

The Role of Social Activism Representative Board of Indonesian National Youth Committee (BP-KNPI) in Malaysia During Movement Control Order 2020-2021

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Abstract: Through activism, community organization, and engagement in social movements, youth worldwide are becoming active actors, demonstrating their ability to influence society in times of crisis. In the context of Indonesian youth, especially those who are part of the diaspora community, attachment to fellow children of the nation is evidenced by social activism, as was the case in Malaysia during the movement control order between 2021 and 2022 through the representative body of the Indonesian Youth National Committee (BP-KNPI). Since its establishment on October 9, 2011, the Indonesian Youth National Committee (BP-KNPI), the representative body for Indonesian youth in Malaysia, has been proactive in playing its role as a second-track diplomatic force, advocating for youth and employment issues, and engaging in social activism to help Indonesian communities in Malaysia. During the pandemic period between March 2020 and December 2021, with the movement control order policy, the representative body of the Indonesian Youth National Committee (BP-KNPI) plays a role in social activism in three domains: (1) the field of employment by supporting the labour recalibration program, which repatriates illegal Indonesian workers in Malaysia (2) in the humanitarian realm by organizing assistance from both internal and external parties, such as the Indonesian embassy in Kuala Lumpur; and (3) conducting second-track diplomacy to strengthen relations with the Malaysian Young Council and elements of the Malaysian government. In cyberspace, BP-KNPI Malaysia is also very active in raising solidarity and providing information related to recalibration programs and social assistance through its members' potential as content creators and relationships with well-known media. Our research concludes that BP-KNPI Malaysia, as a youth civil society, has always been proactive in problem-solving during the pandemic through social activism in humanity, migrant workers from Indonesia, and legal literacy in cyberspace. BP-KNPI Malaysia also tactically implements the spirit of energy and harmony promoted by DPP-KNPI.

Keywords: *BP-KNPI Malaysia; social activism; movement control order*

INTRODUCTION

In sociology and political theory, the struggle of the younger generation is always synonymous with collectivity in the form of movements that are both discourse and action (Díaz & García, 2017; Soss & Weaver, 2017). The nexus between the two gave birth to progressive and revolutionary movements. In political theory, this enthusiastic solidarity will be united in "*engaged citizenship*" organizing methods that M. Goering (2013) associates with the implementation of an active citizenship culture. We examine the main function of organizing young people. We find two functions: (1) to increase individual capacities and (2)

proof of their collectivistic spirit which is diagnostic because they gather not just to get together but also to fight the social cancer, accelerate positive impact, and maintain that impact in a sustainable manner.

The types of organization among young people also take various forms because, in addition to bringing together the same group, various terms such as bond, unity, movement, or assemblage. They also unite each of those who are different in one alliance, both informally, such as forums, and informally, such as committees. And the Indonesian Youth National Committee (KNPI), which was born on July 23, 1973, is an example of an organization that brings together all youth organizations to work together with critical thinking, dynamic organization, and rational democracy to guard democracy and reform in Indonesia (Nora. AN, 2014).

Because the KNPI is a place for all youth organizations gather. Law No. 8 of 1985 stated that the KNPI was confirmed as the only official forum for all youth movement in Indonesia. As a forum for all organizations, the KNPI's work is more like a communication forum that conveys aspirations and actions between youth organizations (OKP), the community, and the state (Indrajaya, 2012a, 2012b; Nora. AN, 2014; Nugroho, 2017, 2017). We found that there were at least three roles played by the KNPI to shape the role of youth based on the mandate of the Republic of Indonesia Law No. 40 of 2009 concerning youth in Article 18, which includes the roles of moral strength, social control, and agent of changes (Indrajaya, 2012b; Nursamsami et al., 2020).

