

ASEAN Community: Strengthening Spirit of Unity In Diversity Through Political Communication

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Abstract: Indonesia is a large archipelago that contains population numbering more than 250 million people, a number that makes Indonesia one of the most populous countries in the world. These large number imply that significant culture, ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity. Indonesia's national spirit *Bhinekka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity) refers to the variety in the country's internal composition but also indicates that despite all differences in its multicultural society there is a true sense of unity (*Indonesianness*) among the people of Indonesia. Strengthening this spirit through political communication is very important in ASEAN Community. ASEAN Community as product of new regionalism give an opportunity for each country to promote its potency narrowing development gap. One of the pillars of ASEAN Community, ASEAN Socio-Culture Community can be an opportunity for national identity of Indonesia. As an opportunity, culture, ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity of Indonesia that be strengthened by state philosophy Pancasila as means national identity. Political communication is an integral parts of Indonesia people daily life that crucial influence on the political socialisation of the individual. Political communication is a one way to strengthen relation between government and people. Indonesia, need to promote unity in diversity among countries in Southeast Asia. Its consequently, first, developing of modern relations and communications, specially, in ASEAN Community should be determined by the rise of communication and information technology namely social media. The next consequently it could be mean to fulfill national interest in politic, economic, and security.

Key words: unity in diversity, ASEAN Community, social media

INTRODUCTION

In modern times we can see that the times continue to increase. It is easier for us to access anything and also facilitate our work in our daily lives. Internet is one of the facilities created by the innovation of a development today. Internet spread in Indonesia on 1990. Internet users in Indonesia now reaches 50 million people. It is also an impact on political communication by internet media, or offer referred as cyber politics like their facebook, myspace, mailing list, youtube and others.

Political communication with the help of internet media is commonly practiced today. With the help internet media, we can deliver the vision and mission of people in Indonesia to be closer to the people in anywhere. Besides, can also provide its aspirations to politicians using social media. The assistance of a PC and then followed with a notebook and android that erupted in the community making the internet and social media into the one of the special needs of the people in Indonesia who tend to be consumptive. This further makes the increasing public demand for the social media. Social media is the collective of online communications channel dedicated to community based

input, interaction, content-sharing, and collaboration. Website and applications dedicated to forums, microblogging, social networking, social bookmarking, social curation and wikis are among the different types of social media. It is seen by politicians in Indonesia as an ideal political instrument in carrying out political communication.

Although the nation of Indonesia consists of diverse tribes whose culture and customs are manifold and diverse along archipelago Indonesian territory, but overall it is a unity that is the nation of Indonesia. Diversity is not conflicting differences but rather that diversity united in a synthesis, which in turn enriches precisely the nature and meaning of the unity of the nation of Indonesia. *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika's* spirit that Indonesia has now begun to fade. And need for a process of political communication in Indonesia with an effective instrument so that the spirit of national unity can be maintained. Thus the author argues social media as product of information and communication technology could be an appropriate instrument to carry out political communication. Social media also an important instrument to strengthen the sense of belonging to our culture in ASEAN Community. In accordance with the title of this paper ASEAN Community: Strengthening Spirit of Unity in Diversity Through Political Communication, then the problem discussed can be formulated as follows: How does the role of social media influence in a political communication to promote the spirit of unity in diversity?

ASEAN COMMUNITY AS A TREND OF REGIONALISM

Regionalism is a group of states that site on the same geographic space. Russett in Edward D. Manfield and Etel Solingen (The Annual Review on Political Science, Korea University, 2010) agrees that

regionalism defines a region based on geographic proximity, social and cultural homogeneity share political attitudes, political institutes and economic interdependence. It added Deutsch in the same article argue that regionalism showed high level of interdependence across multiple dimensions including economic transactions, communications, and political value. Regionalism also have shared perceptions of various phenomena. Political scientist have argued that regionalism is a political process marked by cooperation and policy coordination whereas regionalization is an economic process in which trade and investment within the region grow more rapidly than the region's trade and investment with the rest of the world. However regionalization could be the future of regionalism because it can be a tool of the growth of societal integration within a region. Regionalization also be a soft regionalism which involves increasing population flows, multiple channels, and complex social network spreading ideas and attitudes (Hurrell, 1995).

