POLITICAL DISCOURSE IN INDONESIA AND MALAYSIA FOR NATIONAL HUMAN SECURITY: A CASE STUDY OF LAHAD DATU

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Abstract

Issues related to the Malay world (Indonesia and Malaysia) and across the border in the context of political, economic and trade had been discussed and explored many times over. However, the national and regional human security issues within the Malay culture have been neglected. It received no or little coverage from the media. Thus, this research looked at the Indonesia-Malaysia political discourse in maintaining political stability within the Malay Archipelago. It will use document analysis to understand the role of the Indonesia-Malaysia political communication in maintaining the security of the Malay Archipelago by using the Lahad Datu issue as a case study. The study found that the political communication between Indonesia and Malaysia is vibrant. The style of political communication used was of mutual understanding of their respective roles, with less focus on sensationalism and more emphasis on conflict prevention.

Keywords: *Political communication; Indonesia-Malaysia relations; national human security; Lahad Datu*

WACANA POLITIK INDONESIA DAN MALAYSIA TERHADAP KESELAMATAN INSAN NASIONAL: KAJIAN KES LAHAD DATU

Abstrak

Isu-isu yang berkaitan dengan dunia Melayu (Indonesia-Malaysia) dan merintangi sempadan dalam konteks politik, ekonomi dan perdagangan telah banyak dibincangkan dan diterokai. Namun dalam arus perbincangan ini kerap ditinggalkan keselamatan insan nasional dan serantau memandangkan isu Melayu dari aspek budaya lebih mudah diperolehi. Manakala isu keselamatan insan nasional kurang mendapat liputan media atau ianya mungkin jarang berlaku. Justeru itu, kajian ini meninjau arah komunikasi politik Indonesia-Malaysia dalam memelihara kestabilan politik Kepulauan Melayu. Kajian komunikasi politik Indonesia-Malaysia terhadap keselamatan insan nasional di Kepulauan Melayu ini menggunakan kaedah analisis dokumen dengan melihat peranan komunikasi politik Indonesia-Malaysia dalam memelihara keselamatan Kepulauan Melayu dengan menggunakan isu Lahad Datu sebagai kajian kes. Kajian ini mendapati komunikasi politik antara Indonesia-Malaysia adalah aktif. Kedua-dua negara mempunyai kefahaman bersama dalam peranan mereka masing-masing dengan memberi tumpuan kepada pencegahan isu sensasi dan konflik.

Kata kunci: Komunikasi Politik, hubungan Indonesia-Malaysia, keselamatan insan nasional, Lahad Datu.

INTRODUCTION

Mass communication and politics have always been associated ever since the emergence of mass communication studies. The two fields are interdependent of each other and the effect is still shown until now. Scholars such as Walter Lippman and Harold Laswell are some of the renowned advocators studying political communication from the perspective of public opinion and propaganda. The spread of propaganda using the mass media was deemed to have shaken the political world and the mass media was labelled as a dangerous weapon.

Persuasion in the communication field is considered an important element in presenting an issue to the community, and political figures often seen persuasion as a method to interact and build their network with the community. As argued

by Dan Nimo (2004), political communication is a form of discipline that studies the behaviour and communication activities connected with politics. It is also regarded as a process of transferring communication symbols that contained a message from a person or group to another person or group, to influence the thinking, attitudes and behaviour of the targeted audiences.

Therefore, having understood the definition above, political communication is an activity that contains a certain political message with a view to influence the attitudes and mindset of a target group. Political communication can also be associated with the political media, which can be categorized into three main actors or players, namely (i) political, (ii) media practitioners and (iii) an audience (Siti Aminah, 2008). All three players are dependent on each other and they influenced each other. Erman Anom (2008) further elaborated that in considering media and politic, the few aspects that must be considered are media ownership, media monitoring, media association with the society and government, as well as laws and regulation that governs the freedom and responsibility of media. The role of media as the mediator between community and government and the power of media in shaping public opinion has always been at the forefront of political communication.

National human security issues are probably one of the most discussed area. National human security comprises two important elements namely human security and national security. Human security studies often focused on individual and the rights of an individual under the law as well as the impact to the individual when that security is breached. National security on the other hand concentrates on the sovereignty and territorial rights of a nation. Territorial conflicts and conflicts between immigrations can lead to serious consequences especially to the relationship between two countries. Political communication thus become an important skill to master during times of conflict and the role of the national media as mediators can make or break a nation during the time of national security crisis (Liotta, 2002).

