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Preventing The Politicisation of Corruption Crime Law Enforcement Based on Local Wisdom

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Abstract

This study focuses on the phenomenon of politicised law enforcement in corruption cases during election years, where legal actions are suspected of being used as political tools to weaken opponents and maintain power. Consequently, law enforcement is perceived as "by order" and heavily influenced by vested interests. This entanglement between politics and law is attributed to a lack of integrity and moral values among the involved actors, further undermining democratic practices and justice. This study analyses how the politicisation of law occurs in the electoral context and its impact on law enforcement and proposes a solution to prevent the politicisation of corruption law enforcement through local wisdom-based approaches. This research employs a socio-legal method, analysing secondary data from various corruption cases exposed ahead of the 2014, 2019, and 2024 elections. This analysis includes literature reviews, investigative reports, and data from law enforcement agencies. Findings indicate a consistent pattern where corruption law enforcement involving public officials tends to intensify as elections approach, suggesting efforts to politicise the law. Such politicisation negatively impacts genuine anti-corruption efforts by casting the law as a political instrument rather than a means of upholding justice, thus degrading the dignity of law enforcement and affecting public perception. Taking Malaysia as an example in successfully improving its Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), this study underscores the importance of strengthening integrity by instilling moral values rooted in local wisdom, such as "Hasta Brata" and the "nine anti-corruption values." These efforts are essential to establishing dignified democratic practices and fair law enforcement that are free from corruption, collusion, and nepotism.



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INTRODUCTION

The politicisation of law in enforcing anti-corruption measures is expected to recur, especially as election years approach, undermining public trust in law enforcement (Saifulloh et al., 2025). This situation highlights the urgent need for alternative approaches to prevent legal politicisation while reinforcing the integrity of law enforcement officials. One promising approach is to incorporate local wisdom values that society has long upheld, establishing a foundation of integrity for law enforcers and public officials. These values encompass ethical norms that provide a unique perspective for combating political corruption (Mawarti et al., 2023, p. 357). Without a solid foundation of ethics, morality, and virtue, politics and democracy will potentially become mere formal procedures devoid of substance, leading to pragmatism and transactionalism (R. Dewi & Widyatmoko, 2024).

The local wisdom approach, exemplified by the *hasta brata* principle in Javanese culture, offers guiding values for ideal leadership. *Hasta brata* emphasises eight qualities of a good leader (Riyanto, 2023), patience and compassion like the ocean, motivation like the moon, and guidance like the stars. Internalising these principles can serve as a moral compass for public officials, enabling them to exercise their authority with integrity and a deep sense of responsibility (Shobirin et al., 2024). Through this perspective, the execution of elections and democracy in Indonesia can foster a generation of leaders who uphold trust, reinforce justice, and honour democratic values (Iswanto, 2020).

In practice, a democracy tarnished by corrupt actions—such as the politicisation of anti-corruption law enforcement—will produce equally corrupt (Singh, 2022). Fair and transparent law enforcement is essential in the fight against corruption; however, various obstacles persist, from lacking integrity among law enforcers to political interference (Henschke et al., 2020). As Lawrence M. Friedman points out, the effectiveness of law enforcement depends on the alignment between legal substance, legal structure, and legal culture, which require stable social, economic, and political conditions.

The consequences of legal politicisation are significant: it erodes public trust, fosters political tension, and hampers genuine anti-corruption efforts. Rather than focusing on effectively tackling corruption cases, resources and energy are redirected for political purposes (Baidi et al., 2023), undermining the role of law as an instrument of justice and a means to combat corruption. In this context, the intricate relationship between politics, corruption, and law enforcement in Indonesia becomes apparent.

