

**CONTRIBUTION OF THOUGHTS OF ACEH TAMIANG
FIGURES IN BUILDING DEMOCRACY ELECTIONS FREE
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ABSTRACT

The practice of money politics is a serious challenge in the democratic system in Indonesia, including in Aceh Tamiang, which can damage the essence of democracy and worsen the quality of elections. In this case, voters tend to be influenced by material incentives, not by the quality of candidates or the vision and mission offered, which results in reduced election integrity. In addition, social inequality is increasing because only those with material resources can dominate the election process. Aceh Tamiang, as a region with the implementation of Islamic Sharia, has great potential to build a democracy with integrity. This study aims to explore the contribution of the thoughts and strategies of community leaders, such as religious, educational, and traditional leaders, in minimizing the practice of money politics in the area. This research uses an empirical legal research method with a statute approach and case study. The results of the study show that even though there are qanuns that support fair elections, the practice of money politics continues to occur, mainly due to poverty and lack of political education. Religious, educational, and traditional leaders in Aceh Tamiang play an important role in preventing this practice, through voter education, strengthening law enforcement, and transparency of campaign funds, to realize a democracy free from money politics.

Keywords: Aceh Tamiang, Democracy, Election, Money Politics

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INTRODUCTION

The practice of money politics is a serious challenge in the democratic system in Indonesia, including in Aceh Tamiang. Money politics weakens the essence of democracy, namely free and fair participation, because the decision to vote is often influenced by material incentives, not by the quality of the candidate or the vision and mission offered.¹

The practice of money politics is a serious challenge in the democratic system in Indonesia, including in Aceh Tamiang. Money politics weakens the essence of democracy, namely free and fair participation, because the decision to vote is often influenced by material incentives, not by the quality of the candidate or the vision and mission offered. This results in a reduction in the quality of democracy, because voters no longer consider the competence, track record, or partisanship of candidates towards the interests of the people. Instead, they prioritize the financial benefits offered during the campaign or election period.²

This phenomenon also exacerbates the social gap in society, where only those with material resources can dominate the election process, while candidates who are less financially well-off often have difficulty competing.³ This makes elections no longer an event to choose leaders based on quality and vision, but more about material transactions between candidates and voters.

In addition, money politics worsens the image of elections as a healthy democratic process. People who are trapped in the practice of money politics tend to be apathetic towards the political process that is taking place, because they feel that their choices are no longer valued or respected. They become more skeptical of the democratic system and tend to see elections as a stage for transactions, not as an opportunity to improve political and social conditions.⁴

Aceh Tamiang, as part of a region that has special legal privileges with the implementation of Islamic Sharia, has great potential to build a democracy with integrity. However, the facts on the ground show that the practice of money politics

¹ Muchtar, M. (2019). Pengaruh Money Politik terhadap Partisipasi Pemilih dalam Pemilu di Indonesia, *Jurnal Demokrasi*, 15(3), 45-56. Lihat juga Sihombing, I. (2020). Money Politik dan Pengaruhnya terhadap Demokrasi di Aceh, *Jurnal Hukum Politik Aceh*, 22(1), 34-47.

² *Ibid*

³ *Ibid*

⁴ Budi, D. (2021). Praktik Money Politik dan Dampaknya terhadap Kepercayaan Masyarakat terhadap Pemilu di Indonesia, *Jurnal Politik Indonesia*, 19(2), 23-39

still occurs, which not only violates the law but also religious, customary, and educational values.⁵

In the context of Aceh Tamiang, the existence of community leaders such as religious leaders (MPU and dayah ulama), education leaders (MPD), and traditional leaders (MAA) have a great influence on society. Their thoughts and strategies in overcoming the practice of money politics are important keys in building a dignified democracy.

This research is important to understand the contribution of thinking and strategy of figures in Aceh Tamiang in minimizing the practice of money politics. This study is also expected to contribute to the development of local democracy policies based on religious, educational, and customary values.

METHOD

This study uses an empirical legal method. Abdul Kadir Muhammad stated that empirical legal research is a legal research on the application or implementation of normative legal provisions directly in every specific legal event that occurs in society.⁶ The approach used is a statute approach and case study. This type of research is a descriptive qualitative research. This study focuses on Aceh Tamiang as a region that has unique characteristics, namely the application of Islamic law and a social system influenced by religion, customs, and education.