BACKGROUND

In recent times, mass media are seen as the most important and influential means of transmitting information, starting with traditional media such as newspapers, radio and television to the development of information dissemination through the virtual world. The development of information and communication technology (ICT) has accelerated the distribution and delivery of information. Sterin (2012) explains the development of online media causes news dissemination to become timelier, and at the same time, more complex. This paper therefore, examines two online news portals in Indonesia and Malaysia to understand the political news dissemination on the Lahad Datu issue.

(a) Kompas.com
Kompas.com was introduced in 1995 under the name Compass Online. Initially

only operating online, it then developed in 1998 to Kompas.com. Kompas.com became more focused on development of news content, design, and new marketing strategies. Kompas.com soon became a well known and trusted news portal in Indonesia (http://www.kompas.com/).

(b) Malaysiakini

Malaysiakini was launched on 20 November 1999 with readers from diverse backgrounds due to the fact that the online news portal is available in English, Malay, Chinese and Tamil. In mid-July 2008, Malaysiakini became the top and most visited Malaysia website (Alexa.com). Malaysiakini brand itself as serving fast, accurate and balanced news with various point of views. Malaysiakini also convey information reporting and information on taboo issues such as immigrants, AIDS, Islam and racist system. Such issues has been reworked and given new forms of understanding. (http://www.malaysiakini.com/bm).

(c) Invasion crisis in Lahad Datu.

Lahad Datu is a town and district located in Tawau Division, east Malaysia, on the island of Borneo. It is located on a peninsula north of Darvel Bay. The history of the Lahad Datu started around 1654 in which the Sultan of Brunei gave Sabah to Sultan of Sulu, who is also part of the Philippine government. In 1878, the Sultan of Sulu leased Sabah to the British North Borneo Company. In 1946, the company has delivered Sabah to Britain. Sabah became part of Malaysia in 1963 and has been recognized by the United Nations Organization.

Lahad Datu invasion crisis begun in early February 2013 when armed soldiers of the Sultanate of Sulu Philippine who called themselves the Royal Sultanate of Sulu arrived in Lahad Datu and occupied the village Tanduo for several weeks. They were sent by Jamalul Kiram III, a student at the throne of the Sultanate of Sulu. His goal was to assert territorial claims of the Philippines in the east as part of North Borneo dispute.

Lahad Datu issue is scrutinized in this study as it involved the regional diplomatic ties and innocent lives taken. Lahad Datu invasion was of huge concern to Indonesia with 162 of their citizens working in the area. Indonesian authorities had to ensure its citizen safety and at the same time, ensure its relationship with Malaysia is at its strongest to handle the crisis.

In the case of Lahad Datu, human security takes precedence over national issues. The archipelago countries that have long histories as regional friends must maintain their bilateral relations with each other while still upholding their nation's integrity.

RESEARCH FOCUS

This study focused on the pattern and direction of political communication displayed by the media in Indonesia and Malaysia in preserving national human

security. The role of leaders and strategies used to address the crisis of Lahad Datu were studied especially in the aspect of achieving stability and securing national security.

This research seeks to interpret the positioning of Indonesia and Malaysia in regards to the issue and also to capture the ongoing discourse of this issue in a larger picture of the relationship between these two countries.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Political Communication

Studies of political communication often involved three main actors namely the politicians, media practitioners and audience. In lobbying support for their policy and ideologies to the public, the politicians will try to convey it to the media practitioners. Media practitioners choose the way they frame news with many factors in consideration. The public then receive the political news that went through rounds of gatekeeping. However, the public too can influence media coverage when the public is vocally expressing interest in certain issues and taking certain stands on issue. In other words, all the three main actors mutually influence each other through the process of communication (McNair, 2007).