From 2004 to January 2022, a total of 1,519 suspects had been charged with corruption offences in Indonesia, of which 521 had political ties, including members of legislative bodies (DPR RI and DPRD) and regional leaders (governors, mayors, and regents). Specifically, since its inception, the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) has handled 343 cases involving members of DPR and DPRD, 155 cases

involving mayors/regents and their deputies, 35 cases involving heads of institutions or ministries, and 23 cases involving governors. Corruption cases have been prevalent across local governments (54%), provinces (13%), and regencies/cities (41%) (Satriawan & Angela, 2024). Political parties involved include Golongan Karya, Partai Amanat Nasional, Partai Hati Nurani Rakyat, Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan, Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa, Nasional Demokrat, Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, and Gerakan Indonesia Raya (Ansori et al., 2022). This data reveals that law enforcement against corruption frequently intensifies around election cycles, including 2004, 2009, 2014, 2019, and in the lead-up to 2024, giving rise to recurring concerns over the politicisation of anti-corruption law enforcement.

Addressing this issue requires fundamental reforms with a preventive approach rooted in local wisdom, using the internalisation of *hasta brata* values and anti-corruption principles as a strategic step (Suyono, 2023). This study examines the impact of corruption politicisation on public perception and trust in Indonesia's legal system while highlighting the importance of strengthening local values as a moral and ethical foundation for preventing political corruption, particularly the politicisation of anti-corruption law enforcement.

METHOD

This study employs a sociological juridical approach, focusing not on the normative system of regulations but rather on observing public reactions and interactions concerning the implementation of legal norms—commonly referred to as "law in action (M.D., 2019). It highlights how society responds to legal applications, necessitating that researchers understand both legal and social sciences, as well as possess knowledge in social science research (Gray et al., 2024). Conducted during the 2024 election year, this study centres on preventing the politicisation of law enforcement and underscores the importance of separating law enforcement from political interests.

The approach used is legal sociology, which examines law in practice, uncovering the objectives and values that technical legal procedures may obscure. Legal sociology reminds people of the purpose of law and identifies obstacles in its (Satjipto Rahardjo, 2006). This study gathered data from online media, news releases, anti-corruption agencies, and government bodies like the KPK, along with annual reports from ICW, TII, and KPK. Data collection techniques included library research, online media reviews, and observation of trends in politicisation and law enforcement during the 2014, 2019, and 2024 elections. Data analysis was conducted in three stages: data reduction, data display, and data verification, and findings are presented in interview excerpts and tables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implication of the Politicisation of Law Enforcement in the Case of Corruption Crime in Election Year

"Fiat justitia ruat caelum," or "Let justice be done, though the heavens fall", implies that law should be enforced regardless of circumstances, even during elections. However, political power often erodes legal integrity. While legal theories and ideal principles are taught in universities, they are frequently diminished in real-world application by political interests (Putra & Linda, 2022). The political interests often obstruct law enforcement in Indonesia, especially in regards to corruption crimes.

The main functions of criminal law are prevention and enforcement. Preventive efforts aim to deter individuals from committing crimes, while enforcement seeks to rehabilitate offenders so they can reintegrate into society (Oktaryal & Hastuti, 2021). Criminal acts, whether crimes or violations, are punishable because criminal law serves to maintain public order, specifically protecting individual, state, and societal interests. Corruption, however, is a complex social phenomenon often clouded by grey areas, making it difficult to address solely through legal approaches (Khoiri et al., 2024). In countries like India, corruption is seen as an embedded reality with contested boundaries, systematic characteristics, and an unclear beginning or end. Some view it as a broad national issue, while others consider it a cultural problem reflected within state institutions (Andini et al., 2023).

In terms of the judicialisation of politics, this phenomenon can be observed in enforcing anti-corruption laws. Hirschl describes the judicialisation of politics as a manoeuvre by political elites to leverage the Constitution as a political tool to advance controversial public policies (Koncewicz, 2024). This approach similarly appears in anti-corruption law enforcement when corruption cases are used to target political opponents to advance a particular political agenda. Such practices shift the perception of law enforcement from a fair, independent mechanism to a political instrument. Consequently, public scepticism grows regarding the legal system's ability to operate without political influence (Huda et al., 2023). This lack of trust weakens anti-corruption efforts and threatens Indonesia's social and political stability.

