

### **GARNERING VOTES, BUILDING AN IMAGE**

The democratic party will soon begin, and the candidates and their supporters have started spreading information to attract support. Likewise, the opposing party (candidate) has also maneuverer to deny all the information spread by the other side. This information war seems to be reminiscent of the past presidential and vice-presidential election process that caused deep wounds to the community. The question is whether the process this time will create new wounds or open old wounds or add wounds on top of wounds.

This information war was conducted by highlighting the personalities and performance of the candidates during their public service, either as executive or legislative officials or other positions that could be observed and criticized. For example, how Anis Baswedan was attacked about Formule E while ignoring his other achievements, as if there were no achievements at all. Similarly, Ganjar Pranowo was attacked for his performance in reducing poverty in Central Java, which did not decrease significantly during his two terms in office, while ignoring other performance achievements. And other candidates fielded by parties such as Puan Maharani or Airlangga Hartarto are relatively less attacked, either because there is no material to criticize or because there is no performance worth targeting.

Of course, what is done by the candidates and their success teams is part of the strategy to attract votes and build an image, with the hope of growing and creating confidence for the voters. It will be interesting if the candidates and their success teams compete with data on their performance achievements, not arguing without data support, only based on prejudice and bad intentions to bring each other down. Democracy and nationhood do require maturity in responding to the various information circulating on the information superhighway, with the hope that candidates, success teams and the public will not fall into hatred and indifference to fellow Indonesian citizens.

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