

THE ROLE OF THE PROTOCOL OFFICER OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE BUREAU OF THE REGIONAL SECRETARIAT OF NORTH SUMATRA PROVINCE IN THE SUCCESS OF THE NORTH SUMATRA GOVERNOR'S WORKING VISIT TO THE NATURAL DISASTER AREA IN PADANG TUALANG VILLAGE, PADANG TUALANG DISTRICT, LANGKAT REGENCY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the role of protocol officers of the North Sumatra Provincial Regional Secretariat Administration Bureau in the success of the North Sumatra Governor's working visit to natural disaster areas in Padang Tualang Village, Padang Tualang District, Lalat Regency, as well as identify supporting and inhibiting factors for its implementation. The research uses a qualitative approach with a single case study design. Data was obtained through in-depth interviews, field observations, and documentation, then analyzed descriptively to understand the dynamics of planning, coordination, and agenda adjustment in emergency situations. The results show that the role of protocols is not only administrative, but also strategic and adaptive, including planning functions, cross-agency coordination, communication mediation, and field observation which leads to the addition of visit locations. This success was supported by effective communication, flexibility, and leadership support, although constrained by limited resources and coordination.

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INTRODUCTIONS

The Leadership Administration Bureau is one of the government agencies formed in 2019. The main task of the Leadership Administration Bureau is to carry out general policy making, coordinate administrative aspects related to the tasks of the Regional Apparatus and provide administrative services for the administrative field of leadership. The service includes household arrangements, leadership communication materials, and protocols are the authority of

the North Sumatra Province Region. The Leadership Administration Bureau is also responsible for carrying out the task of deconcentration until the formation of the Governor's Secretariat as a representative of the Central Government and carrying out assistance tasks in accordance with the field of duties given.

The governor's working visit is an important part of the government's agenda which has a strategic goal in building better relations between local governments and the community. This working visit also serves as a means to convey policies, get direct information related to regional conditions, and strengthen coordination between the provincial government and related agencies. The success of a working visit depends heavily on careful planning and execution, as well as the important role played by the protocol officer. (Alfianto Elang et al., 2026; Kartika et al., 2025)

Implementation of protocol activities, services and supporting the smooth running of the duties of the Governor, Deputy Governor, Regional Secretary, and Assistant Regional Secretariat. Reviewing that the duties of the North Sumatra Provincial Protocol Section are very important for the implementation of each series of protocol activities, therefore, the need for performance, alertness, and solid composure from all Protocol Officers of the North Sumatra Provincial Government.

Within the North Sumatra Provincial Government, the Regional Secretariat Leadership Administration Bureau has the task and responsibility to organize and make the governor's working visit a success. One of the units that plays a key role in this success is the protocol officer. Protocol officers are responsible for regulating all technical and administrative aspects that support the smooth running of the event, starting from preparation, scheduling, coordination with various related parties, to the implementation of events in the field. Protocol officers are also required to have high communication and organizational skills in order to be able to manage various challenges that arise during the working visit. (Hidayatullah et al., 2022; Sugito & Anam, 2021)

The main part of the protocol is in charge of coaching, guiding and controlling the field of local government guest reception, official trips, leaders, ceremonies, and not only carrying out the task of preparing materials, policies, and coordination. Protocol responsibilities include, arranging preparations for each event, preparing public services, ceremonies, layouts, accommodation and liaison. As well as acting as a liaison between local governments and the central government and international institutions. As part of a larger system of government, the North Sumatra Provincial Secretariat Leadership Administration Bureau must also ensure that every working visit of the governor can be achieved with a clear goal and can have a positive impact on the community. Good protocols will help maintain the government's image and create an atmosphere conducive to the implementation of broader government tasks.

