Issues in the Framework of Yogyakarta's "Sultan Ground" Land Mafia: A Study of the Functionalization of Corruption

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***Abstract*—This study investigates the Yogyakarta "Sultan Ground" land case, exploring the possible connection between corruption offenses and the land mafia. This study investigates the tangible outcomes of land grabbing through normative legal research, specifically focusing on the "Sultan Ground" case. The findings indicate that although the state financial law system has limitations in recognizing the assets of "Sultan Ground," the Sultanate of Yogyakarta, as a local government entity, can tackle corruption issues related to the land mafia. The report underscores the cultural heritage at risk due to the ongoing land acquisition, underscoring the necessity for stronger legal foundations to pursue allegations of corruption. Implementing measures, such as employing the criminal justice system to safeguard "Sultan Ground" assets outside of state property limits, is based on the research's suggestions.**

***Keywords*—Corruption Delict; Land Mafia; Sultan Ground.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Corruption, or Tipikor, has been widely recognized as having reached a critical level, creating great alarm across all sectors of Indonesian society due to the growing prevalence of corrupt practices. Corruption is widespread throughout various sectors, including the executive, legislative, judicial departments, and the corporate sector. Therefore, the government's primary goal is to eradicate corruption. Concerted endeavors have been made to tackle the combined goals of preventing and eliminating corruption, acknowledging it as a white-collar offense and an extraordinary violation. Concerted efforts have been made to attain an exceptional result. Indonesia is currently witnessing a growing will to eradicate corruption.[1]

In the course of the reform era, other bodies were established to enhance endeavors aimed at eradicating corruption, alongside the police and the prosecutor's office. The aforementioned agencies include the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), the

A. K. Jaelani et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the International Conference on Law, Economic & Good Governance (IC-LAW 2023)*, Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research 827,
https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-218-7_13

Financial Transaction Reporting and Analysis Centre (PPATK), and the Witness and Victim Protection Agency (LPSK). The aforementioned steps were implemented to enhance endeavors in eliminating corruption.[2]

Corruption charges, due to their far-reaching consequences, undergo heightened scrutiny compared to other criminal offenses. This heightened attention is attributed to the detrimental impact of corruption on various aspects of life, undermining societal stability, impeding socio-economic progress, and negatively affecting political institutions. Recognizing corruption as a significant issue arises from its potential to erode democratic principles and ethical norms when deeply embedded in a community's cultural fabric. Romli Atmasasmita emphasizes that corruption in Indonesia, prevalent since the 1960s, persists as a pervasive epidemic, with current anti-corruption efforts deemed ineffective..[3]

Given Indonesia's widespread and organized corruption, it is crucial to curb its uncontrolled spread across all sectors, including the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. Establishing a country under the principles of legal authority requires the eradication of corruption. The United Nations supports Indonesia's anti-corruption efforts through the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, an international initiative formed in 2003. Indonesia benefits from this convention by fostering partnerships for sharing information to detect and combat corruption. Law enforcement agencies, including the prosecutor's office, play a crucial role in addressing corruption charges independently and with a solid legal foundation, ensuring they fulfill their responsibilities and exercise law enforcement powers without external interference.[4]

The legal framework for combating corruption is established in Law Number 31 of 1999, in conjunction with Law Number 20 of 2001, commonly known as the Anti-Corruption Law, which specifically targets the eradication of corruption. Article 3 of the Anti-Corruption Law explicitly states that any person who abuses their position or authority with the intention of gaining personal, corporate, or third-party benefits, resulting in detrimental effects on the state's finances or economy, will face legal consequences. The potential consequences for this offense encompass life imprisonment, with a minimum sentence of one year and a maximum of twenty years, as well as a fine ranging from at least Rp. 50,000,000.00 (fifty million rupiah) to a maximum of Rp. 1,000,000,000.00 (one billion rupiah).[5]