Malaysia-Indonesia Relations

Mohd Noor Mat Yazid (2011) noted that the relations between Malaysia and Indonesia evolved during the 1961-1965 era. Ideological difference between Malaysia that is influenced by the British colonial and Indonesia that is influenced by the Communist ideas sparked off a murky relationship between the two countries. From that point onwards, these two countries have its fair share of tense conflict and good relations. The media of both countries was the watchdog in all the conflicts as they report on the issues of abuse of Indonesian domestic workers in Malaysia, Ambalat between Malaysia and Indonesia, the claims of ownership of the classic Malay nursery *Rasa Sayang Eh* and the *Pendet* dance.

It is clear that Malaysia and Indonesia has difference even when they share common language and culture. However, the conflicts of the countries are usually minor, not resulting in great economic or political consequences. The two countries still help to boost each other's economy such as when Malaysia receive labours from Indonesia in order to meet the needs of labour forces in Malaysia. Economic cooperation is still very much ongoing with both countries often time putting aside their differences to work together.

Media Responsibility in National Human Security

The mass media, especially the traditional mass media has always been credible and deemed as a trusted medium of information. Therefore the mass media have a role and a huge responsibility in delivering transparent information to the public. The media also plays a role in the delivery of policies made by the

government to the people. Straubhaar and LaRose (2000) explained the media play the most important role when it comes to elections. Media also define and shape beliefs, attitudes as well misconceptions about certain issues rather known as public opinion.

The development of media has been rapid in recent years. Current issues happening around the world can be known through the media regardless of the limitations and boundaries. As stated by Gilbao (2006) the online media is slowly gaining the trust of the public as a trusted source of information. The understanding of issues and the take on sides are judged using the media.

The dynamic of information is especially intriguing when we are trying to see how it affects the bilateral relationship between countries. While many studies have been done, the understanding of the Malay political world is still limited. That is why this study focuses on the relationship between Malaysia and Indonesia. These two countries share common cultural features, language and lifestyle. However, many issues had cropped up between these two causing a sometimes strained relationship of the countries.

The relationship between the two neighbouring countries date way back in history. However the intimate relationship has been bruised little by little, partly due to media coverage and provocation of certain issues. For example, Ching et.al (2007) discovered that the Indonesian media often time used the frame of diplomacy and insistence to fight in their reporting. The study also found that the Indonesia media often time used the political elites, government and the Indonesia National Army as the main source of information.

Therefore, it is of importance that the media seeks to establish good regional relationship and not escalate issues, especially in the context of Malaysia and Indonesia. Media, according to Gardner (2001), can be divided to hate media and peace media. The hate media is defined as a form of media that is trying to promote violence, hatred or tensions among racial, ethnic or social groups to each other, or enacted and political aims.

In this concept the media deliberately encourage conflict with bias and fraud. According to Gardner again, hate media are example of abuse of freedom of speech and deliberate exacerbation of pressures that exist between each country in order to provoke feeling of nationalistic or ethnic hatred. Typical example of hate media will be the Nazi Germany usage of radio to increase the feeling of hate to other people.

Meanwhile, peace media are defined as media that can be used to promote peace, and a belief of better response to what has been done by the hate media. Peace media offers alternative sources of information or releases in order to cancel the messages issued by the hate media. Open communication is essential to maintain or build all the stability and change to be more organized. Peace media is a real trial undertaken in the prevention of conflict, conflict resolution and simplicity (Gardner, 2001).

By using the issue of Lahad Datu, the two roles are carried by the same media

which is hate media or media peace actually is a starting point to a human's national security. Due to the factor of distance between Malaysia and Indonesia, they are located in Indonesia will depend on the media simply to get information. Government of Indonesia in particular, need to know the security status of their citizens residing in Lahad Datu as the issue is becoming increasingly serious aggression when it involves death. Therefore, the form taken by the media exposure is considered particularly relevant because in the first to (i) safeguard the welfare and safety of workers in Lahad Datu Indonesia, and both (ii) maintain good relations between Malaysia and Indonesia as well, as the relations between the two countries have already shaky because of conflict issue.

FRAMING AND MEDIA

Framing is a theory most commonly used in communication studies. Sociologist Goffman (1974) explains how information is received and processed by humans using their schemata interpretation to organize information and interpret meaning. Media is seen as an agent responsible not only for delivering information to the public but also to help public interpret meanings.

Valkernbug, Semetko and Vreese (1999) explain framing is defined as a scheme of interpretation that enables individuals to receive, manage and provide feedback about any of the information received. Meanwhile, Chong and Druckman (2007) also define framing as an issue which can be viewed from different perspectives and interpreted with particular implications and consideration.