In the implementation of protocol activities in the field, there are often various obstacles caused by the difference between laws and regulations and the reality at the event, which is mainly triggered by the difficulty of coordination with the organizing committee. Delays for state officials also often occur due to sudden additional activities, such as hearings or visits to disaster sites. The presence of state officials in an activity is highly dependent on protocol decisions that must consider various aspects, including compliance with regulations as well as security and comfort factors. In addition, the role of protocol in an event is not only to carry out the rules, but also often has to adjust to the preferences of state officials, as long as it does not conflict with applicable regulations. Therefore, protocol officers are required to be present and ready one hour before the event to ensure coordination runs well. However, in practice, there is often a shortage of protocol personnel in the field due to the very busy schedule of activities of state officials, thus hindering the smooth running of tasks and protocol functions. However, although the role of protocol officers is vital, there are still many challenges faced in ensuring that every working visit of the governor runs smoothly. Coordination factors between various parties, time management, and situation control in the field are some aspects that need to be carefully considered by protocol officers. (Kartika et al., 2025; Rismawati, 2022)

Based on this, this thesis aims to analyze and describe the role of protocol officers of the North Sumatra Provincial Regional Secretariat Leadership Administration Bureau in the success of the governor's working visit. This research also aims to explore the factors that support and hinder the success of protocol tasks and provide recommendations to improve the effectiveness of protocol implementation in future governor working visits. By

raising this topic, it is hoped that it can contribute to the development of understanding of the importance of protocols in the government system, especially in the context of local government, as well as strengthen the capacity of protocol officers in carrying out their duties more optimally. (Hasim et al., 2024)

Based on the background described earlier, this study formulates two main problem focuses. First, this study examines the role of protocols in the Administration Bureau of the North Sumatra Provincial Secretariat in planning and coordinating the working visit of the Governor of North Sumatra. This focus includes aspects of agenda planning, scheduling, cross-agency coordination, and managing procedures and protocols during the implementation of activities. Second, this study examines various factors that are obstacles for protocols in carrying out their duties during the governor's working visit, both internal such as limited resources and coordination, as well as external factors such as the dynamics of the field situation and sudden changes in agendas.

In line with the formulation of the problem, this study aims to find out and describe in depth the role of protocol in planning and coordinating the working visit of the Governor of North Sumatra. This study also aims to analyze the inhibiting factors faced by protocols in the implementation of their duties during working visit activities, so that a comprehensive picture can be obtained of the challenges and efforts to increase the effectiveness of the implementation of protocol functions within the North Sumatra Provincial Government.

METHOD

The qualitative research design in this study is exploratory by utilizing descriptive data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation. One of the approaches used is case study, which is a research method that focuses on an in-depth investigation of a phenomenon in a certain context. This approach allows researchers to understand in detail how an event or process unfolds by considering the various factors that affect it. Case studies are widely used in the fields of education, business, social, and health because they are able to provide a comprehensive and holistic picture of the subject being studied. The implementation can be in the form of single or double case studies that compare several cases to find significant patterns or differences. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, document analysis, and direct observation to produce a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon studied. (Fiantika et al., 2022; Rofiah, 2022)

Case studies as a research method that focuses on an in-depth exploration of a phenomenon in a real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly visible. Creswell (2013) views case studies as a qualitative approach used to understand a case through in-depth analysis of various sources of information, such as interviews, observations, and documentation. Stake (1995) added that case studies can be intrinsic, i.e. when cases are studied because they have unique values and characteristics, or instrumental, i.e. when cases are used to understand a broader issue. This perspective shows that case studies are particularly relevant for research that demands a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon in a real setting by considering the various factors that contribute to the occurrence of events.

This study adopts a single case study design to explore in depth the process of policy adjustment in the field, communication between stakeholders, and the impact of regional leaders' involvement in disaster management. The case chosen was the process of adding Padang Tualang Village, Padang Tualang District as the location of the Governor's review during a working visit to Lalat Regency, which was initially not listed in the official schedule. The working visit had been planned in advance as an effort by the local government to directly review locations affected by natural disasters, especially floods and landslides, based on a report from the Langkat Regency Regional Disaster Management Office (BPBD). A number of locations in several sub-districts have been set on the official agenda to listen to the reports of field officers as well as provide directions related to handling and recovery. Padang Tualang Village was not included in the initial list because there was no official report on significant damage submitted to the visit preparation team before the implementation of the activity.