In the context of the Indonesian diaspora community, the role of KNPI representatives abroad, such as in Malaysia, also has a great impact on mobilizing and strengthening the participation of Indonesian youth abroad, as well as strengthening diplomacy between Indonesian and Malaysian youth. Since its establishment on October 9, 2011, representative body-the Indonesian Youth National Committee (BP-KNPI) in Malaysia has been play important role in social activism, advocacy, and second-track diplomacy.

In the context of the second track diplomacy, the presence of KNPI representatives in Malaysia as a youth civil society also strengthens ties between youth civil society groups such as the Malaysian Youth Council and other civil organizations. Strengthening relationship between youth in Malaysia and Indonesia not only for opening up opportunities for cooperation but also to increasing understanding between Indonesian and Malaysian youth in the spirit of Malindo (Malaysia and Indonesia) solidarity who are often involved in conflicts with each other when there are sensitive issues such as culture, politics, employment, or football (Sagiralva, 2021).

In advocacy, KNPI Malaysia also has been vocal in voicing justice for Indonesian immigrant workers in large numbers. Education about the law is also provided by KNPI Malaysia to Indonesian migrant workers so that they are not trapped in illegal routes. In social activism, KNPI Malaysia is also active in holding social activities to help Indonesians in need, such as during the Covid 19 pandemic between March 2020 and December 2021, when Malaysia implemented various regulations for movement control orders from light, medium, and heavy scales. At that time, the chairman of the Malaysian KNPI was Tengku Adnan and his secretary general, Muliadi.

In Malaysia, every community organization, including the BP-KNPI, is under the Indonesian Embassy, and the position of the BP-KNPI itself is separate from being a partner for the Indonesian Embassy in Malaysia through (1) maximizing the role and function of Indonesian youth as ambassadors of the nation; (2) growing nationalism as Indonesian citizens wherever they are; and (3) expanding forms of cooperation that can increase the potential and role of Indonesian youth in Malaysia (Muliadi, 2022). The main objective of this study is to analyze social activism carried out by KNPI representatives in Malaysia toward Indonesian citizens in Malaysia during the pandemic period between March 2020- December 2022. Based on our reading of several social movements and youth research, it is still very rare to raise the role of social and youth movements carried out by the Indonesian diaspora community as both the subject and object of research on youth activism.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a type of qualitative research with interview, literature review, and participatory-based observation where the researcher is also part of the actor along with the research object (Tedlock, 1991). There are two main reasons for using this observation technique: (1) the two researchers are part of KNPI Malaysia and (2) during the pandemic, both researchers were actively involved in social activities and employment advocacy through a recalibration program, which is being run by BP-KNPI Malaysia until 2022. Referring to history, if we look closely at the observation method in the history of science development, it originates from the empirical world. Aristotle's botanical observations of Herodotus' historical observations of Thomas Stamford Raffles's colonial-style observations in Singapore and Java have always been based on life, description, and direct experience (Seim, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Unraveling hopelessness

Along with the increase in Covid 19 cases, after the disclosure of the Sri Petaling cluster (Reuters, 2020). The 8th Prime Minister, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, appointed a week earlier, on March 16, 2021, decided to implement a total quarantine policy called a movement control order based on the 1988 Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Act and the 1967 Police Act (Aziz et al., 2020). This policy has changed the socioeconomic conditions of most Indonesian immigrants in Malaysia, relying on daily and monthly income. Especially, when they work without a formal contract for legal reasons, they do not receive social protection. Of course, this condition puts them in a state of hopelessness because they have no income and lack food, are threatened with being evicted from their homes and potentially exposed to the Covid 19 virus, and are caught in raids by Malaysian officials if they force themselves to make a living at that time.

BP-KNPI Malaysia, which had changed administration two weeks before the Lockdown, joined Indonesian social organizations in Malaysia to alleviate the suffering of affected Indonesians. The initial steps taken by BP-KNPI Malaysia at that time were collectively by opening public donations and lobbying the Malaysian side in this matter by approaching the minister of the federal territory, Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Haji Annuar bin Musa to get involved in giving and facilitating the distribution of donations. As a result, in the

early days of the lockdown policy, BP-KNPI Malaysia managed to raise sufficient funds from the effects of public contributions. At that time, the federal territory minister, through the Malaysian Ministry of Territory and the Malaysia Friendship Foundation, donated 5 tons of rice for Indonesian citizens affected by the lockdown policy in Malaysia (AntaraKL, 2020).



Figure 1. BP-KNPI Malaysia public donation poster (BP-KNPI Malaysia Facebook page, 2020)



Figure 2. BP-KNPI Malaysia lobbying minister of federal territory (Twitter BP-KNPI Malaysia, 2020)

After the Malaysia government decide to extend the movement control order. BP-KNPI Malaysia received many requests for assistance from Indonesian around and outside Kuala Lumpur, including in other state on the Malaysia peninsula. Then BP-KNPI collectively intensified lobbying as well as data collection on aid. It was recorded that at the time of the lockdown in 2020, BP-KNPI had received various assistance distributed on April 7, 2020, in collaboration with the International Youth Center (IYC) and the Asian Youth Council (AYC) (AntaraKL, 2020); on April 17, 2020, in collaboration with the youth movement 4b Malaysia;

and on April 18, after receiving donations from the Indonesian Muslim community in South Korea (AntaraKL, 2020). At the same time, BP-KNPI Malaysia also wrote to President Jokowi to increase assistance to Indonesian citizens affected by Covid 19 in Malaysia (AntaraKL, 2020) and to support the replacement of ambassadors who were considered ineffective (Gajahmadanews, 2020).



Figure 3. delivery of aid to other communities (AntaraKL, 2020)



Figure 4. BP-KNPI Malaysia officials with the Malaysian NGO (AntaraKL, 2020)

In 2021, when the Malaysian government again tightened movement control orders for Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, Johor, and Penang between July and June, BP-KNPI became a partner of the Indonesian embassy in Kuala Lumpur in distributing aid and recording aid recipients. At that time KNPI Malaysia re-formed the COVID 19 Care team whose job was to become humanitarian volunteers to raise funds and food supplies as well as distribute them to Indonesian citizens who really needed help.

Recalibration program

The Covid 19 outbreak turned out to have a positive side for the unity of all Indonesian community organizations in Malaysia, starting from the unification of coordination in the distribution and data collection of aid recipients on May 1, 2020, an association of Indonesian community organizations in Malaysia, known as AOMI, was formed. BP-KNPI Malaysia is one of the Indonesian community organizations in Malaysia, which has helped spark the combination of all Indonesian community organizations in Malaysia. even at Aomi's meeting on December 22, 2020. BP-KNPI Malaysia representative Khairul Hamzah was made one of the 9 AOMI presidiums (Lintasasia,2020).

At the first AOMI meeting on June 5, 2020, two issues were relayed to the Indonesian embassy in Kuala Lumpur to address Malaysian immigration: (1) increased food aid for affected Indonesian citizens and (2) repatriating Indonesian citizens who are very ill, pregnant, and separated from their children (Explorenews, 2020). Malaysia implemented a recalibration policy for illegal foreign workers, including workers from Indonesia, from November 16, 2020, to June 30, 2021 (Malaysia Immigration, 2020). BP-KNPI and AOMI Taking on the role of a strategic partners of the Indonesian embassy and Malaysian Immigration to voluntarily help Indonesian workers who want to return home through the recalibration program.



Figure 5. Recalibration program with AOMI (Aomi Facebook page, 2021)

The tactical steps taken by BP-KNPI Malaysia with AOMI at that time included: (1) lobbying airlines to charter planes to repatriate Indonesian workers participating in recalibration. At that time, flights from Indonesia and Malaysia, and vice versa, were very difficult because the border gates of the two countries were closed due to Covid 19; (2) lobbying health authorities so that they can carry out Covid 19 tests on Indonesian workers at low cost and with fast results; (3) opening the AOMI headquarters in Kuala Lumpur as a place to stay for Indonesian workers outside Kuala Lumpur and Selangor; (4) promoting the return of recalibration through AOMI and BP-KNPI through the KNPI administrator's YouTube channel, namely "Ika Wulandari Channel" and paying for promotions on Facebook; and (5)

forming a data collection and organizing team among students whose job is to follow up on recalibration administration payments and organize workers at KLIA Airport.



Figure 5. BP-KNPI Malaysia online poster about recalibration program (BP-KNPI Malaysia Facebook page, 2021)



Figure 6. BP-KNPI Malaysia with other Indonesia communities under AOMI meeting for recalibration program (AOMI Malaysia Facebook page, 2021)

With the spirit of Togetherness in diversity, even though some friction amongst community organizations within AOMI led to the organizing of returning workers outside AOMI, BP-KNPI and the Indonesian community groups that are members of AOMI have effectively handled recalibration till June 2021. Until now, AOMI, together with BP-KNPI Malaysia, has continued to strengthen unity between Indonesian communities in Malaysia. In addition, AOMI has become a social laboratory for students and researchers who want to explore the lives of migrant workers and the Indonesian community in Malaysia.

BP-KNPI Malaysia on cyberspace

The intensity of the use of social media, which increased during the Covid 19 pandemic, was also taken advantage of by BP-KNPI to disseminate its work activities to the public sphere, as well as to provide appropriate information for workers related to recalibration assistance and basic food assistance from the Indonesian Embassy in Kuala Lumpur. Ms. Ika Wulandari, one of the BP-KNPI administrators who serves as general treasurer, uses her YouTube channel, IKA Wulandari Chanel, and her FB page FB rasa radio di Kuala Lumpur (FB tasted radion in Kuala Lumpur) to facilitate the work of the KNPI very effectively. Besides that, BP-KNPI Malaysia also has a Facebook page, namely BP-KNPI Malaysia and Twitter with the same name. besides that BP-KNPI Malaysia also has a website with the address <http://www.knpimalaysia.org/>.

During the lockdown period between March 2020 and the end of December 2021. Members of the Malaysian BP-KNPI also actively filled out reports in Indonesian and Malaysian media, both for social activities and state issues, such as: (1) insulting the Malaysian king by Indonesia netizen; (2) disputing a documentary from Aljazeera, which gave Malaysia a bad image in terms of handling migrant workers during the pandemic; and (3) collaborating with the Malaysian youth assembly as a strategic partner.

CONCLUSION

During the Covid 19 pandemic between March 2020 and December 2022, BP-KNPI Malaysia played a major role in overcoming youth and social problems for Indonesians. There were at least three roles for the BP-KNPI during the Covid 19 pandemic between March 2020-December 2021, including: (1) advocating employment issues and then being involved in the recalibration program and initiating the formation of an association of Indonesian community organizations in Malaysia (AOMI); (2) conducting second-track diplomacy to strengthen relations with the Malaysian youth assembly and elements of the Malaysian government; and (3) distributing and organizing social assistance to help affected Indonesian citizens. We conclude that the spirit of energy of harmony that was carried out by the chairman of the KNPI for the 2018-2021 period, Haris Pratama, was tactically carried out by BP-KNPI Malaysia to express despair among Indonesian citizens in Malaysia and knitting solidarity between community organizations in Malaysia to work together to solve the social problems of Indonesian citizens in Malaysia during the pandemic. Of course, what BP-KNPI Malaysia is doing is expected to provide a foundation for the younger generation, who are part of the Indonesian diaspora community in other regions. Moreover, over time, the context of the situation and problems involving the younger generation are also developing and becoming more widespread. Therefore, the younger generation is not only required to be involved in solving social problems for their generation but also to help other Indonesian people in other countries. The younger generation must be able to implement an energy of harmony that harmonizes, facilitates, and solves problems holistically.

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