

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM IN INDONESIA

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Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

After having been under the yoke of colonialism for three and a half centuries, Indonesia proclaimed her independence on August 17, 1945. It is the largest archipelago in the world and with a population of 147 million people,⁽¹⁾ it is the fifth largest nation in the world after People's Republic of China, India, USSR and the United States of America. It is comprised of 13,677 islands — large and small — 6,044 of which are populated by Indonesians of numerous ethnic groups, each with its own language or dialect as well as its own unique tradition, customs and cultural heritage.

Notwithstanding the local and regional differences, however, Indonesia is a solidly united nation. Culturally bound by its *lingua franca*, the Bahasa Indonesia (the Indonesian language) spoken by every Indonesian regardless of regional origin, social standing and occupation. Ideologically and politically, Indonesia is united by the State ideology, the Pancasila (Five Guiding Principles)⁽²⁾ being socio political values inherited by modern Indonesia from its time-honored societal values and mores. It is constitutionally guided by the 1945 Constitution promulgated by the founding fathers of the Republic on August 18, 1945.

In their wisdom, sense of history, long-term perspectives and idealism, the founding fathers of the Republic decided that the then newly born nation state would strive to be a respected member of the community of nations and at home it would be a republic in form and be governed under the presidential system.

"The independence movement in Indonesia," so they declared in the preamble of the Constitution, "has gloriously and safely arrived at the gate of a free, united, sovereign, just and prosperous Indonesian state."⁽³⁾

The beautifully phrased paragraph is now seen as the ultimate national objective of Indonesia and has to be seen, therefore, as the most fundamental basis for the act of governing in Indonesia and any examination of local government system in Indonesia has to be looked at in terms of the above perception.

Further elucidation of the *raison d'être* of the Indonesian government — and thus of public administration system — is to be found in the fourth paragraph of the preamble of the Constitution that states that the basic missions of the government are:

1. to protect the entire nation of Indonesia and all the people of Indonesia;
2. to promote the general welfare of the public;
3. to uplift the intellectual capability of the people;
4. to participate in the bringing about of world order based on freedom, eternal peace and social justice.⁽⁴⁾

It is in the context of this four-fold basic mission of the government that local government system in Indonesia is described in this writing.

Quite obviously, the history and development of local government system in Indonesia is as old as the Republic itself. However, neither time nor space permits the author to describe in detail the entire historical process. The author has, therefore, chosen to limit himself to the last ten years starting from the time that the present basic law on local government was enacted.⁽⁵⁾

It is a well-known fact that modern governments in the Third World countries are charged with the responsibility of performing two types of functions, namely the more traditional functions of governing such as the maintenance of peace and order and, secondly, the newly acquired function of bringing about development in all spheres of life. Indonesia is, of course, no exception and the various levels of local government in Indonesia are similarly charged.

This article is, therefore, an attempt to examine governmental efforts to construct a modern local government system in Indonesia. It should be very strongly emphasized at the outset that such efforts take into consideration Indonesia's unique characteristics because such consideration is a sure guarantee that the system developed will function well. The paper is ended with the author's perception of future trends which might attain in Indonesia knowing the political determination of the government and the earnest desire of the people of Indonesia to reach its stated national goals and objectives.

INDONESIA: THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

For myriads of reasons, Indonesia is a truly unique country. This uniqueness must be understood and such an understanding is a prerequisite to an analysis of the local government system that prevails in Indonesia. Not all the contributing factors are identified in this article and even those identified can only be analyzed in a capsule form.

Geographical Uniqueness.

Multatuli, a famous Dutch poet, once identified Indonesia as "... the magnificent empire of Insulinde encircling the equator like a girdle of emeralds."⁽⁶⁾

Being the world's largest archipelago, the unique geographical characteristic certainly has a very strong influence upon the course of Indonesia's history and has certainly conditioned to a very significant degree the course of other developments in Indonesia such as politically, economically and administratively. Indonesia's 730,000 square miles are spread out over 13,677 islands — some of them are the largest in the world — covering an area wider from east to west than the United States and from north to south roughly equals the distance between London and Istanbul. For millenia, Indonesia has always been a bridge between Asia and Australia and has served as the principal crossroads of both international commerce and trade as well as exogenous ideas and cultures.

Indonesia is a unitary state. Within the framework of a unitary state, obviously the geographical setting of Indonesia has to be taken into account in developing its local government system. For example, in trying to find the right answer to the perennial question of centralization versus decentralization. Effective and workable decentralization — that will stimulate initiative for local governments to make intelligent decisions, to train others, to learn to assume greater responsibilities and to exercise healthy judgment in solving local problems and meeting recognized and perceived social needs locally — must be brought about not at the expense of but rather to enhance national resilience of the nation as a whole. This is by no means an easy task for several reasons. Firstly, Indonesia is determined to preserve local customs and traditions under the aegis of nationhood. Secondly, the stage of development that has been reached does vary from one region to another. Thirdly, local potentials, both in terms of human and natural resources differ — sometimes greatly — from one locality as compared to others.

In spite of, nay, because of, the above-mentioned reasons, the idea of national unity cannot be too strongly emphasized in the Indonesian context especially when other factors — in addition to geographical uniqueness — are taken into account.

Indonesia As a Heterogeneous Society.

Although sociologists, anthropologists and other social scientists have not agreed on the exact number of indigenous ethnic groups which comprise the Indonesian people, the undeniable fact is that there are many. Each ethnic group, occupying certain locality in the archipelago, has its own distinct characteristics, language, tradition, custom and culture. And yet, a very strong nationalistic sentiment is prevailing and is growing stronger. Bound by a lingua franca — chosen from the many languages and decided upon long before the advent of the Republic of Indonesia — has cemented a very strong sense of oneness. Locally unique characteristics are considered to be "ingredients" in enriching national identity and culture. Hence the motto in Indonesia's coat of arms:

“Bhinneka Tunggal Ika” meaning unity in diversity.

For Indonesia, this question of unity is the more significant in view of the fact that “it has been a frequently made observation that during more than three centuries of colonial rule in the Indies, the policy of the Dutch was to maintain the existing structure of the native society, and that during the period the basic characteristics of that society, except for grafting upon it of European and Chinese economic enterprise, remained virtually unchanged.”⁽⁷⁾

Stated in a somewhat different manner, the heterogeneous nature of the Indonesian society is not considered to be an impediment but rather as an enriching element in bringing about a modern nation.

The Pancasila.

For Indonesia and Indonesians, the Pancasila plays a supreme role. It is the official ideology of the State. It is Indonesia's Weltanschauung. It is Indonesia's way of life. It is the basic philosophy of the Indonesians both as individuals as well as the society as a whole. The principles contained therein guide individual and societal actions. The laws of the land are promulgated based on its principles. The government — both nationally and locally — performs its prescribed roles and assigned tasks based on it. Every constitutional organ of the State is guided by it. Local government system is maintained and developed to enhance its application and practice in the process of governing.

Among the many important factors that makes Pancasila so valued is that it is something that is truly indigenous to Indonesia and from time immemorial has always been guiding the course of political, economic, cultural as well as behavioral and organizational developments.

Even the very ultimate of Indonesia's national goal, namely a just and prosperous society — and all national developmental efforts to reach it — must be based on Pancasila. Nothing else and nothing less will be acceptable to Indonesia. The entire nation is committed to it. Political parties and social organizations accept it and it has become Indonesia's “battle cry” in accelerating the pace of Indonesia's development in all aspects of societal living.

The Agrarian Nature of the Present Economy.

At present, Indonesia is still an agriculturally-based economy. About 81% of its population live in the rural areas and 67% of them earn their livelihood from farming and living in 63,410 villages. The population census taken in 1971 indicated that farm-workers account for 21.1% of the total work force in the rural areas. Fifty seven percent of the total number of farmers is cultivating a piece of land covering an area of less than 0.5 HA with an average landownership of 0.25 HA per person.