DISCUSSION

Democracy and Elections Free from Money Politics

Democracy is a system of government that upholds the principle of people's participation in decision-making, either directly or through elected representatives. A healthy democracy requires freedom, equality, and transparency in the political process, including elections.

According to Robert A. Dahl, ideal democracy rests on several main pillars, namely equality of voice, effective participation, understanding of information, people's control agenda, and inclusiveness.⁷ In the context of elections, democracy must ensure that every citizen has the same right to vote without any detrimental intervention.

⁵ Tafsir, M. (2020). *Implementasi Syariat Islam dalam Sistem Demokrasi di Aceh: Tantangan dan Peluang*. Jurnal Hukum dan Politik Aceh, 12(2), 101-115.

⁶ Abdulkadir Muhammad, *Hukum dan Penelitian Hukum*, (Bandung: Citra Aditya Bakti, 2004), hal. 134

⁷ Robert A. Dahl, *On Democracy*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.

Elections that are free from money politics reflect the true quality of democracy. Money politics refers to the practice of giving money or other material rewards by candidates or certain parties to influence voters' political choices. This phenomenon not only violates the principle of justice in democracy, but also threatens the legitimacy of the election itself.

According to Larry Diamond, one of the most fundamental principles of democracy is fair competition in elections. Money politics violates this principle because it creates inequality of opportunity among candidates and sacrifices the independence of voters.⁸

If the practice of Money Politics is not resolved, it will have negative impacts on Democracy, including:

1. Damaging Election Integrity: Money politics reduces public trust in the election process.⁹
2. Threatening the Accountability of Elected Leaders: Leaders who are elected through political money tend to be more loyal to the donors than to the people who elected them.¹⁰
3. Increasing Corruption: This practice encourages corruption as elected candidates seek to recoup the costs incurred during the campaign.¹¹

In order to avoid the shackles of money politics practices, political observers provide 3 steps that must be taken, namely:

1. Voter Education: Increasing public awareness of the dangers of money politics through political education.¹²
2. Strengthening Law Enforcement: Tightening supervision and sanctions against perpetrators of money politics.¹³

⁸Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999.

⁹Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, p. 72-76. See also Huntington, Samuel P., *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991, p. 174.

¹⁰Timothy Besley, *Principled Agents? The Political Economy of Good Government*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 45-50. See also Ramlan Surbakti, *Memahami Ilmu Politik*, Jakarta: Grasindo, 1999, p. 140.

¹¹Susan Rose-Ackerman, *Corruption and Government: Causes, Consequences, and Reform*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 91-96. See also Andi Hamzah, *Hukum Pemilu di Indonesia*, Jakarta: Sinar Grafika, 2008, pp. 108-112.

¹²Ramlan Surbakti, *Memahami Ilmu Politik*, (Jakarta: Grasindo, 1999), pp. 152-154.

¹³Andi Hamzah, *Hukum Pemilu di Indonesia*, (Jakarta: Sinar Grafika, 2008), pp. 98-101.

3. Campaign Finance Transparency: Requires candidates to publicly report the sources of campaign funds.¹⁴

Money Politics Practices in Aceh Tamiang

Money politics is the giving of money or other materials by candidates, political parties, or certain parties to influence voters' choices in the election process. This practice harms the integrity of democracy because it ignores the principles of freedom and justice in elections. According to Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning Elections, money politics is included in the category of election violations that can be subject to criminal sanctions.

Empirical studies show that money politics is a fairly widespread phenomenon that occurs in various regions of Indonesia, including Aceh. The main factors that support this practice include:¹⁵

1. Poverty: Many voters receive money for economic reasons.
2. Lack of Political Education: Lack of public understanding of the negative impacts of money politics on the quality of democracy.
3. Patronage Culture: Patron-client relationships are still strong, especially in rural areas.

As a region with special autonomy and the implementation of Islamic law, Aceh faces unique challenges in eradicating money politics. Studies show that even though the qanun has regulated the principles of clean and fair elections, the practice of money politics still occurs. Candidates often give money, basic necessities, or other facilities to gain support.¹⁶

The practice of money politics in Aceh Tamiang reflects a combination of local factors, such as poverty and a strong culture of patronage. Case studies show that:

1. Candidates give money directly or through intermediaries of their campaign teams to the public in the form of " *dawn attacks* ."
2. Political money is often associated with patron-client relations between community leaders and candidates.

¹⁴OECD in report *Financing Democracy: Funding of Political Parties and Election Campaigns and the Risk of Policy Capture* , (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2016), p. 45-48.