Framing can be derived using both quantitative and qualitative method. Valkernbug et. al. (1999) introduced the quantitative measurement of framing using five generic frames, namely responsibility, human interest, conflict, moral and economic consequences frames. Hallahan (1999) introduced seven frames, namely, the public relations, attributes, choices, action, issues, responsibility and news.

Entman (1993) on the other hand uses a qualitative approach to understand frames. He explained that framing is a selection and highlight of message presented by the media. Each news will choose a frame and then highlight the text communication. There are four functions proposed by frames namely, definition of the problem, the cause of the problem interpretation, moral evaluation and / or solutions to the issues. By using these four functions, one can evaluate prominent frames.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses descriptive content analysis as proposed by Chang, Tan and Mohd Zaid (2009). It analyzes Kompas.com and Malaysiakini, the two leading news portal in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Entman's four function of framing (1993) is used as the theoretical framework of this study, namely definition of problem, interpretation of cause of problem,

moral judgment and proposed solution. Entman defined the four functions as below.

Definition of the problem: the definition of the problem is the casting of the problem in gains and losses to a party. Evaluation is done varies with the culture of a society. Problem definition usually refers to how an event and understand the problem.

a. The interpretation of the cause of the problem: the interpretation of the cause of the problem will usually identify the events that led to the occurrence of the problem.

b. The interpretation of the causes of this problem is usually referring to the 'what' or 'whom'.

c. Evaluation morality: moral evaluation is done by looking at and evaluating the cause of the problem and its impact to be taken.

d. Proposed solution: in this dimension will offer suggestions and forecasting solution effects will occur. This needs to be done to evaluate what is necessary and what is chosen to solve the problem.

The analysis was done on the two online newspapers, namely Kompas.com and Malaysiakini. The time frame taken was between 1st March 2013 and 15th of March 2013, during the peak reporting of the on-going Lahad Datu invasion. These two online newspaper were chosen as they are the most dominant online news portal in Malaysia and Indonesia, with the total numbers of visitors for both news portal reaching 40 million per month.

RESULT OF STUDY

Kompas.com

(a) Kompas.com Framing Analysis: Definition of problem
Analysis showed that Kompas.com from Indonesia gave emphasis on Indonesia and Malaysia in its Lahad Datu reporting. The main problem defined in the crisis was the safety of the Indonesian worker that is around the proximity of Lahad Datu. The Indonesian government is framed as concerned of the welfare of their citizens during the crisis. A number of Indonesia immigrants at Lahad Datu cause Indonesia to take various initiatives to ensure the people's safety.

The following quote showed that the Indonesian government were concerned of its people during the invasion of Lahad Datu:

> *"Tercatat 162 pekerja di ladang sawit Sahabat 17 telah diungsikan ke Kompleks Embara sekitar 6 km dari tempat kejadian" jelas Konjen RI di Kota Kinabalu" (Kompas.com : 6 March 2013)*

> *[Translation: "162 workers from Sahabat 17 palm oil plantation has been moved to Embara which is about 6 km from the scene", explain Konjen RI in Kota Kinabalu"]*

"Pasukan Kesultanan Sulu menggunakan sistem perang gerilanya sehingga mereka masuk ke hutan-hutan, kamp penampungan para TKI. Ini yang membuat polisi dan tentera Malaysia bisa membabi buta mengejar dan menembak mereka dan kami bisa jadi sasaran" (Kompas.com : 6 Mac 2013)

[Translation: "The Sulu armed force uses the guerrilla war system by hiding in the forest and the villages of the TKI. This is what makes the police and military forces giving a blind chase and we may become the victims"]

They also defined the problem as the guerrilla system of the Sulu team which can be harmful to the Indonesian workers in Lahad Datu. Below is one of the excerpts of reporting.

" Memang ini adalah sesuatu yang sensetif, tetapi tidak boleh juga kita tidak mengambil sikap. Kepada Menteri Luar Negeri sudah saya instruksikan agar manakala mendekati wilayah Indonesia, kita harus punya sikap. Jangan sampai situasinya tambah runyam, oleh karena itu kita juga harus punya posisi yang tepat, kata Presiden Yudhoyono di Budapest" (Kompas.com : 8 Mac 2013).

