

Buzzer and Social Media Dystopia in Indonesia

News:

An Indonesian economist who is known to be critical - Kwik Kian Gie tweeted like this "I have never been as afraid at this point of expressing a different opinion with good intentions of providing alternatives. Immediately it was buzzed-attack all over, personal privacy torn apart", he tweeted in early February 2021. This statement is really representing of the current socio-political situation in Indonesia which tends to have been dystopic.

As reported by Kompas on February 11, a communication and digital culture expert from the University of Indonesia (UI) Firman Kurniawan said that buzzers have a very big influence in the current digital era. The culture of supporting opinion is actually still in a reasonable level on social media, but in reality, then there is one party who starts by fabricating support, can use paid buzzers, can use bots to shape the atmosphere. As a result, Buzzer becomes unnatural and dangerous when conducting opinion engineering accompanied by intimidation and doxing (spreading personal data in cyberspace with the aim of attacking or killing someone's character). The reason is, they also fabricate truths that don't fit the situation or falsify reality.

Comment:

Dystopia is a community or society that is undesirable or frightening, the opposite of utopia. When technology is in the hands of the wrong actors, and is used in a corrupted civilization, what may happen is dystopia and tyranny. Dystopian society has become a reality in this century, a society that is so unwelcome, because it has no freedom and is filled with fear. What happened in Indonesia; dystopic situations begin to become reality, when criticism becomes a frightening thing for its citizens, when personal matters are bombarded simply because their views contradict the government, when threats of doxing are met simply for telling the truth.

This buzzer has created a dystopic situation, because like Tempo's October 2019 review, these buzzers can easily get profiles of those they perceive as opponents, such as identity cards, telephone numbers, and even the type of cell phone used. Their presence on social media is tasked with securing the policies of regime by spreading fake news to influence public opinion and attitudes.

Interestingly, the buzzer is actually flourish in a democracy, because the state does not want to present directly to avoid being labelled authoritarian. So, the buzzers are here to spread slander and become virtual executioners on social media to anyone who is vocal in criticizing the government. The existence of this buzzer actually reveals the false claims of those who support democracy. It has always been emphasized that Democracy is able to unite the nation, Democracy enables a peaceful transition of power, gives rights to all, Democracy protects minorities, quells riots, democracy enables productive debate and that is the pinnacle of civilization. But

the truth? There is no room for different opinions, let alone opinions that come from an Islamic perspective.

When the rapid flow of information can no longer be controlled by the authorities, what they do is create a 'chaos' of information by letting the disinformation flow flood social media, including maintaining digital hit man who are called "buzzers" to do their job of "killing the messenger" ie silencing the bearers of the truth include the bearers of Dawah Islam.

This new phenomenon actually implies the despair also intellectual defeat against Islam because these regimes are not only trying to silence Islamic da'wah, but also wearing dirty manipulative ways to discredit the messengers of Islam and Khilafah (Caliphate). Previously they tried to block, censor, and obstruct the flow of communication, but this method was not successful in stopping Islamic da'wah. Now they are leading to a co-optation strategy that betrays their own values by using social media to control people and sow confusion, ignorance, prejudice, and information chaos.

Indeed, it is true the words of the Prophet *sallallahu alayhi wasallam*: **«سَيَأْتِي عَلَى النَّاسِ سَنَوَاتٌ خَدَاعَاتٌ فِيهَا الْكَادِبُ وَيُكَدَّبُ فِيهَا الصَّادِقُ وَيُؤْتَمَنُ فِيهَا الْخَائِنُ وَيُخَوَّنُ فِيهَا الْأَمِينُ وَيَنْطِقُ فِيهَا الرُّوَيْبِضَةُ قِيلَ وَمَا الرُّوَيْبِضَةُ قَالَ الرَّجُلُ النَّافِهُ فِي أَمْرِ الْعَامَةِ»** ***“There will come to the people years of endemic deception, when the liar will be regarded as honest, and the honest man will be regarded as a liar; the deceiver will be regarded as truthful, and the truthful man will be regarded as a deceiver; and the Ruwaibidhah will talk freely” Who are the Ruwaibidhah?’ His companions enquired. He replied ‘vile persons (i.e. persons of little worth) talking on public affairs.”*** (Narrated by Hakim).

The increasing pressure and persecution of Muslim activists is a sign that victory is drawing near. In this phase, the courage and determination of Muslims is increasingly needed to show Allah that we are worthy for the true victory of Islam. Insha Allah.

﴿يُرِيدُونَ لِيُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ مُنِمْ نُورِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ﴾

“They want to extinguish the light of Allah with their mouths, but Allah will perfect His light, although the disbelievers dislike it.” [TMQ As-Saff: 8]

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Fika Komara

Member of Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir