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### **Certain new media platforms as framing strategy? a case study of the successful anarchist social protest in Central Indonesia**

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## **Abstract**

This article deals with the elaboration of how offline activism was organized to move online through certain new media platforms in an anarchist public protest against the policy of gold mining concessions from 2010 to 2012 in Bima District, West Nusa Tenggara Province, Central Indonesia. Certain new media platforms are assumed to be used by the FRAT Bima's activists as the electronic repertoires of contention for public outreach and framing strategies. In the offline realm, this social movement has been successful in launching claim-making, although it has to be pursued through the destruction of various public facilities, which has an impact on the cancellation of the local authority's policy to convert villagers' agricultural land into natural resource extraction areas. This subversive tactic was carried out in a planned way to give pressure on demands on the local government and at the same time, it was not planned as a reaction to the repressive treatment of the security forces. Mass violence was positioned as an outlet for deprivation-accumulative complaints and even an instrument of struggle. Meanwhile, in the online realm, the digital divide problem became a special obstacle that arose in the locus context where the use of new media platforms was limited so the formation of collective identity, mobilization of support, and network expansion depended on conventional propaganda channels which proved very effective to support the articulation of public complaints to the certain local authority as the object of the claim.

## **Introduction**

The potential and dynamics of using certain new media platforms in social movements for public outreach and framing strategies to transform public grievances into online activism or vice versa is the focus of this paper. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the category of new media platforms such as mobile phones and social media, especially variants of networking sites that are facilitated by the internet, are assumed to be used by the activists of the "*Front Rakyat Anti Tambang (FRAT) Bima*" (Anti-Mining People's Front) during 2010-2012 as the electronic repertoires of contention, before and after the real action took place, to intensify the campaign against gold mining concessions granted by the local authority to certain corporations. The author's focus is on the use of mobile phones and digital media by social movement activists, as a support for offline protests, for the promotion of public grievances and collective identity as an effort to sow changes to the political structure of democratic systems at the local level. Web-supported activism or digitally enabled movement is considered to have coloured the FRAT Bima's resistance to the neglect of environmental rights by

the local government several years ago. This community was a forum for struggle with various elements of student organizations, a village youth, and the general public who were concerned with demands for the cancellation of extractive policies, especially Bima District Head Decree No. 188.45/357/004/2010 concerning the approval of the adjustment of the mining business permit, which included the areas of Sape, Lambu, and Langgudu Sub-Districts as the locus of exploration activities.

In the offline realm, the collective protest of the FRAT Bima has been successful in launching claim-making, although it must be pursued through the application of vandalism or the destruction of various public facilities, which has an impact on the cancellation of the local authority's policy to convert agricultural lands of residents of all villages in three sub-districts into natural resource extractive areas. This anarchist protest was oriented toward encouraging environmental protection as well as criticism towards neoliberal governance, following the conclusion of Hidayat (2019, p. 191) "the disruption of the FRAT Bima to the local authority, which carried elements of violence in the form of public buildings demolition, declared that it was a form of the radical movement that promoted an issue of environmental saving." Such a radical protest was a form of collective action that happened to show feelings of dissatisfaction towards certain undemocratic policies (della Porta & Diani, as cited by Quaranta, 2015, p. 3) and has been used to encourage social change through engaging the collective energy and people action (Germain, Robertson, & Minnis, 2019, p. 153).

Many scholars have formulated the positive contribution of ICTs, the Internet, or Digital Media to the success of various social movements at local, regional, national and international scales. The Internet has enabled the dynamic shift in developing movements through various special platforms namely social media and digital communication which can propagate pieces of information promptly (Germain, Robertson, & Minnis, 2019, p. 152) and support different organizing logics (Bennett & Segerberg, 2011). They can be used as up-to-date channels for engaging citizens (Robles, Torres-Albero, Antino, & Marco, 2015, p. 496), deepening democracy based on the aspect of civic-political participation (Suwana, 2018, p. 11), sharing information and recruiting new members (Howard, 2010), taking online events directly (Earl & Kimport, 2011), or creating a democratic enclave (Yangyue, 2011, p. 33).

However, the existence of these technological devices has contributed to the pessimistic arguments of some observers, especially in the framework of promoting democracy, in the form of the presence of the digital divide problem, campaigns for zero real action, and the like such as Faris & Etling (2008) and Morozov (2011). New media platforms are considered to only form virtual networks and cannot represent the existence or interests of real citizens (Axford, 2001, p. 19) because only people who have internet access can join them (Wilhelm, 2003).

Referring to the Indonesian context, digital media has been politically used for organizing protests, supporting electoral surveillance, and accommodating the space for better freedom of expression (Jurriens & Tapsell, 2017). It has

encouraged the forming of interactive communication without any restriction for Indonesian citizens and engaging freely with others through various platforms such as micro-blogging, blogs, and social media (Nugroho, Putri, & Laksmi, 2012). Digital activism has successfully enabled socio-political changes because of its huge capacity to boost online civic activism or political participation, and both at the same time (Suwana, 2020).

Nevertheless, opinions about the weakness of social movements through social media platforms in Indonesia have also emerged and led to accusations that the substance of the movement tends to float as mere discourse without real action, such as Lim (2013)'s term "Many Clicks but Little Sticks" which reflects the situation when netizens diligently clicked the button but after that, there was no impact on social movements (Savirani, 2017). Social media in Indonesia can mobilize people but has failed to encourage democratic representation and turn public content into a political agenda. Civil society tends to be only busy discussing public issues on social media, without being able to pressure policymakers to transform these issues into a political agenda (Savirani et al., 2014, p. 13). And not all social media activities in this country lead to real action because cyber tweets are only limited to conversations about criticism or protests against the authorities (Galuh, 2017, p. 8).

The segment of the environmental movement in Indonesia, which intersects with the use of social media, has become the attention of Galuh (2017) who examined what social media means for activists of the resistance movement against the Benoa Bay Reclamation agenda in Bali Province. Her study did not discuss the role of social media as a communication channel between activists and the use of the platform as a forum for imaging movement actors but focused on the use of social media as a strategy for articulating the complaints of urban youth in the environmental movement and transforming online activism into action in real space, through the *ForBALI (Forum Rakyat Bali Tolak Reklamasi)* "Bali People's Forum to Reject the Reclamation." She tried to explore social movement as a form of civil society activity that was unique, rational, consciously carried out for the expression of complaints and uses strategies to achieve demands. The *ForBALI* activists chose social media as a movement strategy not only to facilitate communication between actors internally but also to shape public opinion so that they jointly support the movement against reclamation. The choice of strategy was based on reasons of limited economic capital, more effectively reaching the grassroots, avoiding editorial politics in framing news, and social media has become a complementary part of the daily activities of the actors involved in the movement.

In the case of the radical protest that occurred in Bima District in 2010-2012, a lot of research has been carried out to prepare theses and journal articles. Using the Pan and Kosicki model, Septarini (2012) conducted a framing analysis of the content of reporting on the mining conflict in Bima District by the Lombok Post Daily Newspaper, especially in the incident of the forced dissolution of the occupation of the Sape Harbor at the end of December 2011. She attempted to

identify how the mass media framed the meaning of the incident of forced occupation of public facilities and the steps taken by the security forces to deal with the coercive measures against the demonstrators. Firdaus (2013) explained the various obstacles faced by police investigators in the process of investigating criminal acts of destruction of public facilities caused by demonstrations, in which the case demonstrations of tens of thousands of residents at the Bima District Head's Office on January 26, 2012, was also looked at as an object of his study.

Firdaus (2014) examined various post-conflict social changes in Lambu Sub-District, particularly the positive aspects that emerged in people's lives during the protest against the mining permit rejection by the FRAT Bima and in the aftermath. Meanwhile, Mirwan (2014) explored the pattern of conflictual relations between the community and the local government in mining management, where the background or driving factors, the variety of actors, the utilization of mass institutions, and the implications of the community's political resistance against corporations in three sub-districts were also described in detail by Erwin (2014). Satriani's (2015) article also explored the state-citizen relationship in the context of democracy based on Charles Tilly's democratic perspective referring to the context of the FRAT Bima's movement.