[Translation: "It is a sensitive issue, but we must not ignore. I have instructed my Foreign Minister to be alert as it is near the Indonesia territory. Do not wait until the situation becomes more complicated and have a good position, said President Yudhoyona in Budapest"]

The problem was further defined on the safety of the workers when the government announced initiatives for the welfare of those working in or near Lahad Datu.

" Tempoh pemindahan WNI ke penempatan asal juga masih di kawal dan pihak Indonesia menunggu lampu hijau dari pihak Malaysia di dalam membenarkan WNI pulang ke tempat masing-masing. Kami masih menjaga WNI di sana (Sabah), pemulangan mereka menunggu kabar pemerintah Malaysia menyelesaikan masalah itu" (Kompas.com : 15 Mac 2013)

[Translation: "The duration of shifting WNI to the original place is still under control and Indonesia is still waiting for the green light from Malaysia to allow the WNI to return to their settlements. We are still taking care of the workers and await the Malaysia rulers' news on solving the problem"]

All the excerpts above showed that the Indonesia media framed the problem as with the Sulu invaders and that the main problem will be the safety of the

workers. The government is cooperating with the Malaysian government while waiting for further instruction.

(b) Kompas.com framing analysis: Interpreting the cause

The second dimension of framing will be the interpretation of the cause of a problem. In this regards, Kompas.com clearly defined the main person responsible for the crisis will be the invaders who are trying to assert a territorial claim. Interestingly the Indonesia media quoted the Malaysia's authority in defining the problem as follows:

> *"Kepala kepolisian Nasional Malaysia Ismail Omar mengatakan, kelompok bersenjata itu menyatakan diri mereka sebagai Kesultanan Sulu. Ismail menambahkan kelompok itu menuntut agar diakui sebagai " Angkatan Darat Kerajaan Sulu" dan mendesak karena wilayah itu pernah menjadi kekuasaan kerajaan Sulu. Maka dengan itu mereka harus dibiarkan tinggal di Sabah" (Kompas.com: 14 Februari 2013)*

> *[Translation: The Malaysian Inspector-General of Police, Ismail Omar said that the armed group claimed themselves to be the Sulu royalty. Ismail also added that the group demanded to be acknowledged as "Royal Security Forces of the Sultanate of Sulu" and asserted claim that the territory once belong to the Sulu government. Therefore, they should be allowed to stay in Sabah"]*

Invasion of the Sulu armed invaders shocked the region, especially the communities in Sabah. The situation urged the Malaysian government to undertake various initiatives to ensure the crisis end without any bloodshed. Malaysia and the Philippines government continued to communicate with each other constantly throughout the crisis. Both governments were very diplomatic in the issue in order to avoid straining the relationship between Malaysia and Indonesia.

(c) Kompas.com framing analysis: Moral Evaluation.

Kompas.com also used the frame of moral evaluation on the crisis. The overall tone taken by Kompas.com appears to be non-provocative and neutral with the emphasis on peace and calmness. Among the phrases used were as below:

> *" Pihak Malaysia telah membuat surat pernyataan untuk tetap menjamin keamanan para WNI atau TKI di Sabah" (Kompas : 7 Mac 2013)*

> *[Translation: "Malaysia has issued a statement to guarantee the safety of WNI and TKI in Sabah"]*

The emphasis was the safety and care of fellow human being regardless of nationality as everyone is involved in this issue. The Malaysia government was portrayed as maintaining good relationship with Indonesia and that the

diplomacy is well received by Indonesia. The statements below showed the Indonesia praising and expressing faith in the Malaysian government.