On the day of the visit, the author who served as a protocol as well as a researcher conducted an initial survey as part of qualitative data collection. In the process, the author visited the Padang Tualang District area and found the factual conditions in Padang Tualang Village that were different from the official report. Some village areas were

flooded due to the damage to the river embankment which was quite extensive, resulting in damage to residents' houses and agricultural land. These field findings are the starting point for changes in the visit agenda and at the same time the main focus in the case study analysis conducted in this study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Analysis of the Role of Protocols in Planning and Coordinating Working Visits

The research findings show that the role of the protocol officer in this case goes beyond conventional definitions that focus only on procedures and schedules. Based on the role theory put forward by Soekanto (2014), the role of protocol includes three aspects that are manifested in this study:

Norms and Rules: Protocol officers continue to comply with the protocol regulations stipulated in Law Number 9 of 2010 concerning Protocols, but are able to adjust their implementation according to field conditions. Protocols must have flexibility in carrying out their duties.

Ability to Act: Protocol officers demonstrate the ability to identify problems and take appropriate action quickly. They not only carry out the tasks given, but are also able to anticipate needs that have not yet been identified, such as what happened when finding disaster conditions in Padang Tualang Village.

Social Attitudes and Roles: Protocol officers act as a bridge between the government and the community, which is in line with Henry Mintzberg's Interpersonal Role theory which states that the role of intermediary officials is very important in government organizations. (Putra & Raharjo, 2020; Ramadhanty et al., 2026)

The role of protocol in planning and coordinating working visits is also in accordance with the stages of organizing working visits proposed by George R. Terry (2012), namely planning, technical preparation, implementation, and evaluation. However, in this case, the planning stage had to be re-done after discovering new conditions in the field, which shows a high degree of flexibility in event management. (Hidayatullah et al., 2022)

In the process of implementing the working visit, protocol officers arranged safe access routes for the Governor and his team to reach the affected locations without neglecting security aspects. They also arranged a sequence of meetings with community representatives so that aspirations could be conveyed in a structured manner. The layout was adjusted to the condition of the waterlogged field so that it did not allow the use of official tables and chairs, but still maintained respect and protocol ethics for the Governor. Protocol officers carry out the function of communication mediation by ensuring that every community complaint can be conveyed clearly and systematically to regional leaders. Protocol activities before the visit include coordination with the local government, checking the readiness of the location, and preparing other logistical and technical needs. After the visit, the protocol officer documented the entire series of activities, compiled a report on the results of the visit, and coordinated follow-up with relevant agencies so that the Governor's direction could be realized concretely.

The results of the documentation analysis further strengthen the findings of the study. The initial schedule document of the visit shows that the official agenda only covers three disaster-affected locations in Langkat Regency and does not include Padang Tualang Village. The report of the Langkat Regency BPBD received by the visiting team only recorded damage in two other sub-districts without mentioning the villages, although there were additional records regarding the report from Padang Tualang Village that had not been processed. Documentation photos before the visit show the condition of damaged embankments and houses submerged. Documentation during the visit showed the Governor having a direct dialogue with the community and reviewing the location of the damage with the assistance of protocol officers who arranged the flow of activities. The post-visit photo shows the start of the repair of the embankment by the relevant agency as a concrete follow-up to the visit. The protocol administration records also show the internal coordination process in adding the location of the visit, including permits and confirmations from various parties, which confirms the existence of an administrative mechanism that remains in place despite sudden agenda adjustments. (Munawar et al., 2025; Panjaitan et al., 2025)

