

Baperki¹
Badan Permusjawaratan Kewarganegaraan Indonesia
Indonesia Citizens Consultative Agency

This organisation, established as often in Indonesia, as a socio-political movement became the key political vehicle to give voice to the Sino-Indonesian minority. The organisation was established in 1954 as an amalgamation of various local and regional Sino-Indonesian organisations. In its early stages it contained voices associated with a wide spectrum of views on how to manage the issue of Sino-Indonesia identity, be this “assimilation”, or something more akin to “multiculturalism”. With time a more leftist political leaning emerged which included establishing effective electoral partnerships in many local elections with the PKI.

Baperki contested the two national elections of 1955 as well as a little over half of local elections conducted in 1957 and 1958.

In the Parliamentary Elections of 1955 Baperki secured 0.5% of the national vote. Its did, however, demonstrate some depth of support on the Island of Bangka (8%), Cirebon City (8%), North Jakarta (7%), Semarang City (6%), Padang City (5%).

The vote secured by Baperki in the local elections of 1957 and 1958 was quite stable. However within the overall areas of support it lost about three quarters of its vote from 1955. Elsewhere, however the picture was a little brighter. Baperki gained its best result in Pangkal Pinang City on Bangka (20%), actually making it the largest party in this city. Elsewhere on Bangka it maintained its previous level of 8%. It maintained its 8% in Cirebon and 6% in Semarang City but capture 6% in Bogor City. Its best result in East Java was 5% in Mojokerto City.

Baperki’s electoral alliances with the PKI cost it severely at the time of the major political upheavals of 1965 and 1966. The organisation was banned and a number of its leading activists including leader Siauw Giok Tjhan were arrested in the anti-Leftist crack down at the time. Prior to that at the start of the 1960s, Baperki moved to become active in socio-educational activities, founding among the multi-city campus of Universitas Res Publica. In the wake of the political transition in the mid-1960s the Jakarta campus evolved to become the current Tri Sakti University.

Attempts at starting an overly Sino-Indonesian political party have been few and far between and none has been successful with the possible exception of the Bhineka Tunggal Ika party which in 1999 gained 7% of the vote in West Kalimantan, including an impressive 10% in the then newly formed Kabupaten of Bengkayang and 11% in Kabupaten Kapuas Hulu.

¹ Useful information on the background of evolution of Baperki was obtained from http://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siauw_Giok_Tjhan