In the following discussion, based on Constitutional Court Decision Number 25/PUU-XIV/2016 (referred to as MK Decision No. 25/PUU-XIV/2016), it is contended that the term "can" should be removed, making it necessary for state losses to occur as a prerequisite. As a result, Article 3 of the Anti-Corruption Law is modified to prioritize material violations above formal offenses. This change aims to provide legal clarity in situations where the state suffers financial harm. In the Anti-Corruption Law, the word "state finances" encompasses all assets possessed by the state, regardless of their form or division. This encompasses all elements of state assets and their corresponding entitlements and responsibilities. These assets are under the jurisdiction, administration, and accountability of officials employed in state institutions at both the national and local levels.[6]

Furthermore, they include assets that are controlled, managed, and held accountable by state-owned and region-owned enterprises, foundations, legal entities, and firms with state or third-party capital, as per agreements with the state. The term "State Economy" refers to an economic system that functions through cooperative efforts based on family ideals or independent community initiatives governed by governmental policies at both the central and regional levels. This system adheres to established

legislation and regulations, primarily promoting the overall well-being, affluence, and welfare of all citizens.[7]

The agriculture industry is plagued by rampant corruption, which poses early difficulties for local people due to the substantial sway of financial institutions and the government. The state's effort to manage land ownership for financial advantage has raised concerns due to the involvement of law enforcement, government officials, the corporate sector, and a land mafia in illicit operations that adversely affect the country's economy. Since 2018, the Ministry of Spatial Planning in Indonesia has documented 242 reported occurrences involving the land mafia, resulting in legal measures and land restitution to its rightful owners. The operations of the land mafia encompass a methodical and intentional series of actions, which include conflicts, breaches of legal constraints, collaboration among criminals, and manipulation of infrastructural projects, surpassing the mere falsification of administrative documents.[8]

The prevalence of land mafia activities is extensive in multiple locations of Indonesia, notably in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY). These acts entail the unlawful seizure of land that is formally labeled as "sultan ground," which refers to land holdings owned by the DIY sultanate. The financial damages caused by the land mafia's illicit actions on the sultan's property are estimated to amount to tens of billions of rupiah. Unfortunately, there are currently no steps implemented to alleviate these losses. The word "land mafia" is not specifically stated in the Agrarian and Corruption Crime Law. Nevertheless, the notion of land mafia is present in Technical Guideline No. 01/Juknis/D.VII/2018 about the Prevention and Elimination of Land Mafia. This guideline offers an all-encompassing definition of land mafia, characterizing it as persons, groups, or legal entities that intentionally partake in illicit acts that can impede and obstruct the appropriate management of property-related matters.[9]

The phrase "Land Mafia" denotes a collective of individuals who conspire to unlawfully appropriate and occupy the property belonging to others. They utilize a range of tactics, including forging documents, exploiting legal procedures, employing both lawful and unlawful employment practices, orchestrating incidents, collaborating with authorities, perpetrating corporate offenses, and undermining land rights and ownership. The rise of the land mafia can be ascribed to weak oversight, insufficient law enforcement, and a dearth of openness. Moreover, land presents a lucrative investment opportunity that provides substantial economic advantages. Furthermore, land is continually vital to the community.[10]

Supardi, the Director of Investigation at the Attorney General's Office for Special Crimes (JAM-Pidsus), has uncovered multiple instances of corruption associated with the activities of the land mafia. The land mafia utilizes several strategies, such as engaging in fraudulent land acquisition procedures that involve ambiguous and counterfeit communication. In addition, they distort land administration operations to advance their illegal activities. A notorious case that attracted public notice revolved around corruption in the agricultural sector, specifically a fraudulent transaction on the transfer of land assets under the supervision of the Labuan Bajo Regional Government in the West Manggarai Regency of East Nusa Tenggara. The contentious territory, spanning an area of 30 hectares and valued at approximately Rp 3 trillion, has caused damage to the state, amounting to an estimated Rp 1.3 trillion.[11]