Maybe it is important for us to remind about ASEAN as the only one organization in the Southeast Asia. In 8 August 1967, five leaders-The Foreign Minister of Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, and The Philippines sat down together in the main hall of of the Department of Foreign Affairs building in Bangkok, Thailand. The five ministers who sat down together in the Department of Foreign Affairs building were Adam Malik of Indonesia, Narciso R. Ramos of the Phillipines, Tun Abdul Razak of Malaysia, Raja Ratnam of Singapore and Thanat Khoman of Thailand. They designed an important document. By virtue of that document, The Association of Southeast Asian Nations was born. They were founding fathers of probably the most successful intergovernmental organization in the developing world

today. The document that they signed would be known as ASEAN Declaration.

ASEAN Declaration was a short article because it just contained five articles. There were declaration of the establishment of an Association for Regional Cooperation among the Countries of Southeast Asia. Its to be known as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and spelled out the aims and purposes of that Association. Purposes of ASEAN were about cooperation in the economic, social, cultural, technical, educational and other fields, and in the promotion of regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter. It stipulated that ASEAN would be open organization for participation by all States in the Southeast Asian region subscribing to its aims, principles and purposes. It proclaimed ASEAN as representing the collective will of the nations of Southeast Asia to bind themselves together in friendship and cooperation and, through joint efforts and sacrifices, secure for their peoples and for posterity the blessings of peace, freedom and prosperity (asean.org).

ASEAN is a unique organization in Southeast Asia. A little more than a decade ago, Southeast Asia was divided into two blocs. One the old members and another is new members. The old members were Thailand, Singapore, the Phillipines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei and the new members were Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Myanmar. That two blocs describe about different background specifically on political history, ideology, culture, language and religious. The early idea was to create this organization just for economic, social and cultural cooperation however security issues implicitly played a role. At that time, Adam Malik described Indonesia's vision of Southeast Asia developing into a region which can stand

on its own feet, strong enough to defend itself against any negative influence from outside region. It implies that since establishment of ASEAN, Indonesia has own principle to defend it's national identity that based on characteristic of multi-ethnic and multi-culture. But that various background caused the building of integration to regional diversity and national identity so hard or if it impossible to create but an effort to make integrity, narrowing gap, and welfare state must be increased. One way to reach that goal, ASEAN has vision in 2020. It stated that ASEAN as a concert of Southeast Asian Nations outworth looking, living in peace, stability, and prosperity, bond together in partnership in dynamic development and in community of caring societies (Journal Democratic Governance in Multicultural Societies, 2010).

In this time, it is important to recognize that ASEAN Community as a product of renewed and worldwide trend of regionalism. Now regionalism often labelled "the new regionalism" is not confined simply to the inter-state regional organizations and institutions. New regionalism is not only *new* in the sense of a revival or renaissance of regionalist tendencies in terms of the fashionable creation of regional institutions, heralding the return of an old and well known *form* of the phenomenon since the mid-1980s. More important, new regionalism tend to the *purpose* and *content*, or the underlying *logic* of regionalism that is changing and in the process of undergoing a fundamental transformation.

ASEAN, has many purposes namely overseeing reconsiliation, security and stability in Southeast Asia region. It also increasing prosperity of ASEAN nations through building and cooperation on economic and socio-culture in the form of integrating and reflecting on the strength of ASEAN and wishing to create a vision and identity of community. In the regional

international relations, ASEAN cooperation doesn't enough for pressure economic integration and intra regional trade. Each country in ASEAN need to increase national identity and its potency in order to take opportunity about transfer knowledge and technology, increase people-to-people contact, increase capacity building, and narrowing development gap. ASEAN Community as the new regionalism because it can be the *current wave* or era of regionalism. The new regionalism is characterized by its multidimensionality, complexity, fluidity and non-conformity, and by the fact that it involves a variety of state and non-state actors, who often come together in rather informal multi-actor coalitions. Relations among government in the same region as a formal actor and non-government involve bussiness, mass media, NGO, organization and so on. People relationship can also be informal actor. ASEAN Community that devided into three pillars namely ASEAN Economy Community, ASEAN Political-Security Community, and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community as an instrument for each country to show its capacity and capability.

Improvement of Relations Between Government and People Through Politic Communication

People still remember about multiculturalism in the United States. It about what multiculturalism should be and whether it is even a desirable goal. Indonesia as a unique country appears to have gone a long way towards conceptualizing and implementing a national vision of multi-background (ethnic or tribes, culture, linguistic, and religious) coexistence. "Unity in

Diversity" (Bhinneka Tunggal Ika) was proclaimed the national spirit of newly-independent Indonesia when it served Dutch colonial rule at the end of World War II. The spirit, drawn from Sanskrit and attributed to rulers of the Majapahit Empire.