> *"Saya bilang ke teman-teman, kita aman karena kita dipegang oleh Pemerintah Malaysia juga Pemerintah Indonesia" (Kompas.com 11 Mac 2013)*

> *[Translation: "I consider, my friend, that we are safe because we are taken care by the authorities of Malaysia and Indonesia"]*

> *"Pemerintah sudah meningkatkan pengamanan dan pada saya itu cukup. Jarak tempat ini ke Tanduo hanya 9 kilometer, tetapi pengamannya berlapis-lapis" (Kompas.com : 11 Mac 2013)*

> *[Translation: "The authority has increased the security and to me that is enough. The distance from this place to Tanduo may only be 9 kilometres, but the security has many different levels"]*

(d) Kompas.com Framing Analysis: Proposed Solution

In discussing the solution to the Lahad Datu's crisis, Kompas.com highlighted that the Indonesian government has full faith that the Malaysia's government is in control of the crisis. The Indonesian government took the stand not to interfere in Malaysia's internal affairs in accordance to the regional laws. This was said to be the best solution to avoid intervention that will further aggravate the crisis at hand. The Indonesian authorities gave the Malaysian government a full mandate in resolving the issue. Below are some of the statements of solution proposed by the Malaysian government highlighted in Kompas.com.

> *" saya telah memberi mandat penuh kepada Inspektur Jenderal Kepolisian Tan Sri Ismail Omar dan Panglima Angkatan Bersenjata Tan Sri Zulkefli Mohd Zin untuk mengambil semua tindakan yang dianggap perlu," kata Najib (Kompas.com : 3 Mac 2013)*

> *[Translation: "I have given full mandate to the Inspector General of Police Tan Sri Ismail Omar and also Chief of Malaysian Armed Forces Tan Sri Zulkelfi Mohd Zin to take all necessary action," said Najib]*

> *" dengan mandat yang dikeluarkan ini, pihak keselamatan Malaysia telah membuat suatu langkah yang lebih drastik dengan mengepung kesemua kawasan perairan Malaysia di Sabah dan mengetatkan kawasan keselamatan sekitar. Sebagai tambahan dua battalion angkatan darat sudah dikirim ke Sabah, kata Najib" (Kompas.com: 4 Mac 2013)*

> *[Translation: "with the mandate given, the Malaysia security forces*

have taken a more drastic measure by encircling the Malaysia's waters in Sabah and the area around. On top of that, two battalions of armed forces have been sent to Sabah, said Najib"]

Malaysiakini

(a) Malaysiakini Analysis Framing: Problem Definition
Malaysiakini defined the problem as the violence of the invaders and the possibility of shooting incidents between Malaysia and the invaders. The emphasis was on the fact that the area was surrounded by the invaders and a threat of national danger as can be derived from the statements below.

> *"...polis kini mengepung Kampung Tanduo yang masih diduduki sebahagian anggota kumpulan itu dan kawalan keselamatan di kawasan berkenaan semakin diperketatkan. Polis juga telah mengawal segala laluan dan sukar untuk pihak penceroboh untuk keluar atau masuk ke kawasan kampong berkenaan..."*

> *(Malaysiakini : 1 Mac 2013)*

> *[Translation: "...the police now surround the Tanduo Village that are occupied by some of the invaders and the security control around the area is tightened. The police also control the entire pathway in order to control the invaders from going in and out the village"]*

> *"Saya telah menelefon Presiden Filipina Benigno Aquino Jr II berhubung pendirian kerajaan Malaysia itu malam tadi dan beritahu padanya bahawa setelah berlakunya kejadian tembak menembak pagi semalam, kerajaan mengambil pendirian bahawa masa untuk mempertimbangkan apa jua permintaan kumpulan tersebut sudah berakhir"(Malaysiakini : 2 Mac 2013)*

> *[Translation: "I have called the Philippines president Benigno Aquino Jr II regarding the Malaysian government stand last night and told him that if there after the shooting incidents yesterday morning, the government has decided that time in considering the demands of the group is over"]*

The Malaysian government defined the crisis seriously and regard it as a huge threat and dangerous. The government of Malaysia do not hesitate to take drastic moves in the matter as to ensure peace and also protecting the Malaysia's sovereignty. The Malaysian government also defined the people's safety as one of the problems that must be looked into seriously as can be seen below.