The perspective of the key informant, Mr. Ady Putra Parlaungan, emphasized that the role of the protocol is not only limited to setting procedures and activity schedules, but also serves as the spearhead of communication between leaders and the community. In the case of Padang Tualang Village, according to him, the contribution of the

protocol is very significant because it is able to identify the needs of the community that are not listed in the official report. The role has three main dimensions. The administrative dimension includes the regulation of technical aspects such as licensing, transportation, and event planning. The communication dimension is related to the effective delivery of information between the visiting team, the local government, and the community. The strategic dimension can be seen in the ability to distinguish priorities that need to be considered by the Governor based on actual conditions on the ground. He also highlighted the challenge in the form of data insynchronization between agencies, especially the absence of a report from the Regency BPBD regarding the damage in Padang Tualang. Without the meticulousness of the protocol, the location has the potential to be unreachable on the agenda of the Governor's visit.

The view of the main informant, Mr. Reza Prima Kurniawan as the Head of the Protocol Section, strengthens the findings. He said that at the time of the initial survey, it was found that flood conditions were quite severe in Padang Tualang Village, while residents had experienced flooding for about a week without a significant response. According to him, the stages of the role of protocol in this working visit start from the initial preparation stage in the form of preparing a schedule based on the BPBD report, coordination with the security team and media, and preparing materials for the Governor. At the stage of the field survey, the team found the fact of the damage that was not listed in the official schedule. He immediately contacted the Governor's aide to report the condition, and in less than thirty minutes an alternative schedule was drawn up and approved to add Padang Tualang Village as the location for the visit. The implementation stage involves arranging the layout in the affected locations, ensuring accessibility for the Governor, and coordinating interactions between regional leaders and the community. After the visit, the protocol documents the entire set of activities and compiles recommendations for follow-up. (Dewi & Fahmi, 2022; Utama et al., 2025)

The perspective of additional informants also enriches the understanding of the dynamics in the field. Agung Nawaf Salna, an employee of the Leadership Administration Bureau, explained that the addition of the visit location was carried out in a very limited time so that the team had to immediately coordinate with various parties, ranging from the police to related agencies, so that the activity ran smoothly. The Head of Padang Tualang Village said that the report had been submitted to the Regency BPBD but had not received a response, so the presence of protocol officers who immediately reviewed the conditions and took quick steps to foster a sense of government concern in the community. Community representatives also revealed that they did not expect the Governor to visit because the village was not listed in the initial list. The protocol response that hears complaints and facilitates the visit is considered a form of real government attention to affected residents.

Analysis of Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of the Role of Protocols

The supporting factors in the implementation of protocol duties during the working visit of the Governor of North Sumatra can be seen from several strategic aspects. Good communication skills are the main factor, because protocol officers are able to convey information clearly and in a structured manner to all related parties, ranging from the visiting team, regional apparatus, to the local community. This ability is in line with the theory of government communication put forward by , which emphasizes that the effectiveness of communication determines the success of the implementation of government activities. Flexibility in implementing rules also plays an important role, because protocol officers are able to adjust procedures and activity schedules according to factual conditions in the field without ignoring the basic principles of protocol. The findings are relevant to research that shows that protocol flexibility contributes significantly to the smooth working visits of regional officials. The support from the leadership also strengthened the successful implementation of the task, especially through the quick approval of the visit team and the Governor to add a review location. This response reflects the commitment of the leadership in responding directly to the needs of the community. The direct involvement of protocol officers with the community also makes an important contribution because the interaction produces accurate and contextual information, which then becomes the basis for informed and responsive decision-making. Subekti & Suwanto (2025) Istiqomah et al. (2025)