In line with previous research but with a different focus of attention, Bafadhal (2015) described the conflicts that occurred in Lambu Sub-District as a result of the issuance of Regional Government Regulations regarding mining concessions. Added to this discussion, Imaduddin (2016) revealed the background of the FRAT Bima's resistance to the District Head's Decree No. 188.45/357/004/2010 and the factors that propelled the resistance movement to success. From the perspective of communication science, Firdaus (2016) looked at the communication patterns that exist between the local authorities and the community in dealing with mining management conflicts by focusing on five sub-variable indicators of formal communication patterns in the form of face-to-face meetings, official meetings, socialization, seminars or workshops, and official letter, which concluded that the Bima District Government had never implemented it at that time.

Completing the literature on the FRAT Bima case study, Khosiah, Hajrah, & Syafril (2017) explored public perceptions of the plan to open a gold mining area by the Bima District Government, especially in Sumi Village, Lambu Sub-District. Meanwhile, Hidayat (2019) reflected that the denial of the FRAT Bima against the extractive policy of the Government of Bima District from 2011 to 2012 was a type of social movement conducted to claim certain aspects of citizenship, especially environmental rights and political participation, in which in its claim-making process, the FRAT Bima applied maximally some disruptive tactics or nonconventional repertoires such as strikes, pickets, boycotts, riot, civil disobedience, and other confrontation forms.

Of the eleven pieces of literature on the FRAT Bima case study, there was not a single specific discussion on new media platforms in the form of mobile

phones and social media used by movement activists for politicizing environmental issues campaigns to the wider community (public outreach), framing strategies, and publication of various actions taken by the community that carried out before, during, and after a series of radical repertoires to success the social protest agenda. On that basis, a question that will guide the author in finding the research data is *do new media platforms matter in mobilizing villagers in all actions of the FRAT Bima's movement?*

### **Methods**

As an approach that emphasizes intensive tracing of the properties of a single unit or case for generalization purposes across a larger set of units (Campbell & Stanley, 1963; Gerring, 2004) through process-tracing techniques (George & Bennett, 2004), the authors utilize case study to examine the potential and dynamics of using new media platforms oriented to public outreach and framing strategies to transform public grievances into offline activism or vice versa in the case of the social protest of the FRAT Bima during 2010-2012. ICTs in the category of new media platforms such as mobile phones and social media, especially variants of networking sites that are facilitated by the Internet, are assumed to be used by activists before and after real actions took place to launch campaigns against gold mining concessions that given by the Bima District Government to certain corporations. This research data relied on the results of in-depth interviews with 25 activists in the four months of fieldwork investigation (July-October 2021) which were chosen deliberately because they possessed authentic experience and broad insight into the process of collective identity formation, mass mobilization, and the expansion of organizational networks during social protests where both conventional and unconventional repertoires were applied in a sequential pattern for the articulation of public complaints to the Bima District Government as the claimant.

### **Results and Discussion**

#### **“Violence is the Answer” to Spur Policy Change: The Anarchist Contention of the FRAT Bima**

Conflicts in the mining sector often involve many actors and take the form of disputes between the community and the government and/or the community and corporations. The background of this kind of conflict stems from the accusation that the existence of mining activities is often unable to raise the level of community welfare, but only produces negative impacts on socio-ecological life. Likewise, with what happened in Bima District, the adversarial relationship between the local authorities and the community was motivated by the existence of extractive resource exploration permits for certain corporations.

Following the argument of Hidayat (2019) "The decision of the District Head No. 188.45/357/004/2010 serves as the basis as well as the base of the problem to elaborate the dynamics of the anarchist social protest of the FRAT Bima during 2010-2012. It is related to the adjustment of mining business licenses that grant exploration powers to two corporations, namely PT. Sumber Mineral Nusantara with a mining area of 24,980 hectares and PT. Indo Mineral Citra Persada with a mining area of 14,318 hectares." As alleged by activists and villagers, this local policy was a flawed or non-democratic product because it did not involve the public in its formulation process. The unilateral action of the local authorities to determine the location of residential areas, agricultural land, and protected forest areas in three areas of Lambu, Sape, and Lenggudu Sub-Districts as gold mining operational areas for two corporations triggered the residents' resistance through protest actions which transformed into a massive conventional and radical resistance movement. They demanded that this extractive policy be revoked because they feared that the existence of mining activities would only damage nature, moreover it was only an unpopular type of regulation that contradicted the substantive interests of the entire population in the area where the policy would be implemented.

