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## INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)

Article DOI:10.21474/IJAR01/19922  
DOI URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/19922>



### RESEARCH ARTICLE

#### RESILIENCE AND PERSISTENCE OF POLITICAL DYNASTIES: THE CASE OF THE CHASAN SOCHIB FAMILY IN BANTEN, INDONESIA

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#### Manuscript Info

##### Manuscript History

Received: 14 September 2024

Final Accepted: 24 October 2024

Published: November 2024

##### Key words:-

Political Dynasty, Banten

#### Abstract

This paper examines the emergence, consolidation, and persistence of the political dynasty led by Tubagus Chasan Sochib in Banten, Indonesia. Rooted in local culture and power structures, the dynasty established its influence initially through economic ties and expanded into political dominance under Sochib's daughter, Ratu Atut Chosiyah, Banten's governor. Chasan's rise began with business ventures tied to the local military, growing his influence through prominent regional organizations and strategic appointments. His family's political reach continued under Ratu Atut and expanded into a formidable network spanning both political and business spheres in Banten. Despite significant corruption charges against family members, the dynasty has endured and maintained substantial influence over local governance. This paper explores the mechanisms that have enabled the dynasty's persistence, focusing on local cultural leadership norms, historical alliances with political entities, and strategic maneuvering within Banten's power landscape. Through a systematic literature review, the research synthesizes findings on patronage, clientelism, and dynastic politics within the context of Banten's political landscape. This study seeks to answer how the Chasan Sochib dynasty has retained its hold on political power in Banten, revealing insights into the resilience of political dynasties within Indonesia's evolving democratic framework.

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#### Introduction:-

The formation of the political dynasty in Banten is inseparable from the figure of Tubagus Chasan Sochib, who is the father of Ratu Atut Chosiyah, the Governor of Banten. Tubagus Chasan Sochib was one of the Banten "Jawara" who initially worked as a guard for the rice and corn business between Java and Sumatra islands. He then started his business by becoming a provider of logistics needs for Kodam VI Siliwangi. In order to maintain political stability in Banten, Kodam VI Siliwangi needed a local person to be its extension to counter communism and chose Tubagus Chasan Sochib and gave him a special position. Government projects, especially in the field of construction, were often given to him.

In 1967, Tubagus Chasan Sochib founded PT Sinar Ciomas Raya, which later became the largest company in Banten, particularly in the field of road construction and other physical buildings. He then also dominated a number of business organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Banten, the Indonesian National Construction Association Banten, and the Indonesian National Construction Service Development Institute

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Banten(P2D, 2011). Besides business, Chasan also had influence in the world of community organizations. In 2000, he became the Chairman of the Satkar Ulama Unit and led two mass organizations (ormas) of Golkar in Banten, as well as leading the Banten Martial Arts and Culture Warriors Association. He also used the media to raise his reputation. From there, he had economic and political access (Irawan, 2016).

Tubagus Chasan Sochib was able to dominate the political, economic, social, and cultural arena in Banten during the reform era. He was one of the figures who played a role in pushing for the expansion of Banten province. He also provided financial assistance, making him a leading figure in the formation of Banten province. He became more powerful than in the New Order era. During the New Order, he was heavily dependent on connections with civilian and military officials, but was not actively involved in determining who was in power in West Java. This role changed when the reform era began and Banten province was formed. Tubagus Chasan Sochib was actively involved in determining who became the ruler of Banten. Beginning with the success of his daughter, Ratu Atut Chosiyah, becoming the vice governor of Banten, he then designed his family to be actively involved in politics, economics, social, and cultural fields (P2D, 2011).

The political dynasty that was built by Tubagus Chasan Sochib became even more powerful with the rise of Ratu Atut Chosiyah as the Governor of Banten and Atut's success in placing her family in strategic positions in Banten, both in the legislative and executive branches, until now. In addition, to control Banten, the Atut family also owned 11 companies in 2013. During the reform era, the Atut family through Tubagus Chasan Sochib also controlled organizations such as United Banten Volunteers which was founded in 2007, and Banten Martial Arts and Culture Warriors Association which is still useful for the Atut family to win elections (Taher, 2019).

From the economic, social, and political power that it controls, the Tubagus Chasan Sochib family has been dominating Banten until now. Atut's first child, Andika Hazmury, served as Vice Governor of Banten from 2017 to 2022 and Atut's second child, Andira Aprilia Hikmat, successfully won a seat in the Regional Representative Council from 2019 to 2024. Tanto W. Arban, Andira's husband and Atut's son-in-law, served as Vice Mayor of Pandeglang from 2015 to 2020. In 2021, he was re-elected as Vice Mayor of Pandeglang.