On the other hand, there are a number of inhibiting factors that affect the implementation of protocol tasks during the working visit. The lack of coordination between agencies is the main obstacle, especially the lack of data

synchronization between the Regency BPBD and the visit preparation team, so that the affected locations are not identified in the initial planning. This condition is in line with the findings in the background of the research which affirm that coordination problems are a common obstacle in the implementation of the protocol function. Limitations of manpower and time are also significant challenges, given that the busy schedule of visits limits the opportunity for officers to conduct thorough field surveys, while the limited number of protocol personnel increases the workload. Limited resources, both in terms of budget and facilities and infrastructure, require officers to work more intensively to ensure the smooth running of activities, especially in locations with inadequate infrastructure conditions. Challenges in field conditions, such as flooded areas and difficult access, also made it difficult to arrange layout, security, and mobility during the visit. The combination of these factors shows that the implementation of protocol tasks requires strong coordination, resource readiness, and high adaptability in dealing with field dynamics. (Abas et al., 2026; Jitmau, 2025; Wahyudin et al., 2025)

The implementation of protocol duties during the Governor's working visit faces a number of inhibiting factors that affect the effectiveness of activities. The lack of coordination between agencies is the main obstacle, especially because of the lack of synchronization of data between the District BPBD and the visiting team, so that the affected locations are not identified in the initial planning. This condition shows that coordination that is not optimal can hinder the accuracy of decision-making in the official agenda of the visit. These problems are in line with the findings in the background of the research which confirm that weak coordination is a common obstacle in the implementation of protocol functions. Limitations of manpower and time are also significant obstacles, given that the busy visit schedule limits the opportunity for officers to conduct thorough field surveys, while the limited number of protocol personnel increases the workload simultaneously. Limited resources, both in terms of budget and facilities and infrastructure, require officers to work more intensively to ensure smooth visits, especially in locations with inadequate infrastructure conditions. Challenges in field conditions, such as flooded areas and hard-to-reach access, also made it difficult to arrange layout, security, and mobility during the visit. These factors indicate that the implementation of protocols in the context of disasters requires coordinated readiness, resource support, and high adaptability. (Flowerensia & Reviandani, 2025)

Robert Merton's Social Role Theory perspective shows that individuals must be able to adapt their roles according to the demands of the social context they face. In this study, protocol officers succeeded in balancing the formal role as the implementer of official procedures with the informal role as a mediator of communication between the government and the affected communities. George Herbert Mead's Theory of Symbolic Interaction is also relevant, because the adjustment of the visit schedule to add Padang Tualang Village can be interpreted as a symbol of the government's willingness to listen to the aspirations of the community, which then forms a positive social meaning at the local level. The results of this study are also in line with the findings that affirm that the effective implementation of protocol tasks is able to improve performance in supporting leadership tasks, as reflected in the significant contribution of protocol officers to the success of the working visit. Research on the role of protocol in the preparation of the agenda of leaders in West Java Province also strengthens this finding, especially in the aspect of the ability to adjust the agenda according to the needs of the field. The main difference between this study compared to previous research lies in the context of disasters and the dynamics of unplanned schedule adjustments. This situation shows that the role of protocols is not only administrative and ceremonial, but also has a responsive and adaptive dimension in emergency situations that has not been studied in depth in the previous literature. Efri (2025) Puspita (2025)

The findings of this study have significant significance for the development of protocol practices in Indonesia, especially in the context of working visits by regional officials to disaster-affected areas. For the government, the results of this study confirm that the role of protocols is not limited to administrative and ceremonial functions, but also has a strategic dimension in ensuring that government policies and attention truly reach people in need. The position of the protocol as a link between the official agenda and the reality on the ground shows a real contribution to a responsive decision-making process. These findings can serve as a basis for more comprehensive policy formulation on the role of protocols in emergency situations and disaster management. For protocol officers, this study provides an overview that flexibility in carrying out duties and the ability to build direct interaction with the

community can increase work effectiveness and strengthen support for leadership duties. For the community, these findings show that the government has the capacity to respond to the needs of citizens if there is a communication mechanism that allows information to reach the authorities. In this context, protocols act as a strategic bridge between the government and the community. (Alfianto Elang et al., 2026; Hasim et al., 2024; Sugito & Anam, 2021)

The direct impact of the findings of this study can be seen in the follow-up carried out by the North Sumatra Provincial Government, namely the repair of the river embankment in Padang Tualang Village and the provision of assistance to flood-affected communities. In addition, the Leadership Administration Bureau is preparing special guidelines regarding the adjustment of the schedule of work visits in emergency situations. The preparation of the guidelines is expected to strengthen institutional readiness and increase the effectiveness of disaster management on the next working visit.