Hidayat (2019) also argued that "worrying about the threat of environmental degradation, without considering the huge potential for local economic growth offered by exploration activities, is behind the anarchic resistance of citizens to the Bima District Government by destroying several public buildings to make sure ultimatums for policy changes would be taken seriously by the local authorities as the object of the claims that were accused of neglecting the primacy of politicizing the public sphere in the process of policy formulation which will touch the interests of the general public."

The disruptive action of the FRAT Bima, characterized by anarchism or vandalism, took the form of destroying and burning several public facilities, such as the Lambu Sub-District Office on 10 February 2011 and the Bima District Head's Office on 26 January 2012. Not only that, the forced occupation of the Sape Harbor during 19-24 December 2011 paralyzed the Bima-Manggarai transportation route, East Nusa Tenggara Province, which was accompanied by the burning of several government agency offices in Lambu Sub-District (Sectoral Police Headquarters, Agriculture Service Office, Forestry Service Office, and four Village Offices) as a reaction to the oppressive treatment of the security forces against the mass movement in which 3 people died, 23 people were injured by live bullets, and 31 people were arrested as suspects in the forced occupation of the port and the vandalism that accompanies it.

The government tends to choose a repressive approach to respond to citizen protests against extractive policies. In the name of development and public order, the use of security forces is considered the ultimate solution for the government to resolve the turbulence of resistance at the grassroots. Problem-solving models like this often leave complicated problems. Not infrequently demonstrations carried out by the community which were initially just protests that questioned the orientation



of certain regulations suddenly turned into bloody clashes due to provocations by the security forces. The government's reaction that puts forward a non-persuasive approach is not infrequently responded to by the community with violence as well as an effort to fight against such treatment.

The asymmetric power relations in the case of the anarchist protest of the FRAT Bima accompanied by the government's oppressive handling characterize the continuity of radical democracy (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985) at the local level. This concept emphasizes that the existing oppressive power relations in society can be renegotiated and changed. It reflects efforts to transform existing power relations and build a new hegemony. By highlighting the characteristics of differences and disagreements in democracy, power relations like this can be brought to the surface and then eliminated. Radical democracy is a very decentralized type of democracy because it is based on a people's network in which citizens hold democratic control over the state. Therefore, citizens in their political dimension are always in the arena of battle and conflictual relations to articulate various interests. The process of articulation of these interests takes place continuously under the position of the subject which is influenced by various discourses (Juru, 2013). Freedom and equality are primary dimensions in every political struggle initiated by citizens (Mouffe, 1995; Wegwu, 2022).

"Citizens have the right to openly convey their refusal over any development initiative set by the government if it is deemed that it will only worsen the quality of life of many people. The community views the existence of a mining company in their village as a group of robbers trying to seize their assets by not reluctance to injure their owners if they try to fight back." [Interview with Ansyari, an Activist of the FRAT Bima, on July 7, 2021]

When people have this kind of political awareness, they will take various activism actions to realize the social change they aspire to, including organizing protests against the government which is considered negligent in carrying out its constitutional responsibilities to improve the degree of public welfare. The community was then transformed into a critical group against the government which seemed domineering and suppressed the human rights of citizens. The public carries out a series of activism manifests to propose improvements in government services to them. Such activism may include protest, direct action, or civil disobedience (Stern et al., as cited by Ogley-Oliver, 2012; Wilson, 2021).