The ongoing investigation pertains to Agustinus Ch. Dula, who holds the position of Regent in West Manggarai, and is suspected of involvement in corruption. A total of nineteen individuals have been identified as suspects and categorized into distinct categories, namely the land mafia, the local government, the BPN, police enforcement, and the notary. The actions in question have been formally proclaimed as cases of

corruption by the Kupang District Court Decision Number 25/Pid.Sus-TPK/2021/PN.Kpg and the subsequent Kupang High Court Decision Number 26/Pid.Sus-TPK/2021/PT.Kpg.

Consequently, Mizard Fabio has received a 13-year incarceration term, a penalty of IDR 1 billion, and an extra six months of imprisonment. He has been mandated to reimburse the state for losses amounting to IDR 5,529,000,000. Judge Franciska Paula Nino, together with her colleagues Nggilu Liwar Awang and Gustaf Marpaung, were the ones who acquitted the two foreign offenders. Both people were charged with engaging in corrupt practices as defined in Article 2, paragraph (1) of Law 31/1999, in relation to Article 55, paragraph (1) of the Criminal Code. Augustinus Ch. Dulla, the Regent of West Manggarai, was convicted and sentenced to seven years in prison. In a similar vein, Marthen Ndeo, the previous head of the West Manggarai Defense Agency, was likewise found guilty and handed an 11-year prison sentence along with a 1 billion rupiah fine.[12]

The above background demonstrates how the land mafia might exploit corruption in situations involving land assets owned by local and national governments. The worry revolves around the potential application of corruption charges in the illegal acquisition of the "Sultan Ground" land by the land mafia, which is currently owned by either the DIY Government or the DIY Sultanate. According to applicable legislation, this land is excluded from national land laws and is not classified as a state asset. This gives rise to apprehensions regarding the possible enforcement of corruption allegations in such circumstances. The research aims to thoroughly and systematically investigate the utilization of corruption allegations in the activities of the land mafia, explicitly focusing on the "Sultan Ground" land issue in Yogyakarta.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Land Mafia Phenomenon in Yogyakarta

The "Land Mafia Phenomenon" in Yogyakarta poses a substantial obstacle, as it involves the illicit merging of corruption and land dealings, specifically within the culturally and historically significant "Sultan Ground." To comprehend the infiltration of criminal practices into the intricacies of property negotiations, it is essential to recognize the widespread prevalence of corruption across Indonesian culture. [2] The "Sultan Ground," which is in the ownership of the Sultanate of Yogyakarta, has become a central hub for the operations of the land mafia. These activities involve unlawful acquisitions, deceitful transactions, and manipulation of land-related processes. These actions significantly threaten property rights and the conservation of Indonesia's cultural heritage.

An in-depth analysis is required to understand the complex interplay between corrupt practices, local officials, law enforcement, and different players in the land mafia activities in Yogyakarta. Unethical individuals take advantage of unclear legalities, inadequate supervision, and ineffective law enforcement to participate in dishonest activities, risking precious land and the region's cultural identity. [7]To effectively tackle the issue of the "Land Mafia Phenomenon" in Yogyakarta, it is necessary to implement a range of measures. These measures should focus on improving governance, establishing better oversight systems, and protecting the cultural legacy that is essential to Yogyakarta's character.

B. Land Mafia and Corruption Offenses

The article primarily centers on the complex correlation between land mafia activities and instances of corruption. The statement emphasizes the cooperation between several individuals involved in both sorts of crimes, emphasizing collusion as a shared characteristic. [10] The essay highlights the observation that these actions frequently entail the collaboration of multiple individuals in order to accomplish their unlawful objectives. Significantly, it follows the stipulations of the Anti-Corruption Law, specifically highlighting Article 5, which explicitly deals with the act of participation. This legal framework is crucial when investigating and prosecuting those involved in the intricate combination of corruption and land mafia activities.