> *" Majlis Keselamatan Negara (MKN) menyalurkan bantuan*

makanan kepada 26 keluarga dari Kampung Tanjung Labian yang kini tinggal di Dewan Serbaguna Embara Budi susulan serangan ofensif pihak keselamatan negara ke atas pengganas Sulu di Kampung Tanduo di Lahad Datu"

(Malaysiakini : 5 Mac 2013)

[Translation: "National Security Council (MKN) has given the food supply to 26 families in the Tanjung Labian Village that now stay in the Embara Budi Hall after the offensive attack from the national security forces to the Sulu invaders in Tanduo Village in Lahad Datu"]

(b) Malaysiakini Framing Analysis: Interpreting the cause
Malaysiakini interpreted the cause of the problem as the Sultanate of Sulu's army invasion at the expense of the Malaysia's human security. The group led by Agbimuddin Kiram claimed they were soldiers 'King of Sulu', to claim the territory as belonging to the Sultanate of Sulu Sulawesi.

" pasukan keselamatan mula mengepung Kampung Tanduo pada 11 Februari apabila kira-kira 150 lelaki berpakaian ala tentera dan bersenjata menaiki bot pancung menceroboh ke kawasan itu pada 9 Februari dan menjadikan beberapa premis termasuk rumah dan surau di kampong berkenaan sebagai pangkalan mereka" (Malaysiakini: 1 Mac 2013)

[Translation: "the security forces surrounded the Tanduo Village on 11th February when about 150 armed men wearing army uniform came in boats, invading the space on 9th February and made few premises including houses and suraus in the Village to be their base"]

The problem was defined by the starting point when the invaders came in and conquered the village that is filled with civilians.

(c) Malaysiakini Framing Analysis: Moral Evaluation
The moral evaluation taken by the Malaysiakini was similar to the Indonesia's Kompas.com. The emphasis will be the peaceful way to end the crisis and also to ensure that the bilateral relationship between the Malaysian government and Philippines governments remain unscathed by the incident. The value of working together is also clearly emphasized to ensure the best solution. Consensus between Malaysia and Phillipines was seen as of utmost importance in resolving the territorial claims by the invaders. Some of the moral judgment passed out in the Malaysiakini is as below.

"Kita ambil sikap yang berhemah dalam mengendalikan masalah pencerobohan berkumpulan di Lahad Datu kerana kita cuba

> *elak pertumpahan darah dan selesai masalah dengan baik…"*
> *(Malaysiakini : 1 Mac 2013)*
>
> *[Translation: "We take a prudent approach in handling the group invasion in Lahad Datu to avoid bloodspill and resolve the matter peacefully"]*
>
> *"Hishammuddin berkata kerajaan Malaysia dan Filipina sentiasa bekerja rapat dalam menyelesaikan konflik ini dan memberitahu ia akan dilakukan secara diplomasi tanpa sebarang pertumpahan darah"(Malaysiakini : 2 Mac 2013)*
>
> *[Translation: "Hishammuddin said the Malaysia and Philippines government are always working closely to resolve this conflict in a diplomatic ways without bloodshed"]*
>
> *"Malaysia dan Filipina akan memikirkan jalan terbaik berhubung sebarang tindakan undang-undang terhadap anggota kumpulan penceroboh bersenjata termasuk ketua mereka di Kampung Tanduo, Lahad Datu dan Semporna, Sabah" (Malaysiakini : 7 Mac 2013)*
>
> *[Translation: "Malaysia and Philippines will think of the best way regarding the legal action against the armed invaders including to their leaders in the Tanduo Village, Lahad Datu and Semporna, Sabah"]*

The moral emphasis is that diplomacy is needed and bloodshed should be avoided. The government will take morally and legally correct solution against the invaders.

(d) Malaysiakini Framing Analysis: Proposed Solution.
Malaysiakini defined the solution of the Lahad Datu crisis is firstly by peaceful discussion and negotiation with the invaders as per the statement below.

> *" Sejak pencerobohan oleh kumpulan bersenjata di Lahad Datu pada 12 Februari, kerajaan telah mengambil pendekatan untuk menyelesaikan konflik ini tanpa pertumpahan darah. Pihak polis telah mengadakan pertemuan dan rundingan dengan harapan penceroboh akan bersetuju keluar dengan aman tanpa dikenakan sebarang tindakan undang-undang yang serius" (Malaysiakini: 5 Mac 2013)*
>
> *[Translation: "..Since the invasion by the armed group in Lahad Datu in February, the government has been taking the approach of solving the problem without bloodshed. The police have arranged meeting and negotiation with the hope that the invaders will agree*

to leave peacefully without serious legal action taken"]

Many countries took the same measure when face with similar situation in avoiding any lives taken. However, the turn of event came when eight of Malaysia Armed Forces personnel died in the course of protecting the safety of Sabah's east coast in shooting with the invaders. 19 of the invaders died.