Protests intersect with oppositional elements to influence change and civil disobedience is positioned as a path that leads to equality (Knight, 2009). Activism which has proven to be more effective in bringing about social change is through organized groups and social movements. As a powerful political force, social movements can use the collective interest and agency of the masses to drive the change process (Ricketts, 2012). Oppressive power relations and the practice of depriving citizens of human rights by the government or corporations have always been the triggering factors for the emergence of various public protests. The collective movement practised by the FRAT Bima a few years ago is a clear example



of resistance to the local authorities who deliberately ignore their political and environmental rights as citizens. The non-conventional repertoires armed disruptive intervention mode in the FRAT Bima's mass protest for the articulation of demands to the Bima District Government set off an expression of citizen consciousness about environmental citizenship and political rights.

"People's anger was caused by feelings of disappointment, frustration, and feeling that all peaceful efforts were in vain so that pressure on the local authorities to lodge a request for the cancellation of extractive policies must be carried out in other ways beyond law-abiding demonstrations whose existence and significance are often underestimated by the authoritative power holders in Bima District." [Interview with Adi Supriadi, an Activist of the FRAT Bima, on July 25, 2021]

This statement confirms the argument of della Porta & Diani (1999) that "social movements are built to reflect dissatisfaction with ongoing policies," which is motivated by relative deprivation due to unfair treatment (Crosby, 1982; Crosby & Gonzales-Intal, 1984). Violence arises because of the feeling of being marginalized by individuals due to the gaping gap between the merit of expectations and the usefulness of ability. The bigger and more serious the gap, the greater the potential for violence. Thus, social movements emerge as a result of dissatisfaction which will grow when the scope of this dissatisfaction expands and at the same time there are no more flexible institutions that can respond to it (Gurr, 1970).

Social protests tend to be triggered by the anger of many members of the community, especially when social conditions create a wide gap between expectations and reality. The condition of deprivation is not only a secondary factor but is a primary factor that precedes resource ownership. Many people are only armed with a sense of disappointment but have succeeded in carrying out a resistance movement because of the support of a strong determination even without the support of adequate resources (Erwin, 2004, p. 32).

Social movements arise as a consequence of the unification of actors in rational ways based on interests or substantive demands and the existence of a central role for organizations and cadres and leaders to mobilize existing resources. Individuals will form a collective identity when they share dissatisfaction and act for that reason (Klandermans, 2005, p. 376). Discontent, depression, or disgust with conditions of injustice are the main triggers of any social protest (Crosby, 1982). Thus, protests are born out of situations decorated with collective disillusionment with existing injustice and arbitrariness, or as a reaction to something unwanted or unfair that requires policy changes as a corrective step to this sad situation.

The above statement of the FRAT Bima's activists also reflects that the use of subversive tactics is a consciously planned strategic step based on certain moral and ethical considerations, where the form of action that is applied sequentially in this social protest is a continuum from conventional to unconventional actions that include four approaches. at the same time, as formulated by Tarrow (as cited by

O'Brien, 2016, p. 15), in the form of Appeal—*present, address*; Demonstration—*gather, display, march, perform, costume, replant*; Confrontational—*disrupt, chant, enter, obstruct, occupy*; Violent—*damage*, which is used as a way to care for environmental issues and political aspirations, to sequence its claim-making chronology which consists of (1) Raising support from inhabitants through a rejection petition of mining policy and first lawful demonstration at the office of the Lambu Sub-District's Head on January 8, 2011; (2) Second lawful demonstration at the office of the Lambu Sub-District's Head on January 31, 2011; (3) Burning the office of the Lambu Sub-District's Head and other public infrastructures on February 10, 2011; (4) Port's coercive occupation on December 19-24, 2011; and (5) Combusting the office of the Head of Bima District, destructing other public buildings, and releasing cons from jail on January 26, 2012 (Hidayat, 2019). Based on that continuum, the performances of claim-making will evolve according to condition, place, time, and available technologies (Tilly, 2006), and repertoires will rotate both with amending technologies and in response to the authority reactions (Khazraee & Losey, 2016, p. 43).

Subversive tactics were carried out in a planned manner to give pressure demands on the local authorities and were also unplanned as a reaction to the repressive treatment of the security forces that guarded every protest action of the FRAT Bima. The burning of the Lambu Sub-District office that accompanied the demonstration on February 10, 2011, with approximately 7000 participants, occurred because it was triggered by the presence of one victim named M. Nasir who suffered a bullet wound from a police bullet.