Burhanuddin Muhtadi, *Kuasa Uang: Politik Uang dalam Pemilu Pasca-Orde Baru* (Jakarta: Kompas, 2019)

¹⁶Muhammad Nasir dan Teuku May Rudy, "Money Politics dalam Pemilu di Aceh: Studi Kasus Pemilihan Legislatif," *Jurnal Politik Islam*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2020.

3. Supervision by the Election Supervisory Committee (Panwaslu) is hampered by limited resources and evidence.¹⁷
4. Election supervisors received intervention from certain parties.
5. The involvement of law enforcement officers (APH) in money politics practices.
6. Involvement of Village/Village Officials in the practice of money politics.
7. The involvement of election organizers in money politics practices.¹⁸

In response to this challenge, the Aceh Tamiang Independent Election Commission (KIP) has taken various strategic steps to eradicate the practice of money politics. KIP actively socializes the dangers of money politics to voters, both in the General Election and the Regional Election. They continue to strive to increase public awareness, especially the younger generation, to reject the invitation of money politics in order to create better infrastructure development and public welfare.

KIP also opened a complaint service (helpdesk) at the KIP Aceh Tamiang office, where voters and political participants can consult about efforts to create honest and fair elections without money politics. In addition, in the digital era, KIP utilizes social media to disseminate information quickly and effectively, while increasing public supervision of this practice.

KIP also works with Panwaslih, Bawaslu, elements of the police, the prosecutor's office, and community leaders to create positive changes in the democratic system. This collaborative step aims to produce leaders who uphold integrity, reject money politics, and are able to build Aceh Tamiang to be more advanced. With this strategy, KIP Aceh Tamiang hopes to reduce, or even eliminate, the practice of money politics in every stage of the election and regional elections.¹⁹

Views and Strategies of Religious, Educational and Traditional Figures of Aceh Tamiang in Minimizing Money Political Practices"

a. Views of Religious Figures

¹⁷ Adha Kusuma dan Hafizh, "Fenomena Politik Uang dalam Pilkada Aceh Tamiang 2017," *Jurnal Demokrasi Lokal*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 2018. Lihat juga Putra, Muhammad Asri, "Analisis Money Politics dalam Pilkada Aceh Tamiang," *Jurnal Penelitian Politik Islam*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 2019

¹⁸Interview with Nasep on Friday, January 17, 2025 (He is the former Panwas of Bandar Pusaka District for 2022-2024)

¹⁹Interview with Kamardi Arif on January 17, 2025 (he is a member of the Aceh Tamiang KIP for the 2023-2028 period)

Dr. Musthafa Abdul Salam, M.Kom.I²⁰, he gave his views on the practice of money politics in the context of Islamic law. According to him, according to Islamic law, money politics does not have an explicit prohibition because there is not always a party that is directly harmed. In political competition, all kinds of methods are considered commonplace, so if there is a candidate who uses money to attract support, it is considered legitimate as long as there is no clear violation of Islamic principles.

However, he also highlighted that the main problem lies in the intention and purpose behind the practice of money politics. If the purpose of using money is to enrich oneself, prioritize personal or family interests, and ignore the interests of the people, then the impact can be detrimental to the wider community. He reminded that leaders are a reflection of their people, as exemplified by the story of Sayyidina Ali who explained the differences in the character of the people during the previous caliphate.

Dr. Musthafa also emphasized that the positive and negative impacts of money politics depend on the context and purpose of its use. If this practice is used to support leadership that aims to uphold *amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar*, advance the message of Islam, and prevent sin, then the impact can be positive. However, in reality, many candidates use money politics only to pursue power for personal gain, such as returning campaign capital and prioritizing campaign teams, which ultimately damages the morality of society.

He also gave an overview of the phenomenon of money politics in Aceh Tamiang, especially in the election of MPU members. This practice involves payments to community leaders or village imams to ensure vote support. For example, to get votes, candidates only need to pay a certain number of villages with certain rewards, such as IDR 500,000 per imam. This shows that the practice of money politics does not only occur in large-scale elections but also in local and institutional contexts.

In conclusion, according to Dr. Musthafa, money politics is not entirely wrong from a sharia perspective, depending on its purpose and impact on society. However, the misuse of this practice for personal gain without regard to morality and the welfare of the people remains a major issue that must be addressed through education and stricter supervision.