A prominent Indonesian rural sociologist maintains that the number of

small farmers in Indonesia would be about 42% to 47% of the total workforce in the agricultural sector.⁽⁸⁾

Stated differently, three levels of villages are discernible in Indonesia, namely:

1. very poor villages, where the per capita income of the villagers is in the average of Rp.13,266.41 or less per month;
2. poor villages, where the per capita income of the villagers ranges from Rp.13,266.41 to Rp.22,100.69 per month;
3. almost poor villages, where the per capita income of the villagers is more than Rp.22,100.69 per month.⁽⁹⁾

Happily, of course, the present picture is not as bleak as the above statistics show. Thanks to the well planned and properly implemented economic development strategy in three successive five-year development periods beginning on the first of April, 1969, the Indonesian income per capita, according to a World Bank report in 1981, has reached US\$520.00 thus elevating Indonesia's position from a low-income developing country to that of a middle-income developing country.

As a matter of fact, Indonesia's economic development strategy indicates that a much faster rate of growth of the industrial sector will be attempted vis a vis the agricultural sector.

Be that as it may, however, the fact remains that at present and for the immediately foreseeable future, Indonesia will continue to be having an agriculturally-based economy with the majority of the Indonesians living in the rural areas. It is important to make this point as a way of explaining why the strong desire of the government to make village-level administration strong as will be seen later in the paper.

Indonesia's Basic Development Strategy.

It has been pointed out earlier that the ultimate national goal of Indonesia is to bring about a just and prosperous society, not only in the worldly material sense but also in other aspects of life based on the Pancasila philosophy.

Fully aware of Indonesia's historical heritage, its current course of history, its potentials — both in terms of manpower and bountiful natural resources — and its limitations, the people and the government of Indonesia have formulated a basic development strategy that contain many features, four of the very basic ones are described below.

First of all, although economic development occupies a central place in the total national development efforts, political, socio cultural and security targets are by no means neglected because it is Indonesia's conviction that pervasive and balanced national development will guarantee the ushering in and maintenance of Indonesia's resilience in all aspects of national life.

Secondly, each period of development — it is five-years in Indonesia —

must succeed in doing two main things, namely to increase the level of the general welfare of the people and to lay a stronger foundation for accelerated national development in the next development time frame. The second point is of course extremely important not only because it ensures continuity but also because of the dire need to hasten the pace of development exponentially rather than in a linear manner.

Thirdly, in each stage of national development three conditions must attain, namely:

- a. a more equitable distribution of development and its benefits;
- b. sustained economic growth, and
- c. dynamic national stability.

The priority setting for the three conditions may vary from one period of development to another but the three components remain the same.

Fourthly, considering that social justice for all must be realized, and taking into account of the fact that the majority of the people are still poor, the question of equity is paramount in the development strategy of Indonesia and efforts for its materialization are to be carried out through eight development channels, namely:

- a. a more equitable distribution of the basic necessities of the common people, primarily food, clothing and housing;
- b. a more equitable distribution of educational opportunities and the provision of adequate health services;
- c. a more equitable availability of income-earning opportunities;
- d. a more equitable availability of employment opportunities;
- e. a more equitable opportunity to engage in business activities;
- f. a more equitable opportunity to participate in development, particularly with respect to the younger generation and women;
- g. a more equitable distribution of development activities throughout the country;
- h. a more equitable availability of opportunity to obtain justice.

The importance of singling out the four factors described above should become obvious if one considers the fact that the various levels of local government in Indonesia are charged not only in performing the traditional role of government but, more importantly, to effectively carry out its newly acquired role, namely the bringing about of increased welfare of the people through developmental activities.

After all, development activities are carried out in the regions, many of them in the villages.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM IN INDONESIA

A very detailed analysis of local government system in Indonesia is very difficult — if not impossible — to do in an article of this sort. The

best that the author can do is to identify and describe its most salient features after having laid, hopefully, the proper foundation for the maintenance and development of such a system.

Constitutional Provision.

The constitutional basis for the creation, maintenance and development of local government system in Indonesia is found in Article 18 of the 1945 Constitution. The essence of the provision is that the division of Indonesia into large and small areas — with the ensuing result in the creation of various levels of local government — are to be decided upon by law, taking into account the democratic principles in governing the state as well as the historical rights of special territories.

In compliance with the constitutional stipulation, Indonesia since independence has had several laws regulating the existence and functions of the local government. The basic law that is in effect today in Indonesia was promulgated on the 23rd of April, 1974 and it is known as Basic Law No. 5, 1974. Through its promulgation, all previous laws on local government in Indonesia were declared void.

Basic Features of Law No. 5, 1974.

Keeping in mind the unitary nature of Indonesia as a state, there are two types of spatial divisions in Indonesia, namely:

1. Autonomous regions,
2. Administrative territories.

Autonomous regions are created within the framework of carrying out decentralization principles. On the other hand, administrative territories are created because of the need to carry out the principles of deconcentration. For the purpose of carrying out government activities as well for structuring the local government, the coverage of an autonomous region and an administrative territory is the same and the local government carrying out decentralization and deconcentration responsibilities is one and the same.

Autonomous Regions. A region is considered to be autonomous and is granted such status if it is capable of managing its own internal affairs especially in raising the necessary funds to finance its activities. There are three levels of autonomous regions in Indonesia, known as Autonomous Region Level I, Level II and Desa (Village) each with its own Local Government charged with the responsibility of performing both the routine and developmental functions and carrying out decentralized activities.

Among the most important considerations in the creation and development of those autonomous regions are political, economic, socio-cultural and security in nature such as economic potentials, number of population,

size of the region, local as well as regional and national security and other objective criteria. Decentralization principles are to be implemented within the framework of real and responsible local autonomy as manifested in increasing capability to maintain law and order, carrying out developmental activities, maintenance and promotion of political stability and national unity.

Due to the unique characteristics of the country and the basic nature of the state as a unitary one, local governments have no choice but to cooperate with the field offices of the central government apparatus in the regions which carry out central government functions which are not delegated to the local governments through the mechanism of both decentralization and deconcentration.

Deconcentration. The point was made early on in the paper that viewed from the act of governing, decentralization and deconcentration principles are blended into the entity of the local government. In other words, in the Indonesian context, decentralization and deconcentration cannot and must not be looked at in a dichotomized manner because in actual practice, the implementation of the principles of deconcentration is entrusted to the hands of an autonomous local government. This fact can be seen in the reality that the head of Autonomous Region Level I, for example, is also known as Governor and as such he is representing the Central Government. This point will become clearer when the author discusses "Administrative Territories" later on. Suffice it to say at this point that the official title of the head of the First Level Autonomous Region is Governor/Head of First Level Autonomous Region. As governor he is an appointed representative of the Central Government while as the Head of the First Level Autonomous Region he is an elected official.

Participative Function. In addition to the performance of certain functions based on the decentralization and deconcentration principles, local governments in Indonesia can be given additional tasks which are known as participative functions. Those additional functions are in actual fact a responsibility of the central government but the local authorities are asked to perform those certain functions which are financed by the Central Government and it is so done regardless of the presence of central government field offices in the region concerned.

Basic Organizational Structure of the Local Government. In Indonesia, a local government is given a legal definition of a local government as being the Head of the Autonomous Region and the Local Legislative Assembly. There are five main components of the structure, namely:

1. the head of the region,

2. the local legislative assembly with the main function of assisting the head of the region in formulating local rules and regulations,
3. a regional secretariat that is responsible in providing administrative and technical supports to the entire local government apparatus,
4. operational units known as dinas (service) which, as the operational arms of the local government, are charged with both the routine as well as development functions of the local government concerned,
5. a planning unit that assists the head of the region to formulate development plans for the region and to coordinate development programmes of the field offices of the central government in the region.

The Head of an Autonomous Region. In the selection and appointment of the head of an autonomous region, extremely great care is taken to ensure that in leading the region and in heading the local government apparatus a truly capable man is put on the job. This point needs to be emphasized in view of the fact that he is not only acting as the head of his region but also representing the central government in the region.

Qualifications which have to be met by a candidate for the office of the head of a region are:

1. Indonesian citizen,
2. A man of religion,
3. A man with unswerving loyalty to the State ideology, Pancasila, and the 1945 Constitution,
4. A man with unquestioned loyalty to the State and to the Government,
5. A person who has never engaged in acts of treason against the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia and was never a member of the now disbanded Indonesian Communist Party and other illegal organizations,
6. A person with a deep sense of dedication to the country,
7. A person who is well respected in the region,
8. A man with unquestioned honesty,
9. A man who is intelligent, capable and skilled,
10. A man who is just,
11. A man whose legal right to vote has not been rescinded by court,
12. Physically and mentally healthy,
13. A person who has reached the age of 35 years for the position of head of First Level Region and 30 years for the position of head of Second Level Region,
14. A man who possesses sufficient knowledge and experience in the art of governing, and
15. A man whose level of knowledge is equal to that of a person who holds at least a baccalaureat degree for the head of the First Level

Region and at least the knowledge of a senior high school graduate for the head of the Second Level Region.