The forced occupation of the Sape Harbor on 19-24 December 2011 was a planned action that was attempted to be peaceful, but due to the indiscriminate handling by the state apparatus which resulted in 3 deaths and 23 injuries due to live ammunition, the destruction of many public facilities inside and outside the port area became an outlet for demonstrators' anger. Likewise, the burning of the Bima District Head's Office on January 26, 2012, which was positioned as a planned strategy to overflow with disappointment over the attitude of the Bima District Head who did not heed their ultimatum regarding the cancellation of the extractive policy no later than 5x24 hours before the D-Day of the demonstration. Anarchist protest tactics were employed by the protesters as efficacious modes to accelerate the accomplishment of their craved policy changes (Hidayat, 2019, p. 195).

"Without the disruptive pressure that grabs the attention of the public at large, the decision to revoke mining concessions would never have taken place. That's why we carried out the forced occupation of the Sape Port for five days from 19 to 24 December 2011. However, this action was not effective enough to force the local authorities to comply with our demands, so it spread to the burning of the Bima District Head's Office at a later stage." [Interview with Musaidin, an Activist of the FRAT Bima, on 20 August 2021]

Thus, some of the repertoires used by the FRAT Bima are characterized by political violence which refers to violence done by the masses to achieve political goals

as well as social changes ie regime change, implementation of public policy, abolishment of an institution, the protection of civil rights, etc. The violent strategy is applied to launch attacks against nation-states, political bodies, and institutions for realizing the intended purpose of enacting political change based on their values or principles (Tsvetkov, 2021). Opposition movements selected violent methods because they were much more efficient than non-violent strategies at achieving political goals (Pape, 2005). Political violence is necessary for proper political communication and protest (Kling & Mitchell, 2019). And there will always be a need for some politically deprived groups to utilize violent political protests against oppressive actors (Koos, 2014; Pearlman, 2011). Social anarchism is an uncontrollable outburst of emotions that is based on rumours or negative issues to raise the collective awareness of the community to fight which becomes a chance through which the powerless can apply control on policy and decision-making processes (Setiawan, 2021).

Collective violence in the form of vandalism and destruction of public infrastructures, according to the context of the FRAT Bima's movement, can be interpreted as an outlet for deprivation-accumulative complaints and even used as an instrument of struggle. The output of this series of the FRAT Bima's radical protest strategies ultimately forced the District Head to be formally repealed Decree No. 188.45/357/004/2010 in two days after the riots. This decision reflects the application of policy responsiveness by the local authorities to adopt steps that are congruent with the demands of social movement activists as well as the will of the Decree of Bima District's Legislature Chairman and the Recommendation Letters from the General Directorate of Mineral and Coal, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources of the Republic of Indonesia.

### **New Media Platforms as Framing Strategy for Outreaching Public in the Case of the FRAT Bima**

The description of the use of media categorized as "old platforms" in the case of the FRAT Bima gets an adequate portion in eleven pieces of literature on the topic of the extractive policy resistance movement in Bima District during 2010-2012, as reviewed at the beginning of this manuscript. Following the argument of Hidayat (2019, p. 191) "to garner support and public awareness about the mining issue which they challenged, some activists of the FRAT Bima disseminated information to the general public in three sub-districts through various media such as pamphlets and limited round-table discussions with certain villagers." Realizing that one pillar of social movements is identity formation among collective actors (della Porta & Diani, 2006; Tarrow, 2011), students who were involved in the mining concession resistance movement in Bima District spread awareness messages to the wider community about the negative impacts of these extractive activities so that they were motivated to take part in the struggle of the FRAT Bima. Such an explanation of framings is a significant strategy to expand collective identities and solidarities because it aids to encourage a huge quantity of people in the mobilization process (Snow, as cited by Caruso & Cini, 2020, p. 1007).