The prominent use of this spirit by Indonesia's two post-Independence leaders, President Sukarno and President Suharto, is noteworthy for two reasons. First, it marks their early insights about the political importance of supporting a diversified multi-ethnic fusion rather than an American style and effort with "melting pot." Second, the maxim tellingly represents how Indonesian government policies have been designed to address the political challenge of cultural pluralism through the mass manipulation of cultural ideas about a glorious common history and the harmonies present founded on important yet unthreatening social differences. The Indonesian government has succeeded in constructing a unified, multi-ethnic state and multi-culture nation with population numbering more than 250 million people in the world.

We still remember that Indonesia under the leader of President Soekarno designed national power through multiculturalism in facing Dutch and Japan Collonial rule. Unfortunately, Soekarno lost control over his Old Order government in September 1965. At that time multiculturalism become boomerang when an internal army whose alliances with Indonesian Communist Party in political coup. While Soeharto regime with the New Order's government more focused in building infrastructure, national security, and economic development than maintaining heteroginity and integrity of this nation. President Suharto has achieved further successes in controlling the military, revamping the national economy, and securing virtual self-sufficiency in rice production. To support his policy, Soeharto moved Javanese people to

another island like Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Irian Jaya (now: Papua). This forced people migration bring up ethnic conflict. It because of less understanding to each culture between migrations and native people. Under the New Order regime, certain aspects of ethnic difference have been concealed while others have been promoted, coopted, and even invented to serve both national stability and economic development.

Reformation regime give an opportunity for people to get their freedom. People who initially did not freely voice their opinions now got that right. Taps of freedom as completely open. People can freely march to speak their opinion, parties with diverse backgrounds grow rapidly. On the other hand, society is still not ready with this disclosure. Respect the freedom of others and their diversity has not been completely formed, whereas Indonesia's multicultural society requires these prerequisites. Multiculturalism in this era sometime be influenced by Western style and technology information-communication. People tend to more think theirself, more individualism, and more consumptive. As the result, understanding about multiculturalism be debated when criminalism increased such as terrorism, human trafficking, and violence against minorities. The presidents from reformation era already trying to fix this problems such as with special policy for minorities. Here seen in order to solve the problems of transparency in the reformation era, in a multucultural society, good communication between government and people very needed.

Social Media As An Instrument of Communication Politic

Social media has changed the way people communicate an idea. For example newspapers, magazines, television, and radio, providing information to the public in the form of one-way communication.

This phenomenon is different from social media, where social media has revolutionized the way to share ideas and information with the community and share in the online network. Social media has penetrated in almost every community in society, including political actors.

Political communication is a public sphere, is a place where community members can collectively form a general opinion in one environment. Good political communication requires the participation of political actors, media, and public. Political actors must be able to convey their messages to supporters, either directly or through an intermediary. In this case, the internet has become an intermediary and containers that are good for the process of communication and political campaigns. The relations that exists in the current internet era should be a greater opportunity for the government and the people. Political campaign the government should not only existed when the election campaign to get a position in the next period. Political campaigns with an emphasis on strengthening the multiculturalism that is based on the spirit of unity in diversity must be the priorities and a targets that must be realized. Political campaigns as a form of political communication will be getting wider response in terms of both space and time via an internet connection, especially the use of mass media no longer be new, but should be improved.

The diversity of ethnicity, race and religion in Indonesia in each region is very different. Meaning of tolerance then be a tricky thing to understand, because the perspective is wrong to society that only one eye assume that tolerance was a generalization. People should be more

intelligent and critical and do not swallow just the information they get. For that is expected to Indonesian community air-social media can fully understand the information and news you want delivered. And can sensibly address the news and provocation, so it is not always clicking the generalization that particular tribe, a certain religion or race. However, it is just a trick to divide the people of Indonesia. The spirit of unity in Indonesia has already begun through social media as means of political communication. That has happened we can see when Eid and Christmas spoken by adherents of different religions in Indonesia, it will be established which is getting stronger sense of unity amidst our culture is very diverse.

Some public figures greetings via social media to people who have different ethnicities and religions, it also will increase the spirit of unity. An example is when Reverent Obadiah Tanto Setiawan say Happy Eid through his Facebook account, or A cleric like Mama Dede congratulating Galungan. It must be also able to enhance the spirit of unity. The system is banned from admin applied when there are comments that are racist out in social media is imperative. Because then will not create a situation that could break the Spirit of unity. The development of social media in the virtual world will be growing and growing. The ability to master and use it will become a strategic factor for the political actors in the process of communication and political campaigns. Gaining the support and voice is a primary target of any political actor. And has become a synonymous (not to say a linear thing and one thing is for sure) that the political actors of the most popular social

media, is the support and the most votes from the audience. This is the biggest positive impact of social media for communication and political campaigns. Social media is able to give a positive effect on the political actors with the establishment of two-way communication of intense political supporters. Shifting opinions and voice mobilization of floating voters is also a positive effect on the social media.