From the numerous qualifications which a candidate for the office of head of first and second level regions must meet it is readily obvious that they are combination of political, professional and ethical criteria. Such comprehensive criteria is also indicative of the importance of such a position in the government.

Election Procedure. Basic Law No. 5, 1974 has the following procedure for the election of the head of First and Second Level Regions:

1. There should be at least three candidates — and five at the most — to be proposed by the political parties and the Functional Group (Golongan Karya) represented in the Local Legislative Assembly. The chosen candidates will have undergone a close scrutiny by the Local Legislative Assembly together with the Minister of Home Affairs.

2. For the position of Head of First Level Autonomous Region, the names of at least two candidates are submitted to the President of the Republic by the Local Legislative Assembly through the Minister of Home Affairs and the President decides which one of them is to be appointed. From this provision of the Law it is clear that the selected Head of the Autonomous Region is both an elected official (by the Local Legislative Assembly) — and thus by proxy by the people — and an appointed official (by the President as the Chief Executive of the Republic).

3. For the position of the head of a Second Level Autonomous Region, the basic procedures are the same with the difference that it is the Governor/Head of First Level Autonomous Region who scrutinizes the candidates together with the Second Level Legislative Assembly and the Minister of Home Affairs — rather than the President — decides which of the two candidates submitted will be appointed.

4. The head of First and Second Levels Autonomous Regions is appointed for a term of five years and is eligible for immediate reelection and appointment for another term.

Considering the importance of the position of the head of his region as an elected official and his role as the representative of the Central Government in the region, the Basic Law also has provisions for the prohibitions from which he must refrain, namely:

1. to intentionally perform acts which are detrimental to the interests of the State, the Government, the Region and the people;
2. to own business enterprises;
3. to engage in professions which will give him material benefits if the professions have a direct connection with his region;
4. to act as attorney at law in the court of the land.

In safeguarding the interests of the State, the Government, the Region and the people, the Basic Law also provides for reasons which might

cause the head of the region to either resign or to be discharged from office. Obviously if a regional head resigns he is doing it voluntarily. However, in the case of being discharged from office — which is done by the appointing authority, namely the President for the head of First Level Region and the Minister of Home Affairs for the head of Second Level Region — the following reasons explain why:

1. because of death,
2. at one's own request,
3. one's term of office comes to an end and his successor has been sworn in,
4. has provenly violated the terms of his oath of office,
5. if a man is considered to no longer meet the qualifications as set by the Basic Law,
6. if he has been known to engage in activities which are not permitted by law,
7. other objective considerations.

In short, reasons for dismissal can be political professional and/or ethical in nature.

The Local Legislative Assembly. Provisions for the composition, membership and leadership of the Local Legislative Assembly as well as other matters such as the oath of office and prohibitions to be observed by members of the Assembly are found in a Law promulgated specifically for that purpose.

Rules and regulations governing such matters as financial remunerations for the members of the Assembly are stipulated in Local Regulation drafted by the Assembly and submitted to the Minister of Home Affairs for approval before it comes into effect.

The members of the Local Legislative Assembly have the following rights:

1. to study the proposed budget of the local government,
2. to pose questions to the executive branch of the local government,
3. to ask for information,
4. to make proposed amendments to draft Local Rules and Regulations,
5. to initiate the drafting of certain Local Rules and Regulations,
6. to look into the implementation of Local Government policies as carried out, for example, by the Dinas.

On the other side of the coin, the members of the Local Legislative Assembly and the Assembly as an institution, has the following obligations:

1. to defend, maintain and practice the teachings of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution,
2. to uphold and implement to the highest possible level the Basic

Guidelines of the State Policy and other national interests as decided upon by the People's Consultative Assembly⁽¹⁰⁾ and to show total obedience to other rules and regulations of the State,

3. together with the Head of the Region decide the Budget of the Regional Government and to pass Local Regulations for the interest of the region concerned and to implement other rules and regulations issued by the Central Government but whose implementations have been delegated to the Local Government.
4. To be responsive to the living aspirations of the people in the region bearing mind development programmes which the Central Government has decided to carry out.