Utilizing the community-subscribed "Local Cable TV" network, the FRAT Bima's activists publicly broadcasted the propaganda through a documentary film which they acquired from the *JATAM (Jaringan Advokasi Tambang)* "Network of Mining Advocacy". This was very successful in raising public anxieties about the bad effects of mining activities. This video screening was effective in having a great influence on increasing the number of individuals who joined a number of the FRAT Bima's activities oriented towards the collective identity formation in the form of a free pulpit and public meetings discussing the strategic-tactical plans of the movement. Since this community was formed, social protests have become more organized in managing tactical matters in the field during demonstrations as well as the formation of mass mobilization tools from various villages in three sub-districts, by appointing a Village Coordinator to recruit personnel and raise funds for the movement that comes from donations of the local community. The Village Coordinators and their informal apparatus are tasked with conducting conscientization to forge villagers' awareness of the dangers of extractive activities and the issue of the local government's negligence in respecting environmental rights, as well as motivating them to take collective resistance. The framing of the meaning of the movement and the problem of injustice like this is the initial prerequisites for mass mobilization or an important stage that affects the success of achieving the demands of the FRAT Bima's resistance movement.

So how was the usage of new media platforms as a framing strategy? It turns out that conventional propaganda media such as pamphlets and posters seem to be more prominently used by the FRAT Bima's activists than social media, for the enlargement of a siding framework or collective identity formation as the core pillar of recruitment and mass mobilization in all series of social protests carried out. The problem of the digital divide was the main consideration for intellectual actors driving the resistance because most of the villagers who want to be mobilized have no mobile phones and adequate internet access. The usage of mobile phones and social media as internal communication channels between activists was also limited and not optimal due to the same factors. Nevertheless, the interaction between the FRAT Bima and new media platforms reflects a single characteristic, namely reciprocal actions which were begun in the real world and then advanced to the Internet's domain. New media platforms were not the main technology used by the FRAT Bima's activists to support repertoires of contention as framing strategies.

"Communication with all Village Coordinators spread over three sub-districts was not always done through mobile phones, but on the spot, interactions to coordinate fundraising for community donations as well as notification of technical matters regarding the mechanism for recruiting sympathizers from villagers and their mobilization schedule. During the avoidance of arrest by the security forces, while being designated as a *DPO (Daftar Pencarian Orang)* "List of Person Searching" in the case of the burning of the Lambu Sub-District Office on February 20, 2011, via a mobile phone, I contacted students who were studying in Makassar

to immediately return home and reorganize the villagers' resistance." [Interview with Mulyadin, an Activist of the FRAT Bima, on 19 September 2021]

Mobile phones began to be circulated and traded widely in the Bima municipality around 2003 where only certain people (middle to upper class) could afford them, even though the internet came to Indonesia in the late 1990s (Tapsell, 2017) and the reform movement of 1997-98 saw the first significant genesis of an information society in Indonesia, employing the Internet and new media (Hill & Sen, 2005). Internet became popular in the Bima area in the following years after 2003, especially among urban communities. Although the FRAT Bima's resistance movement emerged from 2010 to 2012, the use of mobile phones and the Internet has not yet penetrated the lives of all villagers in Bima District, especially inhabitants of Sape, Lambu, and Langgudu Sub-Districts. This kind of digital divide problem affected the limitations of the usage of new media platforms in the formation of the collective identity of the FRAT Bima's movement, instead of relying on conventional propaganda media.

It will be difficult to find traces of short messages that have been sent to each other as a means of internal communication between activists and external contacts with several village leaders who are sympathizers of the movement because they have never been archived, especially the mobile phones that were previously used have been damaged or lost somewhere. Taking into account, that not all activists involved in the movement have this kind of tool (interview with Mulyadin, an Activist of the FRAT Bima, on 19 September 2021). Similar opinions also came from other activists who were interviewed interchangeably by the authors during the four months' fieldwork visits.

Indeed, in a social movement, the use of conventional propaganda media still has to be integrated with new media platforms so that offline networks can be strengthened. The combination of the two is a form of regulating the strategic resources of the movement as well as creating a linkage of competent actors and groups in media framing. New media platforms tend to be able to open up opportunities to mobilize individuals quickly and offer some instruments for the articulation of individual opinions in a democratic society (Galuh, 2017, pp. 147-148). Media frames determine a matter through selection, exclusion, emphasis and elaboration (Entman & Rojecki, 1993). They notify the audience how to contemplate or consider something (Harlow, 2011, p. 228) and help clarify meanings embedded within the text (Reese, 2007).

