Golkar: The Embodiment of New Order that Still Appeals
Ulla Fionna

Ratification of UN Convention on Migrant Workers (1990):
The Case of Indonesia and The Philippines
Natasha K. Ardiandi

“The Lapindo Case” by Mainstream Media
Anton Novenanto

Integration, Disintegration and Democratization in Indonesia
M. Muttaqien

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in Kingking and Karangsari
Liviandhi Devris Biantoro

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>“The Lapindo Case” by Mainstream Media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Integration, Disintegration and Democratization in Indonesia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dialect Varieties in Tuban, East Java: A study of Dialect in Kingking and Karangsari</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Golkar: The Embodiment of New Order that Still Appeals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ratification of UN Convention on Migrant Workers (1990): The Case of Indonesia and The Philippines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Golkar: The Embodiment of New Order that Still Appeals

Abstract

At the end of Suharto’s long authoritarian rule in 1998, few would throw their support for Golkar â€” the former government-backed party. Golkar (Golongan Karya or lit. functional group) changed its name to Partai Golkar (Golkar Party), but the stigma of being the former governmentâ€™s main hand in controlling and manipulating elections has stuck on. However, against popular belief, the party has managed to continue its electoral success. This article explores the factors behind the continued popularity of Partai Golkar. Investigating its history, close connection with the military, and the changes the party had been undergoing since the start of the reform (reformasi) era, this article argues that the success of the party has been supported by the adoption of new image, the prevalence of money politics, and the strength of the party outside the main island of Java.

Keyword: Indonesian, politics, Golkar, Party, election, reformasi, party, popularity,

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