presidential election. However, Gerindra's legislative seat achievement remains below the PDI Perjuangan and Golkar. In short, Gerindra faces the 2024 Regional Elections with the status of a party that supports the president, but has not yet occupied a position as the party with the largest number of seats in parliament. This situation is what makes Gerindra prefer to rely on coalition strategies and the tail effect, instead of relying only on the acquisition of DPRD seats, in order to meet the requirements for the candidacy threshold.

Gerindra's Achievements in the Governor Election

Gerindra's most prominent achievement can be seen in the election of governors in provinces with large populations. Table 2 summarizes the victories of Gerindra cadres or couples who place Gerindra cadres as governors or deputy governors.

Table 2. Gerindra Cadre Victory in the 2024 Governor Election (Optional)

Provinsi	Pasangan Terpilih	Posisi Kader Gerindra	Catatan Hasil
Jawa Barat	Dedi Mulyadi–Erwan Setiawan	Gubernur	±61,01% (hitung cepat Indikator)
Jawa Tengah	Ahmad Luthfi–Taj Yasin Maimoen	Gubernur	Mengalahkan calon PDI Perjuangan
Banten	Andra Soni–Dimyati Natakusumah	Gubernur	57,52% (hitung cepat Charta Politika)
Sumatera Utara	Bobby Nasution–Surya	Gubernur	Diusung KIM Plus
Sulawesi Utara	Yulius Selvanus	Gubernur	Mengakhiri dua periode gubernur dari PDI Perjuangan
Sumatera Barat	Mahyeldi–Vasco Ruseimy	Wakil Gubernur	77,12% (rekapitulasi KPU Sumbar)
Aceh	Muzakir Manaf–Fadhlullah	Wakil Gubernur	Koalisi dengan Partai Aceh

Source: Processed from GoodStats (2024), Republika (2024a), Bisnis.com (2024b), and Antara Jateng (2024).

The importance of Table 2 lies in the structure of the demographic proportion pattern of the provinces that were successfully won. West Java was recorded as one of the provinces with the largest number of permanent voter lists in all of Indonesia, while Banten and Central Java themselves were included in the top five. This success in the three regions has meant that the figure of a Gerindra cadre is currently in control of the local government that houses the majority of the population on the island of Java. In addition, the victory in North Sulawesi and Central Java carries its own symbolic meaning, considering that the two regions have long been known as the region that has become a vote barn for the PDI Perjuangan.

The Coat Tail Effect and the Narrative of Central and Regional Harmony

The main point that explains the success of Gerindra is the impact of the coat tail on Prabowo's election. In the form of the implementation of the regional elections which took place exactly a month after the presidential inauguration, Gerindra gave Gerindra a kind of political boost that is rarely felt by other political parties. In line with the results of a study by Borges and Turgeon (2019), the most significant advantage of a coat tail effect is indeed aimed at the president's party, although his coalition partners also feel similar benefits.

This impact does not only occur by itself. Gerindra consciously constructs the existence of regional elections as a form of continuity of the national agenda. The core message emphasizes synchronization between central and regional government programs: regional heads who come from the coalition of presidential supporters are considered to have more capacity to secure national strategic projects at the local level. For example, the Chairman of the Central Java Gerindra DPD, Sudaryono, had appealed to the regional heads they support to align their work plans with the President's vision, so that the implementation of national programs can run efficiently and effectively (Antara Jateng, 2024). Public policy observers also argue that only Gerindra's victory in Central Java will most likely strengthen collaboration between the central and regional governments (Republika, 2024b).

Based on the perspective of Chaisty et al. (2018), this narrative is a form of adaptation of presidential instruments into a regional contest. Voters are faced with pragmatic considerations: choosing candidates who are in the same direction as the president is

considered to increase the potential of the region in attracting attention and program allocation from the central government. This logic is so dominant in the midst of Indonesia's decentralization system, considering that the dependence on regional revenues is still quite large on the fund transfer scheme from the central government.