Before the FRAT Bima was formed, dozens of students who had institutionalized themselves in the *KMLB (Kesatuan Mahasiswa Lambu Bima)* "Students Union" conducted a convoy and demonstration for the first time in front of the Lambu Sub-District Office on April 28, 2010. Although the mass was small, the action was oriented to openly declaring local students' rejection of the extractive policy of the Bima District government and announcing to the general public about anxiety over certain things that have gone unnoticed, because activists believe that disseminating reliable information to the wider community will be able

to build a feeling of togetherness and create collective anxiety about certain unfavourable situations (Smelser, 1963).

In the period leading up to the second demonstration on December 13, 2010, this student community implemented conscientization to the community by disseminating propaganda through pamphlets and limited discussions with community groups continuously and moving villages, even repeating the same pattern after the formation of the FRAT Bima as a forum for the collective movement of all elements of student organizations with the same agenda. This kind of technique or mechanism reflects that public opinion is to be formed through conventional means, with the hope that later it will get broad support from various parties, mainstream mass media coverage, and social media publications by sympathizers who have internet access. This reflects how offline activism was organized to move online through social media, and it is relevant to the arguments of Germain, Robertson, & Minnis (2019):

“Once a movement begins, the strategies of activism are vital means of carrying forward the message of those engaged in seeking change. Where, when, and how the protests are lodged may have a significant impact upon the strength and credibility of the messages and messengers of the social movement. Social movements may consist of a variety of approaches for consciousness-raising, identity formation and solidarity, identification of an agenda for affecting policies, resisting enforcement of laws, educating or sharing information about an issue or set of issues. We may witness marches, rallies, strikes, petition drives, and sit-ins with varying intentions from peaceful means to violent actions within social movements. Participants of these movements can lead to broader impacts through lectures/speeches, solicitation for fund-raising, development of campaigns for change, occupation of public and private spaces, violation of laws, and the provocation of riots.”

Although social media provides easy access at low costs, both for communication and campaigning, without any limitations of space and time (Galuh, 2017, p. 84), the problem of the digital divide was a special obstacle that has sprung up in the context of the FRAT Bima’s movement. The usage of new media platforms was limited so the formation of collective identity relied on conventional propaganda channels, which have proven to be very effective for framing strategies even though they required an outpouring of time, energy, and excessive costs. The formation of a collective identity, mobilization of support, and network expansion in this disruptive protest that took place in Bima District stood out in the offline rather than online realm.

## **Conclusion**

The democratic political system in Indonesia after the New Order facilitated the availability of great opportunities for the growth and development of various contemporary social movements. Freedom to assemble, organize, and express opinions openly are possible because the pattern of state regulation is no longer



authoritarian. The anarchist social protest of the FRAT Bima during 2010-2012 added to the record of events of public political resistance in Indonesia to reject the non-populist policies of the local authorities who tend to favour corporate interests and ignore the sustainability of the livelihoods of villagers. Collective violence in the form of vandalism and vandalism of various public infrastructures was positioned as a response to the repressive treatment of the security forces, an outlet for deprivation-accumulative complaints, and even an instrument of struggle in the eyes of the activists to pressure the local governments to act congruently with the demands of the movement.

As a form of the crowd and social movement, the FRAT Bima was able to utilize conventional propaganda media in the framework of public outreaching, collective identity formation, and the transformation of public issues into a political agenda. This media variant has functioned optimally for framing strategies in identifying the figure of a common enemy, comrades in arms, as well as the substantive problems being faced and their solutions. The utilization of new media platforms such as mobile phones and social media was at a low level due to the digital divide problem that plagued the lives of most activists and villagers targeted for recruitment. Thus, the construction of the meaning of resistance, mobilization of support, and network expansion in the disruptive protest turned out to rely more on the existence of offline repertoires for the articulation of public complaints to the certain local authority as the object of the claim.

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