²⁰Interview on January 15, 2025. He is the Head of the Manarul Islam Islamic Boarding School (Aceh Tamiang Border Islamic Boarding School) and is also a Lecturer at STAI Aceh Tamiang.

Ustaz Hasan,²¹ he gave his views on the practice of money politics from an Islamic perspective and law in Indonesia. He explained that elections in Indonesia have been regulated by law, including regulations that prohibit the practice of money politics. In the view of religion, every act of fraud, including money politics, is a violation of sharia, categorized as a forbidden act. As the Prophet said, "Whoever cheats is not one of us," cheating is considered contrary to Islamic values.

However, he also has a different view regarding money politics, citing the results of Bahtsul Masail in East Java, and the view of KH. Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim (Gus Baha). He explained that in certain conditions, such as fighting evil, the use of money/money politics by a candidate for good purposes can be justified.

In Islam, riswah (bribery) is prohibited because it is a gift to support falsehood. However, if the money is used to uphold the truth, it can be considered a permissible act. Nevertheless, the practice of money politics still violates the law in Indonesia and is therefore included in the category of fraud.

Regarding the impact of money politics on public trust in elected leaders, that the public tends to judge leaders based on the policies produced, not on how they were elected. If the policies made are good, the public will accept the leadership. Conversely, bad policies will damage public trust, regardless of how they obtained their positions.

Ustaz Syahrizal Darwis, MA,²² Chairman of MPU Aceh Tamiang, explained that the practice of money politics, or often referred to as riswah (bribery), is an attempt to influence others by using money or certain rewards. In the view of Islamic law, this action is considered wrong because it is contrary to the values of justice and honesty which are the principles of religion.

The practice of money politics can damage integrity and justice. For example, people who have honesty, the spirit of building a government, and good morals, often lose out to those who use money to gain power.

Money politics has a major impact on public trust. This practice can make people apathetic and skeptical of the democratic system. This distrust disrupts political stability and public interest in being involved in choosing leaders. If a leader is elected through unfair means, the policies taken often only benefit the group or themselves. This has the potential to ignore the principles of justice and public welfare.

²¹Interview on January 15, 2025 (He is the Head of the Fazrussalam Islamic Boarding School, Menanggini Village, Karang Baru District. He is also a Member of the Aceh Taiang Regional Education Council 2024-2029)

²²Interview on January 15, 2025 (He was the Chairperson of the MPU Membership from (2019-2029)

Money politics also affects the morality of society and the integrity of Muslims. Muslims become pragmatic, prioritizing short-term profits over religious principles. Prospective leaders who are elected through this practice tend to try to return the money they have spent, so that the policies taken are often only oriented towards personal or group profits. As a result, an honest and just government system is difficult to realize.

As a religious institution, MPU Aceh Tamiang has an important role in providing education and delivering fatwas regarding the prohibition of money politics. This fatwa is based on religious principles, as conveyed by scholars in Banjarmasin in 2018. MPU is committed to delivering this education through various channels, such as religious teaching pulpits, religious activities, and the issuance of written fatwas.

Through this approach, MPU hopes to instill a sense of fear of Allah SWT among the people, so that they stay away from the practice of *riswah* / money politics. This step is expected to create a clean, honest, and just political system in accordance with the principles of Islamic law.

b. Views of Education Figures

Money politics is one of the serious threats to true political awareness, especially for the younger generation. This practice not only damages morals and deceives the conscience, but also contradicts the values of Islamic law. As a result, the political awareness of the younger generation is disturbed. Money politics eliminates the essence of the people's voice in political life, creating an attitude of apathy and indifference among the people, especially among the younger generation. As a result, they lose their concern for politics, which is truly very important for the future of the nation.

Educational institutions have a strategic role in providing a correct understanding of politics, both in the context of the state and in the perspective of sharia. Education must be able to instill awareness in the younger generation—school and university students—about the importance of a clean political role that is in accordance with moral values. The younger generation needs to be directed to use their political rights based on conscience, reject money politics, and contribute to a healthy and dignified political order.

In this case, institutions such as the Regional Education Council (MPD) play a role in providing input on education issues, including how correct political values can be conveyed to the younger generation. Although the MPD is not an operational education institution, they have the authority to ensure that programs run by the government are in the appropriate corridor, including in basic education, PAUD, and religious education.