Ratu Tatu Chasanah, the sister of Atut, was elected as the Regent of Serang in the 2015 simultaneous regional elections and served until 2020. In the 2020 regional elections, she was also re-elected as the Regent of Serang. Tubagus Haerul Jaman, the half-brother of Atut, became a member of the Indonesian House of Representatives for the Banten II constituency in the 2019 general election. Previously, he served as the Mayor of Serang for two terms, from 2011 to 2013 and from 2013 to 2018, and as the Deputy Mayor of Serang from 2008 to 2011. Next, Atut's half-sister, Ratu Ria Maryana, was elected as a member of the Serang City Council in the 2019 general election. Adde Rosi Khoerunnisa, the daughter-in-law of Atut, successfully became a member of the Indonesian House of Representatives for the 2019-2024 term.

Airin Rahmi Diany, the wife of Atut's brother (Tubagus Chaeri Wardana), served as the Mayor of Tangerang Selatan from 2011 to 2016 and from 2016 to 2021. Pilar Saga Ichsan, the son of Ratu Tatu Chasanah, has been serving as the Deputy Mayor of Tangerang Selatan since 2021. In the 2024 regional elections, former Mayor of Tangerang Selatan Airin Rahmi Diany is also being touted as a candidate for governor of Jakarta. This fact shows that the Banten political dynasty is still strong and is attempting to expand its power from Banten to Jakarta (Siregar, 2022). In terms of party support, the Atut family is predominantly nominated by the Golkar Party, which has had a long relationship with Chasan Shohib.

Tubagus Chaeri Wardana Chasan, also known as Wawan, is well-known to the public for his involvement in corruption cases. He has been involved in four cases, including corruption of medical equipment in Tangerang Selatan and Banten, bribery of the Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court, Akil Mochtar, and money laundering. The latter case involved several celebrities. Wawan, who is also the husband of the Mayor of Tangerang Selatan, Airin Rachmi Diany, also distributed luxury cars to beautiful actresses such as Jennifer Dunn and Chaterine Wilson. In the first trial at the Corruption Crimes Court, the younger brother of Banten Governor Ratu Atut Chosiyah was charged with bribing Constitutional Court Chief Justice Akil Mochtar to annul the victory of Iti Oktavia Jayabaya-Ade Sumardi and to ask him to win the Amir Hamzah-Kasmin pair in the 2013 Lebak Banten Local Elections (Medcom, 2020).

In 2013, Ratu Atut Chosiyah and her brother Tubagus Chaeri Wardana were arrested by the Corruption Eradication Commission for bribery of the Constitutional Court judge, Akil Mokhtar, about the case of the dispute over the regional head election of Lebak Regency, Banten Province, and corruption in the procurement of medical equipment and other goods in Banten Province from 2011 to 2013. With the arrest of Ratu Atut and Wawan, political observers predict that the political dynasty in Banten will be destroyed.

Burhanudin Muhtadi, for example, said that the arrest of Atut as the "Queen" and Wawan as the "King" in the political dynasty makes the political dynasty of the Atut family in Banten just a matter of time before it is destroyed. The same was also conveyed by Uday Suhada, Coordinator of the Banten Reform Community, who believes that this political dynasty will be destroyed (Ihsanuddin, 2013). Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (PDI-P) politician from Banten, Tb Dedi Gumelar, also expressed the same belief regarding the destruction of the political dynasty in Banten after the arrest of Atut and Wawan by the Corruption Eradication Commission (DetikNews, 2013).

In fact, the imprisonment of Atut and her brother for corruption cases did not affect the victory of their family in the 2015 simultaneous regional elections in Banten. The Atut family won the 2015 Banten regional elections, the 2017 gubernatorial election, and only lost in the 2018 regional elections. The Atut family that won the 2015 Banten regional elections were Airin Rachmi Diany (Atut's sister-in-law) who was paired with Benyamin Davnie in the City of Tangerang Selatan, Tanto Warsono (Atut's son-in-law) who became the deputy for Irna Narulita in Pandeglang Regency, and Ratu Tatu Chasanah (Atut's sister) who was paired with Pandji Tirtayasa in Serang Regency.