The most important ethical put forward is in the process of communication and political campaigns. Communication and political campaigns is not the place to look for weaknesses, shortcomings, even mistakes for political competitors, but rather as a medium to convey ideas, vision, mission and opinions healthy dignified, polite full of wisdom, and is responsible for the political maturity and diversity of Indonesia. Social media itself is a means of public diplomacy can embed a wide variety of interests. With the rapidly expanding of using internet, The role expanding of social media become increasingly alongside traditional media to promote spirit of unity in diversity.

Strengthening Spirit of Unity In Diversity in ASEAN Community

From three pillars of ASEAN Community, this article more focused on the third pillar namely ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community. This pillar emphasizes on ASEAN Community in socio-cultural community's have primary goal of realizing that is people centered and socially responsible with a view to achieving enduring solidarity and unity among the nations and people of ASEAN by forging common identity and building a sharing and caring society which is

inclusive and harmonious where the well-being, livelihood and welfare of the people are enhanced. Indonesia as multi-ethnic and multi-culture nation has to be quick run and enhance understanding of spirit unity in diversity. Writer assume that spirit unity in diversity such as growing spirit of tolerance and respect of minority group, loving national product dan local culture. It is very important emphasized and encouraged to the younger generation, considering that more and more young people who are drawn into the vortex of foreign cultures Import culture unwittingly continued and increasing with the increasing use of social media for the community. In this case the government should be prudent to issue a special policy on the use of social media particularly facebook and twitter, as example public service ads that will contain the cultural diversity of the archipelago. This small step in the future will be very meaningful considering that the ASEAN Community is no longer a luxury item in Indonesia. ASEAN Community, especially in the third pillars can be a way for Indonesia to accelerate the realization of national interests in addition to the two other pillars . First , the first pillar of the ASEAN Economic Community ASEAN Community that is slowly but surely has to be a milestone for Indonesia to show the potential and ability. The existence of Indonesia in the path of the equator bring good luck to the country. Such geography make Indonesia as a country which rich in natural resources from both land and sea. If it is associated with earlier statements about the importance of public service ads that are packed in social media can help people to get to know a variety of potential

natural products that have a high commodity in the international market .

Second, with so many Indonesia people knowing their own national culture which rooted in local culture it can increase nationalism. Strong nationalism became the government's success in running the government because nationalism will go hand in hand with the political development of the nation . This grass root nationalism will be government's foundation. It would be wise to turn to the Soviet Union , a superpower that has finally been broken because of weak nationalism. The integration of people who only sustained by the development and ease infrastructure without a strong nationalism will eventually kill the country. Thus, the political power and state security can not be separated from how much nationalism possessed by each people. Third, the third pillars of the ASEAN Socio - Cultural Community clearly provides an opportunity for Indonesia to introduce its culture to other countries . This country has long been famous for the personality of the people who were courteous, polite, friendly and forgiving in despite of the cultural diversity owned. The advantage of the existing potential are due transferable to other countries in the Southeast Asian region in particular . So that the various international events that can add charm and image of Indonesia should be intensified improved by using social media . Also still with the use of social media, the government can also hold cultural exchanges by showing Indonesian young figures in the international arena.

CONCLUSION

Indonesia as one of the founders and a member of ASEAN is no longer as a spectator as well as receipient countries of any progress and convenience gained from its involvement in the organization. From previous reviews showed that Indonesia

has a lot of potential that can be presented along with the implementation of the ASEAN Community. Through ASEAN Community, Indonesia can actually use to fulfill its national interest :

1. National interest in the terms of economic, with the existence of ASEAN Community will make Indonesia easier to seek it's market share from all of existing commodities. These commodities can be sourced directly from natural potential or from the result of processing natural resources based on the ability of technology and creativity.
2. The national interest in terms of political security through the involvement of Indonesia in the ASEAN Community can also be realized. It can't be separated from the original purpose of the organization which want to decrease the internal conflict in order to reach regional integrity based on the diverse backgrounds of each members. In other words, if the advanced economies are characterized by the decreasing gap on the welfare among ASEAN member countries, the political and national security can be more manageable.
3. For the third element of the linkage of Indonesia and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community in fulfilling the national interest and not be the object of complement. The diversity of Indonesia give more values especially with capabilities of using advanced technology such

as social media wisely. This is the importance of providing openness and flexibility of knowledge to the whole Indonesian people through government policy, especially in the use of information and communication media.

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