Education is a process of behavioral change that aims to create a generation that is intelligent and has integrity. As an important part of character building, education should not only teach knowledge, but also moral and ethical values. Therefore, education must provide clear guidelines and solutions to produce leaders and citizens who are intelligent, moral, and have integrity.²³

The issue of money politics is like a "malignant cancer that has taken root in all lines nationally." Money politics has created pessimism among the people. As a result, many people prefer shortcuts without considering the long-term impacts, especially the negative effects that can be felt for the next five years.

Limited Regional Education Council (MPD). Based on Qanun Number 11 of 2013, MPD has the authority to provide input and suggestions to the government regarding policies in the field of education. Thus, MPD's efforts to encourage changes in the education system remain dependent on the government's willingness to implement these suggestions.²⁴

Money politics is a major disaster that harms the essence of democracy. Democracy should be built on the competence, integrity, and ability of a person to carry out the people's mandate, not on financial transactions. Leaders who are elected through money politics often do not have the capacity and morality needed to bring goodness to society. Therefore, money politics is a crime that must be eradicated completely.

The problem of money politics cannot be separated from the low level of public understanding of politics. This low level of political intelligence is a tough task for all of us, especially for educational institutions, to provide education to the public. Politics is not about money; politics is about power. If power is in the hands of the wrong person, it can be a major disaster for the nation. On the contrary, power must be entrusted to individuals who have the mandate, wisdom, and integrity to carry out the interests of the people.

As a society, we have a great responsibility to build the character of young people as the next generation. They must understand that not everything can be monetized, especially the mandate of leadership. Goods and services can be bought and sold, but the mandate of leadership is a responsibility that is only worthy of being given

²³Interview with Mr. H.Muttaqin, M.Pd on January 17, 2025 (He is an educational figure and Chairman of the Aceh Tamiang MPD for the 2024-2029 period)

²⁴Interview with Mukhlis.NT, MM on January 15, 2025 (He is an educational figure and served as Chairman of the Aceh Tamiang Regional Education Council in 2014-2019).

to wise people. Do not carelessly entrust policies to individuals who do not have the necessary capacity and morality.

The future of the nation and state is in our hands. It is important to choose a leader who truly has the ability to manage the people's mandate wisely. This wisdom and integrity must be the main benchmark in determining who is worthy of leading. Never sell the interests of the nation's future for momentary gain. Only by instilling these values can we create a healthy and dignified democracy.²⁵

c. Views of Traditional Figures

Ir. Muntasir Wan Diman, MM,²⁶ gave his views on the phenomenon of money politics from the perspective of Tamiang Custom. According to him, the customs of the Aceh Tamiang community are closely related to Islamic law. "Our customs are customs that are based on Islamic law," . Anything that is contrary to Islamic law automatically contradicts customs. Money politics is considered a real crime and destroys civilization.

Although there are opinions of scholars that the practice of money politics *can* be justified in certain situations, such as when the goal is to defeat a *wicked* or dishonest leader candidate. This opinion needs to be reviewed further in the context of reality and the principles of building a sustainable civilization. Although religiously there are views that allow this practice in emergencies, the reality is that individuals who use this method are often trapped in two layers of lies. **First**, they use money to influence people's choices, which violates the principle of honesty in the democratic process. **Second**, after being elected, they do not show a real commitment to making changes or building a better civilization.

Building a civilization cannot begin only when someone nominates themselves as a leader. Instead, the effort must be carried out long before that through a consistent process, such as establishing good relations with the community, conducting dialogue, and understanding their needs and aspirations. Ideal leadership is born from closeness to the people, not from instant practices that damage moral values and justice.

The behavior of the giver, receiver, and distributor of *political money* is fraudulent and dishonest. This not only fosters hypocrisy, but also damages the social order, both in terms of ethics and manners. Political money not only disrupts the mindset of society in choosing leaders who should be based on quality, but also unconsciously creates an apathetic attitude towards development.

²⁵Interview with Fauzi, SH on January 16, 2025 (He is a member of the MAN 1 Manyak Payet Committee, besides that he is a legal practitioner who has been involved in the world of politics)

²⁶Tetuhe Adat, Tamiang Malay Cultural Customary Council

Money politics is a poison for society because it damages morals, thoughts, and human values. The long-term impact is the destruction of sustainable development. Leaders who are elected through money politics practices tend to be careless in determining development policies, more oriented towards personal gain than the welfare of the people. Money politics also creates a chain of resentment in society, because people are forced to depend on short-term money without long-term solutions to their economic problems.²⁷

The practice of money politics is a serious challenge in maintaining the integrity of democracy, including in Aceh Tamiang. Various figures from religious, educational, and traditional backgrounds provide views and strategies to minimize the practice. Here are their views:

1. Education and Awareness about Money Politics

Direct approach through doctrine to leaders that the practice of money politics is not justified. According to him, public education is less effective because it requires large costs and a long time. He also noted that the high cost of political operations often encourages candidates to use pragmatic methods, including money politics.²⁸

2. Instilling Religious Values in Society

Instilling fear of Allah and providing understanding to the public about the prohibition of receiving property obtained in vanity. This is based on the verse of the Koran: "*Wala ta'kulu amwalakum bainakum bil-bathil*" (*Do not consume the wealth among yourselves in a false way*).²⁹

3. Reject Candidates Who Do Money Politics

Concrete steps for the public to take a firm stance in rejecting money politics. If the public does not dare to reject it directly, they should at least not vote for candidates who use bribes. Both the perpetrator, the recipient, and the intermediary of the bribe will receive the same sin before Allah SWT.³⁰

4. Educational and Regulatory Approach

Educational and regulatory approaches. Education is an important step in building correct political awareness, especially among the younger generation. Educational institutions must instill an understanding of the importance of clean and moral politics, and encourage the younger generation to exercise their

²⁷Interview with Ir. Muntasir Wan Diman, MM on January 14, 2025 (He is a Traditional Figure of Aceh Tamiang Malay).

²⁸Dr. Musthafa Abdul Salam, M.Kom.I

²⁹Ustaz. Hasan Abdul Salam

³⁰Ustaz Syahrizal Darwis, MA

political rights responsibly without being tempted by money politics. On the other hand, strict regulations need to be implemented to prevent and prosecute the practice of money politics. Clear legal rules and strict sanctions can be tools to suppress the spread of this practice.³¹

5. Early Political Education

Incorporating political education into the school curriculum to form a generation that is aware of democratic values and political ethics. In addition, law enforcement against perpetrators of money politics must be consistent and a priority. He emphasized that major changes require long-term commitment.³²

6. Strengthening the Democratic System and the Role of Customs

The importance of building a democratic system with integrity through massive political education, strict supervision, and strengthening the role of customs. Local philosophies such as "*Bersenoh ke bukam, qada bunge celake*" (negotiating to prevent harm) can be used as guidelines. Evaluate the direct election system, which is considered to open up opportunities for corruption, by returning to the indirect election system but through the DPR.³³

7. Election of Regional Heads by the DPR

As an alternative, the election of regional heads and presidents through the DPR is considered to be able to minimize the opportunity for money politics practices. However, this strategy still requires strict control to prevent the potential for political lobbying among the legislature.

8. Strict Enforcement of Rules for Election Organizers

The importance of strict rules for election organizers, such as administrative sanctions, criminal sanctions, or removal from office. This aims to ensure that they are responsible for maintaining the integrity of the election process.³⁴

9. Clean and Honest Political Education

Public education through seminars, public discussions, and campaigns about democratic values is the first step in building a voter mentality that places integrity above all else.

10. Political Cadre Development with Integrity

³¹H.Muttaqin, M.Pd

³²Mukhlis.NT, MM

³³Ir. Muntasir Wan Diman, MM

³⁴Dr. Cakra Arbas, SHI, MH

Political parties need to strengthen the cadre development process to produce prospective leaders who are committed to clean politics and reject transactional politics.

11. Collaboration between elements of society

Uniting the perceptions of all elements of society—government, law enforcement, educational institutions, religious leaders, and traditional leaders—about the dangers of money politics. This collaboration is important to build synergy in eradicating the practice.³⁵

CONCLUSION

The Importance of Democracy Free from Money Politics. Healthy democracy requires elections free from money politics because this practice damages the integrity of elections and threatens the accountability of elected leaders. In the context of Aceh Tamiang, although there are qanuns to support fair elections, the practice of money politics continues to occur, mainly due to poverty, lack of political education, and a strong culture of patronage. Efforts to eradicate money politics must involve voter education, strengthening law enforcement, and transparency of campaign funds.

The Role of Religious, Educational, and Traditional Figures in Preventing Money Politics. Religious figures in Aceh Tamiang expressed the view that although in some cases money politics can be justified, misuse for personal gain must be prevented. Education has a strategic role in fostering healthy political awareness in the younger generation, by ensuring that they reject the practice of money politics and contribute to a clean and fair political system.

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³⁵Amir Hasan Nazri Al-Mujahid, SH

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