

Two Decades After Reforms, Anti-pluralism Discourse Still Strong

Thursday, 16 August 2018 WIB, By: Marwati



The Indonesian reform movement that has entered its second decade this year has brought hopes to the citizens regarding changes in state governance affairs. But in fact, the freedom that had long been awaited for has now turned into euphoria that carries with it extremist attitudes. This phenomenon was discussed during the Mangunwijaya Discussion Forum on Wednesday (15/8) at Faculty of Cultural Sciences UGM.

“The word pluralism that is part of Indonesia’s identity of pride has become an alien instead. People are even scared and unwilling to discuss it,” said Dean of the Faculty, Dr. Wening Udasmoro.

The Mangunwijaya Forum that is initiated by the Faculty along with *Kompas* daily and Yayasan Edukasi Dasar (DED) since 2009 has developed ideas and practices of humanism from Yusuf Bilyarta Mangunwijaya. The theme of the discussion this time was *(Anti) Pluralism and the Ups and Downs of Post-reform Citizenship*.

In this context, discussion on pluralism or extremism was not apart from the phenomenons that are happening in the online media. Openness, supported by digital technology, has also carried

opportunities to spread hoax and hatred as well as garnering influence. Specifically, freedom of expression has instead triggered primordialism-based exclusive attitudes.

J. Haryatmoko, SJ, lecturer from Universitas Indonesia and Universitas Sanata Dharma, said the socio-political situation in Indonesia recently had been tested by the societal dynamics that tend to be anti-pluralism. Such dynamics were much affected by digital communication advancement, particularly social media. Citizen journalism, he said, was often misused to spread hoax.

“Hoax is still rampant. On one hand, many people are sceptical with mass media credibility. On the other hand, hoax shows that instead people turned out to easily trust information from social media,” he said.

Society, according to Haryatmoko, was conditioned to ignore verification of truth. Credibility of news, message, or opinion is often left out. Lies easily enter through people’s confusion in separating between news, opinion, fact, and analysis. Among the Indonesian people who are already polarised by ideologies, tension and conflict will be more easily triggered.

“Those who devised, engineered, and spread hoax through social media are breaking the public room that sacrifices acceptance of pluralism, whereas pluralism acceptance is the pillar or diversity,” he said.

But he saw this as a normal phenomenon in the post-truth era that puts first emotions than rationale and objectivity of data. To deal with this matter, self-criticism is required as well as giving more time to the often ignored form of communication, which is listening to the perspective of others. He also suggested to introduce media literacy, especially digital communication literacy in school so that the school students understand the mechanism, technique, and tricks of social media and they would not be easily manipulated.

“Start this from simple things such as alertness towards headlines, because these are often used as a tool to lure someone to get into a discourse that would entrap them. Track down the source of news whether it is credible,” he said.

Related News

- [Young Generation Determines Pluralism Future](#)
- [PUKAT UGM Urges President to Reject Anti-corruption Law Amendments](#)
- [New Ways are Required to Make Bureaucracy Reforms](#)
- [Prof. Tom Campbell: Human Rights Issues Experience Demythology](#)
- [Reflection on Down-to-Earth Innovation for the State: UGM Anniversary](#)