C. Criminal Liability and Corruption

The literature explores the notion of criminal responsibility, highlighting the essential idea of culpability in criminal law. This comprehension is crucial, particularly within the framework of investigating allegations of corruption, since it aids in establishing the culpability of the individuals implicated. [6] The principle of culpability is a fundamental concept in criminal law, serving as a foundation for establishing the extent to which a suspect or defendant can be held responsible for a committed crime. This legal standpoint greatly enhances the intricate evaluation of corruption accusations against individuals involved in land mafia operations. It offers a thorough structure for assessing the legal ramifications and liabilities of those involved in these interconnected illegal activities.

III. METHOD

The study is a form of normative legal research that examines explicitly "positive legal norms within the legislative system." This study has confirmed using three separate methodologies in legal research: legislation, cases, and conceptual approaches. The research approach of this study primarily uses document analysis as the method for collecting data. Document studies collect secondary data from many literary sources, such as legislation, rules, international agreements, books, journals, articles, reports by previous researchers, and other relevant papers about the issue under investigation. The study relies on a comprehensive legal framework encompassing many essential laws and regulations. These encompass Law Number 31 of 1999, which deals with eliminating corruption, and Law Number 20 of 2001, which introduces modifications to Law Number 31 of 1999. In addition, the research considers the implementation of Regulation Number 34 of 2017 by the Governor of the Special Region of Yogyakarta, which deals explicitly with utilizing village land. Moreover, Law Number 13 of 2012, about the specialization of The objective of this study is to analyze the extent of corruption offenses related to the operations of the land mafia, with a specific emphasis on land under the jurisdiction of the Yogyakarta Special Region Government, often known as the "Sultan Ground."

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The term "land mafia" is not explicitly mentioned in the Agrarian and Corruption Crime Law. From a legal perspective, the term "land mafia" and its definition may be found in Technical Guidance Number 01/Juknis/D.VII/2018 focuses on the prevention and elimination of land mafia activities. The term "land mafia" refers to individuals, groups, or legal entities who deliberately participate in illegal practices that can hinder and obstruct the resolution of land-linked conflicts. The phrase "Land Mafia" denotes

a group of individuals who conspire to grab and assume control over someone else's property unlawfully. The land mafia often utilizes a range of tactics, such as forging documents to create false ownership claims, pursuing legal validation through court processes, both legally and illegally occupying land, orchestrating planned incidents, collaborating with officials to obtain legal status, committing corporate offenses like embezzlement and fraud, and engaging in actions that lead to the erosion of land rights and the forfeiture of land titles.[13]

Assume an inquiry is carried out within the context of the domestic judicial system.[14] Therefore, if a group of two or more individuals engages in conduct intending to unlawfully gain control over privately held or state-owned territory that does not belong to them, it can be regarded as a malicious conspiracy. The categorization is derived from the specifications delineated in Article 88 of the Criminal Code (KUHP), which mandates that a malevolent plot is present when two or more individuals have reached a mutual accord to partake in unlawful endeavors. The regulation of malicious conspiracy is also addressed under Article 110 of the Criminal Code.

The concept of criminal conspiracy is apparent in numerous legal statutes and regulatory systems, as demonstrated by the following examples of As per Article 1 point 15 of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 8 of 2010, which deals with the Prevention and Eradication of the Crime of Money Laundering, conspiracy is defined as the joint effort of two or more individuals who agree to participate in the illegal activity of money laundering.[15]

As per Article 15 of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 31 of 1999 on the Eradication of the Crime of Corruption, modified by Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2001 on the Amendment to Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 31 of 1999 on the Eradication of the Crime of Corruption, individuals who attempt, aid, or conspire to commit corruption will face the same penalties specified in Article 2, Article 3, Article 5, up to Article 14.[16]