Of the four regions that participated in the simultaneous regional elections in Banten, three were won by the Ratu Atut family. The Atut family again won the 2017 gubernatorial election with the rise of Atut's son, Andika Hazrumy, as Vice Governor of Banten paired with Wahidin Halim. Only in the 2018 local elections in Serang City did the Atut family experience defeat, Vera Nurlaela Jaman who is the wife of Atut's half-sister failed to become mayor. The victories that the Atut family has obtained show that the prophecy that the Atut family's political dynasty will be destroyed after Ratu Atut was arrested by the Corruption Eradication Commission has not been proven.

The strength of the political dynasty cannot be separated from the role and domination of Tubagus Chasan Sochib as a local strongman who succeeded in making Atut the Governor of Banten for two terms, namely 2006-2011 and 2011-2014. Since Atut took over, the practice of political dynasty has spread and shown signs of proliferation that not only occurs in the executive and legislative spheres but also extends to the religious, educational, socio-cultural and business life of the Banten community (Sukri, 2020).

The performance of Tubagus Chasan Sochib, which was then continued by his son Tubagus Chaeri Wardana (Wawan), appears to be increasingly strong in local politics in Banten. Wawan is a behind-the-scenes actor, who is also an operator in every implementation of the regional head election that is followed by his family's lineage, starting from arranging winning strategies, building network nodes, mobilizing political parties, building media opinion, and controlling the election organizers. Wawan also plays a role in the arrangement of positions in the bureaucracy. His influence on the placement of positions exceeds the authority of the Job and Rank Assessment Board. Similarly, in the work of government projects, Wawan plays a very important role in controlling it for the interests of his family's business. Until now, even though Wawan is serving a sentence, but the power of his control over the above things is still ongoing.

This paper aims to answer "How has the Banten political dynasty managed to maintain its influence over political power in the land of Jawara, Banten Province, to this day?".

### **Research Method:-**

A systematic approach was used to conduct this research. The following steps were taken:

- 1) The databases Google Scholar were searched.
- 2) The search terms "Banten, Chasan Sochib, Ratu Atut Chosiyah, Tubagus Chaeri Wardana, Dinasti Politik, Oligarki, Klientelisme, Negara Bayangan, Jawara, Pemberontakan Petani, Strongmen, Bossism, and Uncivilitas" were used.
- 3) The search results were limited to articles about politics.
- 4) The abstracts of the articles were reviewed to determine their relevance to the topic of the literature review.
- 5) The full text of the articles was retrieved for those that were deemed relevant.

- 6) The articles were read and summarized.
- 7) The key findings of the articles were synthesized and presented in the literature review.

The literature review was conducted in a rigorous and systematic manner. The methods used ensured that the most relevant and up-to-date research was included in the literature review. The findings of the literature review provide a comprehensive overview of the research question.

### **Discussion:-**

Banten is one of the provinces that was formed after the Reformation located in the western tip of Java Island, Indonesia. Based on Law No. 23 of 2000, Banten officially became a New Province together with Gorontalo. The capital of Banten Province is located in the city of Serang, which has a great history of the Banten Sultanate in the past. Banten is known as a region that became an international trade center and a center for the spread of Islam that is respected by both local and international communities (Sulaiman & Ridwan, 2019).

The Banten people are devout Muslims. The role of Ulama-Umara became a strong leadership collaboration in running the Banten Sultanate government in the past, including in facing the divide and rule policy (*devide et impera*) carried out by the Dutch Colonial Government. This is evident when Banten reached its heyday during the leadership of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa (Umara) together with the Sultanate Mufti (Ulama) who was also his son-in-law, Sheikh Yusuf in 1651-1683.

The leadership of Ulama-Umara has been important in the long history of Banten. Several important events in Banten have been influenced by the influence and leadership of the Ulama (Kyai). For example, the Geger Cilegon event in 1888 placed Kyai as the main leader and mover (Kartodirdjo, 1984). Even the 1945 revolution made the people spontaneously place the Kyai as formal leaders, both civil and military. The positions of Resident, Regent, District Head, Wedana to Village Head were held by Kyai. Even the military leader in Banten at that time was Kyai Sjam'un who later became Brigadier General (Sutisna, 2015).

In addition to Kyai, there are other actors who also play an important role in the cultural leadership in Banten, known as Jawara. According to Tihami, Kyai in the sultanate era had students who studied religion together with their teacher (kyai), among these students there were those who had a talent in religious science known as Santri and there were those who tended to have a talent in physical struggle with a nuance of wisdom (inner), namely Jawara. Over a long period of time, Jawara and Kyai were two figures of cultural leadership who were once united, especially during the struggle to realize independence in Banten until the physical revolution period after independence (Tihami, 2015).

Historians believe that both were indeed born from the same historical entity. Santri, relies on religious knowledge, but he also fought alongside the kyai. Therefore, he must also have the ability to defend the physical, although his portion is small compared to Jawara, but the strength of his wisdom is great. Jawara's wisdom is less powerful than santri. The unity of Santri and Jawara under the leadership of kyai is actually the key to victory in fighting for the people of Banten. But in the past, then in the next period, there was a kind of split between the two (Mansur & SM, 2000).

The involvement of Jawara in the practical political life in Banten began with the interests of the New Order rulers in the early 1970s to establish their political influence and control to shift the power of Islamic groups that since the 1973 merger were gathered in the body of Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP). The New Order and Golkar realized that the key to political power in Banten was in the Jawara and Kyai group as local leadership actors who had a strong influence on the grassroots masses. The Kyai themselves had been co-opted and mobilized by the government before the 1971 election. That's why Golkar was able to get the most votes of 49.83% in the 1971 election, defeating more senior parties such as Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI) and Partai Muslimin Indonesia (PARMUSI)(Hamid, 2010).

Golkar's victory in the 1971 election did not satisfy the New Order rulers at that time. As a result, after the 1971 election, the Jawara group also began to be co-opted and mobilized through the state corporatism political strategy that was the mainstay of the New Order regime at that time. They were organized under the banner of the Satuan Karya (Satkar) Jawara in 1971. Satkar Jawara was led by H. Tubagus Chasan Sochib, who is none other than the father of Ratu Atut Chosiyah, the Governor of Banten who was involved in a corruption case. Satkar Jawara was

designed by the New Order as the Golkar political wing in Banten which, together with Satkar Ulama, was projected to become the Golkar political machine in the future. At the end of 1973, Satkar Jawaara changed its name to the Banten Martial Arts and Culture Warriors Association.

According to Hamid, it was their relationship with Golkar and the New Order government that later gave Jawaara the advantage of political and economic access as a structural foundation to extend their domination (Hamid, 2010). From there emerged new entrepreneurs who emerged from exploiting the distribution of projects that circulated among the Jawaara. Therefore, if you look closely, the profession of most of the Jawaara who are members of Banten Martial Arts and Culture Warriors Associationis entrepreneurs, especially entrepreneurs who implement government projects. The Jawaara who do business are often referred to as the Rawu Group. This name is because the business control center is carried out from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Bantenoffice in the Rawu Traditional Market area, Banten.

After the reform, the presence of Jawaara with their uncivil behavior in the political landscape of Banten became more solid, especially after their success in "controlling" the leadership of Banten in the regional head election by the Regional House of Representatives in 2001. The success of the Jawaara group in winning the 2001 regional head election by placing Ratu Atut Chosiyah as Vice Governor was not immune to the uncivil ways they did. Starting from vote buying to intimidation directed at the members of the Banten Regional House of Representatives. The Jawaara, intimidated by mobilizing the mass force in the name of security personnel. Even in the Jawaara meeting room. This provides psychological pressure on the Council members. In addition, threatening activities also took place, even though they were blown through rumors during the election process. To win the 2001 regional head election contest, the Jawaara group also conducted opinion control. Jawaara controls the opinions that are developing, especially in local mass media. Jawaara, with its interest in continuing the election of the Governor and Vice Governor of Banten, succeeded in controlling public opinion. Jawaara has two strategies. First, by buying media circles that support Jawaara's interests. Second, by pressuring media circles that are considered uncooperative with violence (Hamid, 2010).

Since Ratu Atut Chosiyah became Vice Governor in the 2001-2006 period, then replacing the position of Djoko Munandar who was dismissed in 2003 following his status as a convicted person in the corruption case of housing funds and supporting the activities of members of the Regional House of Representatives, practically the dynamics of local political life in Banten are controlled under the hegemony of the Jawaara group. Various government policies and or events that invite the action of civil society elements such as students and NGOs tend to be responded to and faced with violence and other uncivilities by the government by putting the Jawaara ahead.

In addition, many civil society activists and academics in Banten also believe that a number of corruption cases involving Ratu Atut Chosiyah's extended family have actually been going on for a long time. That the cases were only exposed in 2013, this is strongly suspected because they are skilled at "playing" Jawaara-style uncivil tricks plus the power of capital to "secure" various of their corrupt behaviors in the realm of law enforcement agencies.

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