Based on the results of the research and discussion that has been presented, the main findings can be summarized descriptively. The protocol officer of the Leadership Administration Bureau carries out a comprehensive role, including agenda planning, cross-agency coordination, direct observation in the field, schedule adjustments, and communication mediation between the government and the community. In the case of Padang Tualang Village, the protocol managed to identify previously unreported disaster conditions and took strategic steps to ensure the location received direct attention from the Governor. This success is supported by effective communication skills, flexibility in implementing protocol rules, leadership support, and direct involvement with the community. The obstacles faced include lack of coordination between agencies, limited manpower and time, lack of resources, and challenges of difficult field conditions. The role of protocol in this case not only ensures the smooth running of the working visit, but also produces a positive impact in the form of follow-up on disaster management and strengthening the government's image as an institution that is responsive to the needs of the community. The findings of this study are consistent with the theory of social roles, event management theories, and applicable protocol provisions, while expanding on previous studies by presenting a new perspective on the role of protocol in the context of natural disasters.

CONCLUSION

The role of protocol officers of the Administrative Bureau of the Regional Secretariat of North Sumatra Province in the success of the working visit of the Governor of North Sumatra to Padang Tualang Village, Padang Tualang District, Langkat Regency shows that the function of the protocol is not only limited to arranging procedures and preparing official schedules. This role has developed into a strategic function that connects the government with the community, especially in the context of areas affected by natural disasters. In this situation, the protocol not only carries out administrative procedures, but also plays an active role in ensuring that the reality on the ground can be integrated into the official agenda of the regional leadership.

In the planning aspect, protocol officers prepare the visit agenda based on official data obtained from related agencies. When actual conditions are found in the field that are not listed in the official report, they make adjustments dynamically without ignoring the applicable protocol principles. In terms of coordination, the protocol establishes intensive communication with various parties, including the visiting team, local government, police officers, media, and the community. The mediative role ensures that information is conveyed clearly and accurately between stakeholders. In the field implementation, the protocol acts as a direct observer who identifies the needs of the community, evaluates location conditions, and adjusts the layout and flow of events according to the evolving situation. They also carry out documentation and follow-up functions by recording the entire series of activities and compiling recommendations so that the results of the visit can be followed up in the form of policies or concrete actions for the affected communities.

The success of the protocol role is supported by several important factors. Good communication skills and the ability to adapt to field conditions allow the implementation of tasks to run effectively. The full support of the leadership and the visiting team accelerated the decision-making process, including the addition of previously unplanned locations. Direct engagement with the community results in accurate and relevant information as a basis

for policy considerations. A deep understanding of protocol regulations and flexibility in their application strengthen adaptability in emergency situations. This study also identified a number of obstacles, including the lack of data synchronization between agencies, especially between the Langkat Regency BPBD and the visiting team, which caused the affected locations to not be identified in the initial planning. The limited number of protocol personnel and preparation time aggravated the workload. Difficult field conditions and limited accessibility in disaster-affected areas add to the complexity of organizing activities. Limited resources and budgets also affect the ability to make sudden adjustments to the event.

The contribution of the role of protocols to the success of the working visit is evident in the impact produced. The visit to Padang Tualang Village, which was not originally scheduled, provided significant benefits for the flood-affected community, who felt direct attention from the provincial government. The Governor had the opportunity to provide direct directions related to the repair of river embankments and assistance for residents. The visit also encouraged the formation of synergy between the provincial government and the district government in handling disaster problems. Rapid response and agenda adjustments carried out through the strategic role of protocols strengthen the government's image as an institution that is responsive and sensitive to the needs of the community.

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