It was then that Malaysiakini framed the Malaysian government as taking drastic measures by deploying armed forces to launch offensive attack from the air and land. Read the excerpts below. It was highlighted as a measure of last resort as negotiations has failed and lives have been taken in the course.

> *"Pasukan keselamatan telah melancarkan serangan ke atas kumpulan penceroboh bersenjata. Serangan ofensif udara dilakukan oleh jet pejuang F18 dan Hawk diikuti mortar dan gerakan daratan oleh anggota tentera" (Malaysiakini : 5 Mac 2013)*

> *[Translation: "Security forces have launched attack on the armed invaders. Offensive air attack was launched by the F18 fighter jet and Hawk followed by mortar and ground attack by army.]*

Legal action was also highlighted by the Malaysiakini against Jamalul Kiram for his attack against the sovereignty of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

> *"Pejabat Peguam Negara (AGC) turut mengemukakan permohonan bagi Jamalul Kiram dari Filipina diekstradisi ke negara ini jika terbukti ada kes terhadapnya. Pergerakan Pemuda Umno juga turut memberi cadangan yang sama untuk mendakwa Jamalul Kiram dan pengikutnya mengikut seksyen 121 Kanun Keseksaan kerana melancarkan perang terhadap Yang di Pertua Agong" (Malaysiakini : 6 Mac 2013)*

> *[Translation:"Attorney General's Chamber issued request for Jamalul Kiram from Philippines to be extradited from this country once the case is proven against him. The UMNO Youth Movement also suggested to sue Jamalul Kiram and his followers according to the Section 121 of Penal Code for launching war against the Yang di-Pertuan Agong"*

Another solution that was highlighted by the Malaysiakini was the ESSZONE (Eastern Sabah Security Zone) which was launched by the Prime Minister after invasion. The existence of ESSZONE was seen as a significant symbolic move of strengthening the security, restoring the public order and protecting the people in the state. Below are excerpt taken from Malaysiakini.

> *" Zon Selamat Sabah Timur (ESSZONE) telah dikuatkuasakan di mana ia meliputi 10 daerah sebagai memberi asas perlindungan kepada Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM)."*

(Malaysiakini : 25 Mac 2013)

[Translation: "East Sabah Safety Zone (ESSZONE) has been enforced where it includes 10 districts to give the basic security to Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM)"]

In addition to the stringent control in the vicinity of Sabah, the Malaysian government also provides assistance to local communities that have been victims of circumstances. Need lend a hand shaped contribution to the local community is seen as one of the initiatives of the current government encroachment in Lahad Datu.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The research has clearly captured the political discourse of Indonesia and Malaysia news portal throughout the crisis of Lahad Datu. It proved that when a crisis or conflict threatens national human security, the utmost concern of countries will be the safety and the welfare of their citizens. Using the four functions introduced by Entman (1993), the research used Kompas.com and Malaysiakini to capture the ongoing discourse. It is clear that the news portal were careful in their reporting in defining the problem and the cause of the problem so as not to cause strain of relationship between Indonesia, Malaysian and Philippine. The regional relationship and threat to the sovereignty of the countries were the forefront concern.

The studies showed that both news portal framed the issue with a balanced and neutral tone to safeguard both countries' interest and welfare. The focus was very much intense of the invasion per se with not much of diversion to its political, social and economic consequences. This is consistent with the results of the interview with Gantnyo on 16th February 2012 where he explained there is lack of strategy in addressing security and stability issues within the Malay archipelago region. However when issues arise, there is a need to understand its multifaceted level with much objectivity. The role of media during conflict times is crucial in conveying information in a balanced way and yet at the same able to create more discourses among the readers to think deeper into the issue.

As seen in the Lahad Datu issue, the media clearly helped in promoting good relationship and moral judgment in solving the problems. Peace journalism was practised by both online news portal. Malaysiakini appeared to be more aggressive in promoting solutions such as suggesting legal actions and drastic measures to be taken. It is clear, in the case of Lahad Datu, the media is an important mediator between governments as well as in assuring the people that actions are taken to resolve the issue.

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