A notable example of law enforcement politicisation during Indonesia's regional elections (Pilkada) is the 2018 case of Dirwan Mahmud, the Regent of Bengkulu Selatan, who was arrested by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) for alleged bribery involving five infrastructure (Oktaryal & Hastuti, 2021). Another case occurred in the same year involving Ahmad Hidayat Mus, a gubernatorial candidate in North Maluku, accused of corruption in the Bobong Airport land acquisition, resulting in an estimated state loss of IDR 3.4 billion (Sidiq & Wahyuni, 2024). These cases highlight how corruption law enforcement near

election years often fuels perceptions of political motives rather than impartial justice.

Furthermore, Surveys and reports from various civil society organisations reinforce these perceptions. For instance, a report from the Indonesian Survey Institute (LSI) indicates a significant decline in public trust in the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) following several controversial decisions allegedly influenced by political interests (Larasati et al., 2024). Addressing this issue requires comprehensive reform within Indonesia's legal system. Law enforcement agencies must be ensured independence and free from political interference. Transparency and accountability in legal processes should also be strengthened to rebuild public trust (Bambang Sumantri et al., 2024). Additionally, legal education focused on integrity and ethics should be bolstered, instilling anti-corruption values to ensure that future generations of legal enforcers can uphold their duties with professionalism and fairness. The following are examples of the politicisation of law:

1. Engineering-the-Law Phenomenon

Current leadership poses a serious threat to the integrity of law following the 2024 elections (Amancik et.al, 2024). Many argue that the law, which should serve as the foundation of justice in the state, is instead being manipulated to justify unethical actions by those in power. The Constitutional Court's (MK) decision to partially approve the judicial review of Article 169 letter q of Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning Elections (Zaman et al., 2024), which paves the way for the president's child to become a vice-presidential candidate, further reinforces this perception (R. S. Dewi et al., 2024). Conflicts of interest in this ruling were compounded by ethical sanctions imposed on Anwar Usman (Novilia et al., 2024), the MK chairman at the time, by the Honorary Council of the Constitutional Court (MKMK). The Honorary Council for Election Organiser (DKPP) also issued a stern warning to the chairman of the General Elections Commission (KPU) and its commissioners for registering Prabowo-Gibran as candidates without revising the KPU Regulation to stay in harmony with the MK's ruling (Arkida & Sumarlam, 2024).

Despite various violations and sanctions announced by DKPP and Bawaslu, many believe these sanctions lack a deterrent effect and have had minimal impact on the election process. Findings by the Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence (Kontras) and the Indonesian Corruption Watch (ICW) identifying at least 310 alleged violations in the 2024 election further fuel public suspicion regarding the legitimacy of the election process (Sutopo et al., 2024). The flaws detected from the beginning of the candidate registration process highlight that, in this era, the law is being used as a tool to justify political interests rather than uphold justice.

2. Discourse on Continuity

In the current political landscape, it has taken over two decades to revive a governance style reminiscent of the New Order era, emphasising the establishment of political dynasties. The General Elections Commission (KPU) declared the Prabowo-Gibran pair as the victors of the 2024 presidential election, with 58.58% of the vote. This first-round success is often cited as proof of majority support and is frequently used to overlook issues within the election process (Astuti & Setyarini, 2024).

However, the KPU's final count does not mark the end of the public's duty to ensure fair and transparent elections (Saifulloh et al., 2025). Strengthening civil society networks has become increasingly vital as relying on opposition parties in parliament has proven unpredictable. The constitutional values intended to build a just nation that respects human rights are increasingly neglected by those in power (Fauzan & Arifta, 2020). The 2024 election, which was hoped to produce leaders truly representing the people's will, ended in disappointment due to political manoeuvres and alleged fraud. Hopes of establishing an ideal rule of law are fading amid a government rife with corruption, collusion, and nepotism (Jun, 2024).

3. Law Enforcement Approaching Election Year

The exposure of corruption cases often intensifies in the lead-up to election years (T. P. Power, 2018). Data reveals a trend in anti-corruption enforcement during these politically charged times. Indonesian Corruption Watch (ICW) data highlights this trend, with a surge in corruption crackdowns preceding the elections in 2014, 2019, and 2023;

Table 1: Corruption Eradication Trend

Election Year	2014	2019	2023
Total Corruption Cases	629	1328	Rp 5.29 Trillion
Total Suspects	271	580	Rp 8.4 Trillion
State Loss	791	1695	Rp 28.4 Trillion

Source; Authors, 2024

The Table indicates that while the number of corruption cases and suspects decreased in 2019, the losses to the state increased. Although there is a general upward trend in corruption cases each year, cases involving political officials become especially prominent during election years. Data collected through October 2019 shows that the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) conducted 47 operations during the 2018-2019 period, with 31 operations in 2018 and 16 in 2019.

These operations resulted in the arrest of 231 individuals, though not all were formally charged (T. Power & Warburton, 2020).

Looking specifically at the involvement of local government officials (Yulianingsih & Algasahri, 2020), there were 27 cases involving municipal or regional governments, with 20 cases occurring in 2018 and seven in 2019 (Afifulloh et al., 2022). In addition to the case involving the Regent of Indramayu, bribery cases were tied to projects involving the Regent of Bengkayang, Suryatman Gidot, and the Regent of Muara Enim, Ahmad Yani. Most corruption cases at the local government level were related to bribery for infrastructure projects and rewards for securing tender victories. In 2018, corruption cases peaked at 260, with members of the House of Representatives (DPR) and the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) being the most frequently involved actors, accounting for a total of 103 cases (Tirto., 2018).

The legal framework for combating corruption in Indonesia is outlined in 13 articles under Law Number 31 of 1999, which was amended by Law Number 20 of 2001. These articles classify corruption offences into seven categories: state financial losses, bribery, embezzlement, extortion, fraud, conflicts of interest in procurement, and gratuities (Boemiya, 2023). This comprehensive legal framework is essential, considering that corruption threatens the economy and erodes the nation's moral values (Hufron & Fikri, 2024). Corruption is considered an extraordinary crime, yet efforts to recover state losses remain far from proportional.

The disclosure of corruption cases in election years often carries a political undertone, especially in cases involving individuals with specific political affiliations, such as Anas Urbaningrum and Johnny Plate.

Table 2: High-Ranking State Officials and Legislative Members Involved in Corruption Crimes

Suspect	Case	Official Position	Election Year	
Atut Chosiyah Alleged Corruption in				
	Medical Equipment	Inactive Governor		
	Procurement in	of Banten, Former	2014	
	Banten Provincial	Chairperson of	2014	
	Government 2011-	Golkar DPP		
	2013			
Tubagus	Alleged Money			
Chaeri Laundering and		Treasurer of		
Wardana	Corruption in Banten	Golkar DPD	2014	
	Medical Equipment	Banten		
	Procurement			

Sutan Bhatoegana	Alleged Corruption in Budget Amendments at the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources 2013	Former Chairperson of DPR RI Commission VII, Democrat Party Faction	2014
Jero Wacik	Alleged Extortion at the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources	Deputy Secretary General of the Democratic Party DPP	2014
Suryadharma Ali	Alleged Corruption in Hajj Management at the Ministry of Religious Affairs 2012-2013	Minister of Religious Affairs (Chairperson of PPP)	2014
Bambang W. Soeharto	Alleged Bribery in Handling Land Certificate Forgery Case in District Court	Chairperson of Election Winning Board, Hanura Party	2014
Annas Maamun	Alleged Bribery Related to Forest Conversion Revisions in Riau 2014	Chairperson of Golkar DPD Riau Province	2014
Fuad Amin Imron	Alleged Bribery Related to Natural Gas Sales in Bangkalan	Chairperson of Gerindra Party DPC	2014
Imam Nahrawi	Distribution of KONI Grant Funds through the Ministry of Youth and Sports 2018	PKB Cadre	2019
Idrus Marham	Alleged Bribery in Riau-1 Coal-Fired Power Plant	Golkar Cadre	2019
Juliari Batubara	Alleged Bribery in Covid-19 Social Assistance at the Ministry of Social Affairs	Minister of Social Affairs, PDIP Cadre	2020