Sources of Revenue of the Local Government. It is common knowledge that one of the cornerstones of effective and responsible application of the principles of decentralization is the capability of local governments to generate funds to finance their numerous activities. Indonesia is no exception in this respect. In fact, capability of local governments to generate their own sources of revenues is one of the main criteria for the creation and development of autonomous regions in Indonesia.

There are three major classifications of the sources of revenues for local governments in Indonesia, namely:

1. Those which are of purely local origin such as different kinds of local taxes, local retributions, income from enterprises owned by the local government and other legally sanctioned sources of revenues.
2. Revenue coming from the Central Government which are primarily given in the form of various subsidies.
3. Other revenues as determined by law.

Administrative Territories. Within the framework of the implementation of the deconcentration principles, the territory of the Republic of Indonesia is divided administratively into provinces and the Nation's Capital. Each province is in turn sub divided into kabupaten (district) and municipalities. A kabupaten and municipality is further divided into kecamatan (sub district).

If conditions and development so require, administrative territories within a kabupaten can be created and such a territory is known as kota administratif (administrative town). An administrative town is, of course, not autonomous and the best manifestation of such a status is the absence of a local legislative assembly. The creation of administrative towns is done through the issuance of a Government Regulation⁽¹¹⁾ especially promulgated for that purpose.

In the government system of Indonesia, there are five types of administrative territories whose heads are Central Government appointed officials. They are:

1. Province, headed by a governor who at the same time is the head of a First Level Autonomous Region, including in this case the Nation's Capital City of Jakarta.
 2. Kabupaten, headed by a bupati who at the same time is the head of a Second Level Autonomous Region.
 3. Kotamadya (Municipality) headed by a Walikota (City mayor) and this is at the same time a Second Level Autonomous Region having its own Local Legislative Assembly.
 4. Kota Administratif (Administrative town) headed by a town mayor and such towns are to be found within kabupatens.
 5. Kacamatan (Sub district) headed by a camat (Sub district head) and it is to be found within both kotamadya and kota administratif.
- Upward lines of responsibilities of those officials are as follows:

1. A camat is responsible to a bupati, or to a city mayor or to a town mayor.
2. A town mayor is responsible to a bupati.
3. A city mayor is responsible to a governor.
4. A bupati is responsible to a governor.
5. A governor is responsible to the President of the Republic through the Minister of Home Affairs.

It should be pointed out at this juncture that a governor, who, as has been seen, is at the same time the Head of a First Level Region, utilizes the apparatus of the First Level Autonomous Local Government in discharging his responsibilities. The same principle applies to the Bupati in his capacity as the Head of a Second Level Autonomous Region. It is also true with a City Mayor. A town mayor and a camat each has its own apparatus to enable him to perform his assigned duties and responsibilities.

Village Administration.

There is no denying that village administration is and will continue to be important in local government system in Indonesia. It is so important in fact that Basic Law No. 5, 1974 stipulates that matters regarding village administration will be regulated by Law.⁽¹²⁾ It has been shown earlier that there are 63,410 desa (villages) in Indonesia where the majority of Indonesians reside and their livelihood is earned there. In view of the fact that the majority of Indonesians live in villages — and presumably will continue to do so in the foreseeable future — the Central Government considers the promulgation of a legal basis for village administration very important. Such legal basis is to be found in Basic Law No. 5, 1979 on Village Administration. With the enactment of this Law on December 1, 1979, all previously existing Laws on village administration were declared void.

Village administration in Indonesia performs activities of the lowest

organ of the Government. Its head is responsible to a camat, regardless whether the camat, as head of kecamatan is responsible to a bupati, a walikotamadya (city mayor) or wali kota administratif (administrative town mayor).

There are two types of village administration in Indonesia, namely:

1. Pemerintahan Desa, a desa being the lowest (third) level autonomous region within a Second Level Autonomous Region.
2. Pemerintahan Kelurahan, a kelurahan being the smallest administrative territory under a camat in a township.