Gerindra as the Architect of the KIM Plus Coalition

The next factor is related to Gerindra's ability to gather strength and build coalitions. After the Presidential Election, the Advanced Indonesia Coalition, which began with members of Gerindra, Golkar, Demokrat, PAN, PSI, PBB, and Garuda, grew in size along with the joining of NasDem, PKB, and PKS in several of these regions, which were then popularly referred to as KIM Plus (Antara Ambon, 2024a). In the 2024–2029 parliament, the KIM Plus party ranks control 470 of the total 580 seats, or covering around 81% of the representation (Bisnis.com, 2024a).

Gerindra occupies a key position in the political alliance. Most of the gubernatorial candidates encouraged by KIM Plus come from Gerindra cadres themselves (Bisnis.com, 2024c). For example, in the election in Banten, Andra Soni, who previously served as Chairman of the local Gerindra DPD, was not only championed by ten parties and succeeded in overthrowing his opponent Airin Rachmi Diany, who was supported by PDI Perjuangan and Golkar (CNN Indonesia, 2024) in the last few elections. Meanwhile, in Central Java, the Luthfi Taj Yasin duo received support from dozens of parties, including PKB, which used to be a party outside Prabowo's camp.

The influence of Gerindra's leadership in the coalition can also be seen from its flexible attitude. Gerindra Secretary General, Ahmad Muzani, once said that each KIM member party is given the freedom to decide on candidates at the regional level with the provision of adjusting to their respective voter bases and local dynamics (Investortrust, 2024). This flexible attitude is certainly crucial considering that the local political landscape in Indonesia is very varied (Aspinall & Berenschot, 2019). Gerindra can even open itself to cooperate with PDI Perjuangan in certain areas, for example in Karangasem Regency, Bali (Antara Bali, 2024). This model not only in this kind of approach has shown that Gerindra is more concerned with one aspect of victory and the stability of the running of a local government than being trapped in the framework of ideological competition.

Candidate Recruitment Strategy

The next factor is in the form of the implementation of a flexible candidate recruitment strategy. Parties from Gerindra affirmed their commitment to prioritizing internal cadres in the election contest (Republika, 2024c). Therefore, the party continues to open a space for a figure from outside the party who has electability and a qualified performance history. The determination of this candidate is taken by conducting a survey and collecting various suggestions from various community leaders, religious leaders, and regional figures, before finally being decided directly by the Chairman (Antara Babel, 2024).

From this practice, it can be seen that there are three types of candidates carried by Gerindra:

a) The party's structural cadres, for example, Andra Soni in Banten, who combined a legislative background with a network of internal party organizations in the regions.
b) Popular figures who are close to Gerindra, such as Dedi Mulyadi in West Java and Bobby Nasution in North Sumatra, have contributed a significant personal electoral support base.
c) from the security element, such as Ahmad Luthfi who is a former Central Java Police Chief and Major General of the Indonesian Armed Forces (Ret.) Yulius Selvanus in North Sulawesi, who carries an impression of firmness and managerial skills.

This combination is in line with the literature study that states that a candidate has a crucial influence in the election of regional heads in Indonesia (Aspinall & Sukmajati, 2016).

Through the various endorsements of figures who have such high popularity using various party vehicles, Gerindra has managed to reap two benefits at once, namely from a greater chance to win and the strengthening of the cadre base in the executive scope of the existing regions.

Case Study: Central Java

Central Java presents the clearest picture of how effective Gerindra's political machine works. In this region, it has been known as the main vote barn of the PDI Perjuangan at that time. However, in the 2024 Regional Elections, Gerindra not only succeeded in delivering Ahmad Luthfi-Taj Yasin at the provincial level, but also in ensuring victory in 27 out of a total of 35 districts/cities. Of the many elected regional heads, 20 of them are party cadres themselves, while the rest come from the party of a coalition member (Antara Jateng, 2024).

This achievement only proves how the three factors examined are intertwined. The impact of Prabowo's coat tail feels even stronger thanks to the support of President Joko Widodo, who does have a base in Central Java. Thanks to a large coalition, Gerindra was able to nominate candidates in almost every region. On the other hand, the active role of DPD management in guiding victory at the district/city level ensures that consolidation is maintained to the lowest layer (Republika, 2024b). What happened in Central Java also provides evidence that the shift in support from nationalist-pluralist voters towards Prabowo's coalition, just as reviewed by Fossati (2019), can actually take place even in areas that have been attached to loyalty to the PDI Perjuangan party.