Edhy Prabowo	Alleged Corruption in Granting Lobster Seed Export Permits	Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Gerindra Cadre	2023
Johnny Plate	Alleged Corruption in the Provision of 4G BTS and BAKTI Kominfo Infrastructure	Member of DPR RI 2014-2019, Secretary General of Nasdem DPP	2023
Syahrul Yasin Limpo	Alleged Extortion in Position Trading and Gratuities	Minister of Agriculture	2023

Source; Author, 2024

From the Table above, three points can be concluded:

- a. Corruption perpetrators come from various political parties such as Golkar, PDIP, PKB, Hanura, Nasdem, and Gerindra, holding positions as state officials, including governor, regent, minister, and members of the DPR.
- b. The types of corruption offences commonly committed relate to financial losses to the state or national economy and bribery.
- c. Law enforcement actions against these perpetrators are often politically charged, especially as elections approach.

Regarding corruption offenders in the cases mentioned, specific articles under corruption crimes apply to actions causing financial harm to the state or economy, as outlined in Articles 2 and 3, and to bribery, as stipulated in Articles 5 through 12 of the Corruption Crimes, detailed as follows

- a. Acts of corruption causing financial harm to the state or economy (Article2, Paragraph (1) and Article 3)
 - These two articles prohibit anyone from deliberately acting unlawfully to enrich themselves, another person, or a corporation in a way that could harm the state's financial standing or economy (Olsen & Bernal-Bermúdez, 2024). Article 3 further prohibits similar acts but specifically requires the misuse of authority, opportunity, or available resources due to one's position or office. A real-world example of this provision is the e-KTP (electronic ID card) project corruption case, where several government officials were found guilty of collusion to enrich themselves through budget mark-ups on the e-KTP project. In this case, the values of accountability and honesty were violated by the perpetrators, ultimately causing substantial losses to the state (Jardhan et al., 2024).
- b. Acts of bribery

Bribery is one of the most common forms of corruption among state officials and law enforcers. Bribery provisions are covered in Articles 5 to 12 of the Corruption Crimes. For example, there was a bribery case involving officials from the Directorate General of Taxes who accepted bribes to reduce corporate taxes. This action not only violated the law but also disregarded the ethical values which public servants should exemplify.

Regarding the politicisation of law enforcement in corruption cases, political elites with vested interests in political dynamics often use their parties to achieve personal or group goals (Nemčok et al., 2023). There is a tendency for the politicisation of anti-corruption law enforcement to involve political figures with strategies to influence election outcomes. This approach is commonly used to eliminate political opponents by employing corruption as part of black campaigns or negative campaigns. Such actions are not always based on factual evidence; instead, they often involve manipulating narratives to shape specific public opinions. Furthermore, legal politicisation can even involve a conspiracy with law enforcement to target political rivals (Andre Yosua M & Tegar Mulia, 2024).

To combat corruption and the politicisation of law enforcement, preventive measures are essential as a strategic step (Murdani et al., 2024). At the same time, repressive law enforcement must be pursued for the sake of law and justice rather than corrupt enforcement serving particular interests (by order). There is a need for state officials, public officials, and law enforcers of integrity to prevent similar cases from recurring (Ramadhan et al., 2024).

4. Political Interests as a Driving Factor for the Politicisation of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement and Its Influence on Public Perception

Political interests significantly shape actions and decisions, influenced by the culture and ideology of each (Mukhlis et al., 2024). In Indonesia, political interests often drive corruption within political parties to secure electoral victories or maintain power (Qian et al., 2024). This phenomenon is evident in social media and news coverage that highlights political issues, including corruption, impacting public political participation and awareness (Marchetti & Stanziano, 2024). The interests of political elites are frequently linked to conspiracy theories that surface during election periods, illustrating how political agendas can influence corrupt actions. The results of the Indonesian Corruption Watch (ICW) investigation found that at least 138 candidates in the 2024 regional elections were suspected of being involved in corruption cases. The number is spread from candidates for Governor & Deputy Governor, Mayor & Deputy Mayor, and Regent & Deputy Regent. Candidates related to corruption cases include suspects, defendants, convicts, witnesses, and those mentioned in the trial (Khoiri et al., 2024).