Pemerintahan Desa. A pemerintahan desa consists of the Desa chief and the Desa Consultative Unit. In performing its duties and responsibilities, the pemerintahan desa is assisted by a Desa secretariat and the dusun (sub village) chiefs. The village chief is elected through the mechanism of a universal suffrage system and all the villagers who have reached the age of 17 years or who are/have married are eligible to vote.

A village chief serves for a period of eight years and is eligible for immediate reelection for another term.

It has been seen that the village chief is assisted by a village consultative unit whose members are composed of the heads of dusuns and other recognized leaders of the community.

Pemerintahan Kelurahan. A kelurahan can be created in the Nation's Capital, provincial capital, capital of kabupaten, municipalities, administrative towns and other population centers by the issuance of a decision to that effect by the Minister of Home Affairs.

There are, of course certain criteria to be considered for such an action such as area, number of population and other factors deemed appropriate by the Minister of Home Affairs.

A kelurahan administration consists of the chief of kelurahan (the lurah) heads of lingkungan sub divisions of kelurahan) and the kelurahan secretariat. It should be noted that a kelurahan administration does not have a consultative unit as in the case of a pemerintahan desa.

Future Trends.

To try to predict future trends as far as local government in Indonesia is concerned is by no means easy. As in any human undertaking, hind sight is always easier as compared to any futuristic analysis. In trying to project what might attain in Indonesia, therefore, the author uses certain indicators which are historical, political, developmental and administrative in nature.

It is a historical fact that to strengthen nationalistic sentiments, local customs, traditions and unique characteristics are considered not as impediments but rather as a source of societal and national enrichment.

At the political level, it is a political commitment and determination, if not obsession, to maintain the unitary nature of the state, come what may and at all cost, while at the same time promote effective and responsible decentralization in the act of governing.

If Indonesia's three successive — and successful — development plans are any guide, it is easy to see that no effort will be spared in bringing about equitable distribution of development activities throughout the country. Such a strategy is obvious whether one talks about political development, or economic development or socio-cultural development and other areas of developmental activities and programmes.

Administratively, the very nature of Indonesia as the world's largest archipelago dictates intensification of efforts to hasten the advent of strong and viable local government in Indonesia. Administrative reform efforts which have been continuously carried out and intensified in Indonesia since 1966 — the year when the present New Order government came to power — all point to the fact that all approaches used both for institutional and capacity building purposes are geared to strengthen the entire machinery of the government and by no means limiting them only to the central government.

The one and only conclusion that can be drawn, therefore, is that one can hope to see greater effort by the government to strengthen its local government throughout the country down to the lowest level because given the nation's aspirations and ideology, the Indonesians won't have it otherwise.

NOTES

- (1) According to the 1980 Population Census.
- (2) The five guiding principles of Pancasila are: Belief in the Almighty God, Humanism, Indonesian Unity, Democracy based on Consultation/Representation and Social Justice for all the people of Indonesia.
- (3) Second paragraph of the 1945 Constitution. Translation by the author.
- (4) Ibid., paragraph four. Translation by the author.
- (5) The Law is known as Basic Law No. 5, 1974 titled "Basic Law on Local Government."
- (6) Quoted by H. H. van Heldsdinger, Editor, *Mission Interrupted* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1945), p. 1.
- (7) George McT. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1952), p. 2.
- (8) Prof. Dr. Ir. Sayoga, *Prisma*, No. 3, VIth year, March, 1977. The exchange rate of the US dollar to Rupiah was 1: 360.00.
- (9) Central Java Government Publication No. 59 of 1976.
- (10) The People's Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat) is constitutionally the supreme organ of the State being the embodiment of democracy that rests with the people. It has three main functions, namely: to promulgate the Constitution, to elect the President and Vice President of the Republic and to formulate the Basic Guidelines of State Policy known in Indonesia as the Garis-Garis Besar Haluan Negara.
- (11) The hierarchy of legal products in Indonesia is as follows: The 1945 Constitution, Decision of the People's Consultative Assembly, Law, Government Regulation, Presidential Decision, and Presidential Instruction. Lower ranking organs of the government and lower ranking officials issue operational decisions based on the appropriate legal product according to the above hierarchy.
- (12) Article 88 of Basic Law No. 5, 1974.