Article 15 of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 15 of 2003, specifically related to the Stipulation of Government Regulation instead of Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2002 on the Eradication of the Criminal Offence of Terrorism, states that individuals involved in conspiracy, attempt, or assistance in committing acts of terrorism, as described in Article 6, Article 7, Article 8, Article 9, Article 10, Article 11, and Article 12, will be subject to the same penalties as the main perpetrator of the crime.[12]

The offense of criminal conspiracy is also defined in Article 8 Letter O of Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 15 of 2003, which focuses on establishing government regulations rather than the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2002. This law specifically aims to combat criminal activities related to terrorism. As mentioned, the paragraph stipulates that persons participate in a collaborative activity involving two or more people as an extension of a criminal conspiracy, with a deliberate intention, resulting in substantial injury to an individual through the behaviors indicated in subsections l, m, and n. As per Article 5 of Law No. 9 of 2013 in the Republic of Indonesia, individuals involved in conspiring, attempting, or aiding in committing the crime of terrorist financing will face the same penalties as stated in Article 4.[17]

Land mafia and corruption offenses are typically characterized by collusion, including multiple individuals in the commission of the infraction. Hence, the Anti-Corruption Law explicitly addresses the act of participation under Article 5 of this legislation. Article 15 contains exceptional regulations that reduce 1/3 (one-third) of the criminal punishment for attempted and assisted criminal offenses. According to the

doctrine of participation in criminal law, Utrecht has proposed Simons' viewpoint, which states that for participation to be considered a maker (dagger), the participant must possess the same qualities as the perpetrator. This means a person cannot be convicted as a participant if they do not possess the same qualities as the perpetrator. In terms of criminal liability and the application of penalties, it also considers each offender's culpability.[18]

Criminal accountability is the basis for determining whether a suspect or defendant can be held accountable for a committed crime. The Criminal Code primarily addresses criminal responsibility in Chapter III of Book I, with further provisions dispersed across various articles of the legislation. Roeslan Saleh paraphrased Alf Ross, stating that being responsible for a criminal act entails legal liability for punishment. The existence of a permissible punishment implies the presence of regulations within a specific legal system that control the behavior in issue and that the system applies to the behavior in question. Overall, the legal system may consider the action (penalty) justifiable.[19]

In addition, Roeslan Saleh asserts that responsibility is exhibited through the connection between the circumstances that give rise to facts and the necessary legal consequences. The association between the two is not based on causality or natural factors but rather on legal concepts. In order to establish the perpetrator's criminal responsibility and determine the appropriate punishment, it is necessary to consider the following factors: a. The perpetrator must fall within the scope of the law; b. There must be evidence of the perpetrator's fault; c. The action must be unlawful; d. The action must be explicitly prohibited and punishable by law (broadly); e. The action must be committed within the parameters specified by the law, including the place, time, and other relevant circumstances; f. The presence of an act is a determining factor for imposing punishment. The presence of the act dictates the application of a penalty.[20]

Engaging in a criminal act entails the imposition of criminal responsibility. The principle of culpability, often known as the principle of no punishment without fault (geen straf zonder schuld), is the cornerstone of criminal law. The stipulation states that an individual is responsible for a sentence if the illegal conduct performed can be traced to them. A fault can be characterized in two distinct ways. It pertains to intentionality (dolus/opzet), which denotes acting deliberately and consciously (willen en weten) to some extent; alternatively, it contains both dolus and culpa more comprehensively. "Culpa" is a term used to describe negligence, which is the absence of thought or knowledge on the part of the criminal. The third element is the idea of subject responsibility, which states that if an individual commits an act, it may be considered criminal. "To be found guilty, the individual who committed the crime must not have any grounds for erasing their criminal record, such as a justification or forgiveness." Therefore, it may be inferred that an individual can be held responsible for a criminal act if they meet the criteria for guilt defined by the law and commit the offense. There is no valid rationale or reason.[21]