During election years, the public often becomes more sceptical of law enforcement, especially in cases involving political figures or public officials, fearing that the law is being manipulated for certain interests. For example, delays by agencies like the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) in handling corruption cases close to elections reinforce public perceptions of politicised law enforcement (Umam, 2021). This perception is shaped by several factors: *Personal Effect*—individual perceptions of selective law enforcement in handling corruption cases; *Cultural Effect*—the influence of culture and education, fostering the belief that the law serves certain interests; and *Physical Effect*—socio-political instability reinforcing the perception of a politicised legal system. To ensure neutrality amid conflicting interests, Indonesian leaders are encouraged to adopt values rooted in local wisdom, such as the *hasta brata* principles from Javanese culture, which emphasise ideal leadership traits like wisdom and justice (Mibtadin, 2022).

In a democratic context, leadership neutrality and the independence of power are crucial for ensuring fairness in political processes. Local wisdom, such as the *hasta brata* in Javanese culture, which teaches eight principles of ideal leadership, serves as guidance for leaders to remain neutral and act in the people's interest, particularly in election years (Mibtadin, 2022). Principles of *hasta brata*, like patience, wisdom, and justice, offer direction for leaders to avoid political interests that could compromise the neutrality of authority (Selvarajah et al., 2017).

Furthermore, countries like Malaysia and India use their traditional values to strengthen public trust in leaders and government institutions (Minh & Nguyễn Anh, 2024). In Malaysia, the concept of *Budi Bicara* emphasises the importance of wisdom in exercising power, encouraging officials to act without corrupting political influence (Jang et al., 2020). India, too, employs the *Panchsheel* philosophy to maintain harmony and justice, serving as a moral guide for its leaders. By adopting these local values, Indonesia's leadership could strive for greater independence, sustain legitimacy in the public eye, and foster a clean, transparent political process, even amidst the pressures of election cycles.

Internalising "Hasta Brata" Local Wisdom Values and the "Nine Anti-Corruption Values" to Prevent the Politicisation of Law Enforcement

Local wisdom has been embedded in community life long before the establishment of formal legal norms. It has been passed down through generations, often holding significant cultural and spiritual value. The above discussion leads to three roles of local wisdom:

- 1. Providing a guiding principle for state officials (executive) and legislators to avoid politicising law for political purposes.
- 2. Serving as a reference in making political decisions to ensure they align with ethical and moral standards.
- 3. Supporting the integrity of law enforcers in carrying out their duties and authority with respect for legal and moral obligations.

This cultural and local wisdom perspective should be preserved and instilled in the nation's leaders across all branches—executive, legislative, and judiciary—so that local wisdom becomes an integral part of national governance. To sustain these values, the state and society must collaborate to reinforce local wisdom, particularly through implementing *Hasta Brata* and the nine anti-corruption values. *Hasta Brata* comes from Sanskrit. Hasta means eight and Brata is behaviour or self-control. It means eight manners or guidelines (Werang et al., 2024). It is a symbol of leadership in the eight elements of nature: earth, sun, fire, ocean, sky, wind, moon, and stars. This collaboration can foster a culture of integrity and accountability in governance, helping to resist political manipulation in law enforcement practices.

In Historical Approach, *Hasta Brata* is a philosophical concept of leadership derived from the epic Ramayana, one of the ancient literary works of India thought to have appeared between the 5th and 4th centuries BC. The concept was delivered by Sri Rama, an idealised figure in Hindu tradition, to his brother, Bharata, as advice to lead the Kingdom of Ayodhya wisely (Das, 2024). The concept was later adopted into Javanese culture through a process of acculturation when Hinduism and Ramayana literature entered the archipelago around the 4th and 5th centuries AD, especially through kingdoms such as Kutai and Tarumanegara. In Javanese culture, Hasta Brata not only guides leadership ethics but is also adapted to local values, making it a powerful philosophy for creating harmony and justice in governance (Sharma & Saxena, 2024).

1. Internalising "Hasta Brata" Local Wisdom Values for State Leaders

Hasta Brata represents eight core principles of leadership, passed down from Sri Rama to his brother Bharata when he was to be crowned as the king of Ayodhya (Wilaksito et al., 2024). These eight principles are derived from the attributes of natural elements and serve as a guide for every leader:

- a. Indra Brata: An ideal leader is likened to rain, constantly striving to bring prosperity to the people, creating calm in every action, and radiating authority.
- b. Yama Brata: A leader should emulate the qualities of Yama, the deity of justice, having the courage to uphold justice according to the law to protect the public.
- c. Surya Brata: A leader should embody the traits of the sun, be capable of inspiring and empowering others to face life's challenges, and serve as a source of energy and encouragement.
- d. Candra Brata: An ideal leader should be like the moon, bringing enlightenment to those in darkness or ignorance, with a calming and sympathetic presence that makes people feel secure and at ease.

- e. Bayu Brata: A leader should be like the wind, always present among the people, bringing refreshment and actively engaging with the community to understand their lives.
- f. Kuvera Brata: A leader must be wise in managing state finances, avoiding wastefulness, and consistently seeking to enhance public welfare without harming the state or the people.
- g. Baruna Brata: An ideal leader should have a perspective as vast as the ocean, capable of handling various disturbances with wisdom and leading with profound insight
- h. Agni Brata: A leader must possess noble qualities like fire, encouraging public participation in development, be steadfast in principles, and be firm in upholding justice without discrimination.

The *Hasta Brata* principles, rooted in tradition and culture, emphasise wisdom, justice, and responsibility (Safi' et al., 2024). These eight ideal qualities are expected of leaders, particularly state officials in the executive, judiciary, and legislative branches. Strengthening these values encourages leaders to view themselves as trustworthy public servants who exercise their authority in the interests of the nation. This approach is particularly relevant in addressing the phenomenon where state officials or public figures show bias in exercising power, often demonstrating loyalty to political parties over national interests (Lee & Jones-Jang, 2024).

One key factor in maintaining the quality and integrity of democracy, especially during election years, is upholding the neutrality of those in power (Mellani Mugia Adhita, 2023). The independence of power is tested in election years, marked by conflicts of interest that can lead to abuse of authority (Da Silva et al., 2024). Article 17 of Law No. 30/2014 concerning Government Administration categorises abuse of authority into actions that exceed authority, mix personal and official authority, or act arbitrarily (C et al., 2024). These behaviours become particularly possible during election years when the influence among political parties impacts public perception (Taqwa et al., 2023).

Local wisdom, like *Hasta Brata* in Javanese culture, which teaches eight principles of ideal leadership, guides leaders to remain neutral and act in the people's interest, especially during politically charged periods (Mibtadin, 2022). The principles of *hasta brata*, including patience, wisdom, and justice, offer leaders guidance on resisting political pressures that could compromise their neutrality (Selvarajah et al., 2017). In the context of regional governance and Indonesia's diversity, local wisdom provides value-based guidelines that shape the relationship between leaders and local communities (Aliyah, 2024). These values help maintain political stability and offer leaders guidance on preserving neutrality amid conflicts of interest.

A preventive approach to curbing the politicisation of law enforcement focuses on preventing corruption through education, outreach, and ongoing bureaucratic reform (Djulaeka et al., 2024). The *Hasta Brata* values, representing wisdom, patience, courage, and integrity, should be reinforced through early internalisation, particularly during state officials' and public leaders' selection or appointment (Harini et al., 2024). This internalisation ensures that leaders not only understand the importance of these values but also embody and apply them in their daily actions, maintaining neutrality and integrity in their roles.