Critical Note: The Boundaries Of Dominance

Gerindra's achievements must be seen in a balanced manner. There are at least four crucial points that limit the generalization of these findings.

First, the defeat in Jakarta. The Ridwan Kamil-Suswono pair nominated by KIM Plus was defeated by Pramono AnungRano Karno, who was supported by PDI Perjuangan. Ahead of election day, some analysts argue that the KIM Plus party machine in Jakarta is not running optimally, although Gerindra leaders deny this allegation (Kompas TV, 2024). This event has proven that the coat tail effect has a limitation in urban areas that have characteristics of voters who are more independent and educated.

Second, in the dominance of this mixed coalition. The results of JPPR monitoring from the final recapitulation of the regional level KPU count show that in the pure coalition structure, KIM Plus only excels in 4 out of 37 provinces (10.81%), namely Central Java, Riau Islands, North Sumatra, and West Papua. A total of 29 provinces (78.38%) were won by a coalition of KIM Plus and non-KIM Plus parties (Metro TV, 2025). This data has signaled that victory at the regional level cannot only be fully claimed by one party or one coalition from the national level.

Third, then the phenomenon of a single candidate. Observers and democracy activists have criticized the jumbo coalition because it is considered to have the potential to cut the space for contestation. Before the Constitutional Court Decision Number 60/PUU-XXII/2024 reduced the threshold for a candidacy requirement, it emerged from the anxiety reaction that the area would expand with a single candidate faced with an empty box (Bisnis.com, 2024d). After the registration period that took place was extended, it turned out that there were still 41 regions with a single candidate (Antara Ambon, 2024b). This critical view is in line with academic concerns related to cartelization and the narrowing of electoral space in Indonesia (Mietzner, 2020; Slater, 2018). It is important to underline that the existence of this single candidate phenomenon does not only occur in Gerindra, but also certainly involves the existence of other political parties in various regions.

Fourth, in the threat of personalization and recentralization. This narrative of regional center harmonization is indeed able to smooth the course of the national program, but on the other hand risks paralyzing regional autonomy and the control function of the DPRD when

almost all parties are members of one row of the coalition (Power, 2018; Warburton & Aspinall, 2019). A number of experts also warn that the concentration of power in the executive is one of the triggering factors for a deterioration in the quality of democracy in Indonesia (Aspinall et al., 2020; Power & Warburton, 2020).

These points do not only rule out a Gerindra achievement, but instead emphasize that an electoral victory should be accompanied by quality with local government management and dedication to the form of dignified political competition.

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that the Gerindra Party's electoral performance in Indonesia's 2024 simultaneous regional elections was shaped by coalition consolidation, strategic candidate recruitment, and the ability to capitalize on presidential electoral momentum. Prabowo Subianto's victory in the 2024 presidential election provided political advantages that strengthened Gerindra's bargaining position and facilitated cooperation with other political parties at the regional level. The party's electoral achievements, particularly its success in supporting the winning gubernatorial candidate and securing victories in 27 of 35 regency and municipal elections in Central Java, demonstrated the importance of organizational coordination and coalition-building strategies. However, the defeat of the KIM Plus-backed candidate pair in Jakarta indicated that national coalition strength did not automatically translate into regional electoral success. These findings suggested that the effectiveness of Gerindra's political machinery depended not only on presidential coattail effects but also on local political dynamics, candidate competitiveness, coalition flexibility, and the capacity to mobilize electoral support. The study further highlighted that coalition consolidation functioned as a strategic mechanism for strengthening political coordination between national and regional actors, although its effectiveness varied across electoral contexts. Overall, the findings contributed to understanding the interaction between presidential electoral momentum, coalition politics, and regional electoral competition within Indonesia's multiparty presidential system. Future research should employ comparative regional case studies and incorporate primary data from political party officials, campaign teams, and voters to examine the organizational mechanisms underlying electoral success and assess the long-term implications of coalition consolidation for party institutionalization and regional governance.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors contribute to the preparation of research concepts, methodology development, data collection and analysis, manuscript preparation, and manuscript revision. All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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