Criminal responsibility, also known as the ekenbaardheid theory or criminal liability, involves placing sanctions on the perpetrator to determine the guilt of a defendant or suspect for committing a criminal act. According to Moeljatno, Alf Ross expressed his viewpoint on personal responsibility, particularly about an individual's obligation for their actions.[22]

A cause-and-effect relationship between the factual elements that serve as the necessary circumstances and the required legal outcomes determines criminal culpability. Criminal behavior refers exclusively to the prohibition and consequent punishment of an action. According to the fundamental concept of criminal liability in criminal law, the determination of culpability depends on whether the perpetrator is

responsible: no punishment can be given without blame (Geen et al.; Actus non facit reum mens rea).[23]

Sutan Remy Sjahdeiny, in agreement with Alf Ross, argues that individual responsibility in criminal law follows the long-standing principle of actus non facit reum, nisi mens sit rea. The Latin maxim highlights that legal culpability for a crime necessitates the occurrence of the action (actus reus) and a distinct mental state (mens rea) that is intimately connected to the act. This principle is commonly articulated in the Indonesian setting as "no penalty without culpability." Expanding on this point, Makhrus Ali and Sudarto provide additional details on criminal liability, emphasizing that the justification for punishment is based on the illegal act itself and the actual wrongdoing committed. Legality establishes the foundation for criminal acts, whereas the idea of responsibility dictates the degree to which a wrongdoer can be held liable. Therefore, the punishment for a criminal offense depends on establishing the offender's culpability.

Thus, to determine guilt, a wrongdoer must comprehend the inherent "illegitimate nature" of engaging in criminal conduct, as this constitutes the most crucial characteristic of said offense. The criminal offense's illegitimate nature might be either "intent" or "negligence" when linked to the offender's psychological state.[24]

The discussion on incorporating corruption allegations in investigating the land mafia's association with the "Sultan Ground" property gives rise to substantial apprehensions due to the potential for varied interpretations and legal uncertainty. The precise interpretation of state assets or funds as defined under the Anti-Corruption Law is currently a topic of ongoing debate, resulting in a need for more clarity. According to legal regulations, state finances include all governmental assets. However, Article 18B Paragraph 1 of the 1945 Constitution recognizes the Sultanate of Yogyakarta as a local authority, highlighting the state's acknowledgment and respect for local government institutions with distinct characteristics specified in the law. Sultan Ground plays a crucial part in the cultural heritage of Indonesia as an influential figure in both the Yogyakarta municipal government and the Sultanate of Yogyakarta. Hence, land grabbing threatens the long-term conservation of the country's cultural and historical treasures.[2]

Although it is argued that the property owned by the Sultanate of Yogyakarta, known as "Sultan Ground," can be protected as a national heritage asset under the corruption offense framework, there are specific constraints. More precisely, according to the legal framework governing state finances, the "Sultan Ground" assets are not categorized as public assets. Hence, a robust legal framework is required to prosecute corruption crimes associated with land mafia operations effectively. Hence, it is imperative to implement several actions, including integrating the resources of "Sultan Ground" as a safeguarded subset under the anti-corruption provisions of the legal structure designed to combat corruption.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on research and legal inquiries, the Sultanate of Yogyakarta recognized as a local government entity under Article 18B Paragraph 1 of the 1945 Constitution, can tackle corruption offenses related to the land mafia, particularly in the "Sultan Ground" project. Sultan Ground holds the cultural legacy of the Sultanate of Yogyakarta, a valuable resource for the local administration of Yogyakarta. Therefore, the current process of acquiring land may result in the gradual loss of the country's cultural assets in the future. However, there is a vulnerability in this case since, as per the state's financial regulations, the assets of "Sultan Ground" are not categorized as state assets.

Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the legal basis for prosecuting the land mafia with corruption charges. Article 18B of the 1945 Constitution says the "Sultan Ground" asset should be protected outside the state property system. One of the most important things that needs to be done is to use criminal law to clearly define this asset as something that needs to be protected.

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