2. Internalising Local Wisdom of "Nine Anti-Corruption Values" for Law Enforcement Officials

The Indonesian Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) has promoted local wisdom values known as the Nine Anti-Corruption Values: honesty, care, independence, discipline, responsibility, hard work, simplicity, courage, and justice. Internalising these values, especially among law enforcement and public officials, is a crucial preventive approach. These values reflect strong moral and ethical principles embedded with integrity (Faizal et al., 2025). Corruption, collusion, and nepotism can be deterred by instilling these nine anti-corruption values in public officials and law enforcers.

The politicisation of law in enforcing anti-corruption measures often occurs because corruption offences are frequently committed by state officials (executive branch), legislators, and law enforcers, making them the political target of politicised law enforcement in election years. To safeguard the integrity of the law, particularly in the realm of anti-corruption enforcement, both repressive and preventive efforts are essential (Da Silva et al., 2024). According to Marc Ancel's theory on crime prevention, both approaches are necessary, highlighting the importance of balancing repressive and preventive strategies in addressing criminal offences. The repressive approach aims to provide deterrent sanctions for offenders, while the preventive approach focuses on preventing crime through education, outreach, and systematic reform.

Marc Ancel's concept of modern social defence, interpreted as "The prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders," underscores a balanced criminal policy approach known as the "systematic resocialisation of offenders." This concept seeks to uphold offenders' human rights while ensuring they serve their sentences (Silva & Asyiqoh, 2024). Ancel emphasises the importance of a balanced approach for effective crime prevention and enforcement (Machmud et al., 2024). In tackling corruption, both approaches play vital roles:

a. Preventive approach: The internalisation of the nine anti-corruption values is a concrete preventive measure. Values like honesty, responsibility, and justice should be instilled early on in public officials and law enforcement through anti-corruption education. Initiatives such as anti-corruption

- certification for public officials, a strong foundation in professional ethics, and transparency in public financial management are all preventive steps.
- b. Repressive approach: On the repressive side, the Anti-Corruption Law, specifically Articles 2(1) and 3 of Law No. 31 of 1999 as amended by Law No. 20 of 2001, provides the legal basis for prosecuting state officials found guilty of corruption.

In comparison, Malaysia and India serve as relevant examples due to their geographical, cultural, and historical ties with Indonesia. Malaysia emphasises the concept of Budi Bicara, which highlights wise governance and encourages officials to act independently of detrimental political practices. Similarly, India applies the Panchsheel philosophy, promoting harmony and justice as a moral guide for its leaders (Vavouras & Theodosiadis, 2024). These examples demonstrate how traditional values can strengthen public trust and governance (Soleh et al., 2024). In Indonesia, integrating local wisdom, such as Hasta Brata and the "Nine Anti-Corruption Values," offers a pathway to prevent the politicisation of anti-corruption enforcement (Syafi'i et al., 2022). These values can support the creation of a transparent and fair bureaucracy that prioritises public interest, resists political pressures, and ensures law enforcement operates with integrity, justice, and without collusion, corruption, or nepotism.

CONCLUSION

To prevent the politicisation of law enforcement in corruption cases, strategies should go beyond purely repressive law enforcement and encompass comprehensive preventive actions. The internalisation of local wisdom values like hasta brata, which emphasises the traits of an ideal leader, can serve as a guiding framework for public officials and state administrators. Meanwhile, instilling the nine anti-corruption values in law enforcement officers is expected to foster and maintain integrity. Adopting these values has the potential to instil moral and ethical awareness in every decision, thereby discouraging corrupt behaviour. Drawing lessons from Malaysia, strengthening these local values is essential, beginning from education within the family, extending through all levels of formal education, and continuing into training and development for state administrators and law enforcers. A preventive approach that instils local wisdom values is a long-term measure to cultivate an anti-corruption culture in Indonesia. Additionally, implementing transparency, accountability, and public oversight mechanisms provides concrete steps to narrow the space for corrupt behaviour. A collective commitment from all societal elements, including law enforcement, the government, and the general public, is essential to establish a system that supports anticorruption efforts. The combination of fair law enforcement and the use of local wisdom as a moral compass can create an environment that promotes justice and effectively discourages corrupt actions.

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