

From Bullet to the Ballot: A Case Study of the East Timor's Referendum as Viewed by Newspapers of *Kompas* and *Republika* in Jakarta

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ABSTRACT: *The conflicts occurred in East Timor, since it integrated with Indonesia in 1976, could be described as a conflict between Indonesian government and pro-independence group in one side; and in other side, a conflict between pro-integration and pro-independence groups. Meanwhile, such conflicts ended with referendum option in 1999, so that it could be described as conflict resolution through the mechanism of "from bullet to the ballot". This paper studied the policy of Indonesian government, under the rule of President B.J. Habibie, giving special autonomy option or independence to East Timor as noted in two newspapers' views in Jakarta, namely "Kompas" and "Republika". Such two newspapers had different ways in viewing every political events in East Timor. "Kompas", which initially supported, then tried to keep at a distance to government and became critical to the government. It was different with "Republika" which was still consistent to support every Indonesian government policy under the rule of President B.J. Habibie.*

KEY WORDS: *Conflict and integration, Indonesian government, East Timor, referendum, and the mass media views.*

INTRODUCTION

Along the integration process of East Timor into Indonesia Republic since 1976, this former Portuguese colonialized region had never been free of conflicts, either nationally or internationally. The political parties

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formed in East Timor, before Indonesia army came in such region, were divided into two conflicting groups which were pro-integration group and pro-independence group. Some political parties such as UDT (*Uniao Democratica Timorese* or Timor Democracy United), APODETI (*Associacao Popular Democratica Timorence* or Association of Timor People Democracy), KOTA (*Klibur Oan Timor Asuwain* or Association of Timor Fighter), and TRABALHISTA (*Partido Trabalhista* or Timor Labor Party) constantly supported the integration with Indonesia. However, the FRETILIN (*Frente Revolucionaria do Timor-Leste Independente* or East Timor Independence Revolution Front) consistently rejected the integration and asked for independence by deciding their own fate (ETAN, 2006:16-17).

Pro-integration and pro-independence groups had existed continuously until the Santa Cruz event occurred on 12 November 1991. This event became the historical turning point in which the development process by Indonesia government had been done for 15 years in East Timor. When the Indonesia people has started to believe that the problem of East Timor integration was resolved and the international community had forgotten the problem of East Timor, the Santa Cruz event reminded the world and Indonesia people about the socio-political realities and problems in East Timor (Singh, 1996:154). Besides that, such event brought the discussion of East Timor to international problem. Based on the human right, the main problem was the right to decide their own fate re-announced after the President Soeharto was finally replaced by B.J. (Baharuddin Jusuf) Habibie in 1998. The right of self determination was also stated in the referendum and ending with the separation of East Timor from regional authority of the Indonesia Republic nation-state.

Meanwhile, the press involvement, especially newspaper, in political matters has functioned as information source, participation, and integration in developing healthy and dynamic political culture. In such condition, press provided the informations as well as the opinions for public about fact and events (Suwirta, 2000 and 2003). The information and opinion have functioned to help society in constructing the view of world geographically, socially, and politically. Besides that, the press made the proof of various activities, issues, and political events. By this way, the press was able to construct various opinion about political events and issues (Burton, 2008:88-89).

This paper focused on the views given by newspapers of *Kompas* and *Republika* in Jakarta about the political problems and dynamic in East Timor from 1993 to 1999. The reasons of choosing *Kompas* were: (1) for tens years, *Kompas* had been the highest level of national daily in Indonesia,

although in its early development, 1960-1970, *Kompas* was Catholic minority daily developed in the middle of Moslems community and other newspaper which numbered more; (2) *Kompas* was included in open-minded and independent newspaper which didn't affiliate with any political party; (3) *Kompas*, for 32 years of Soeharto regime from 1966 to 1998, had proved itself as the media that could adapt and economically had gained higher profit from such adaptation skill, and it could be seen from the writing style of *Kompas* that was balanced and careful; and (4) *Kompas* was able to maintain the good relationship with politicians and this relationship was not seen in real of daily journalism business (Keller, 2009:45-56).

Meanwhile, the reasons of choosing *Republika* were: (1) *Republika* was the only one newspaper which was made congruent with Islam, surviving among a number of Islamic newspaper published around 1990s. *Republika* was born as a realization of one of ICMI, *Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia*, or Association of Indonesian Moslem Scholars' programs. It was agreed with the Press Principle Act that the press publication should be corporate body. Therefore, *Yayasan Abdi Bangsa*, or Foundation of National Dedication, founded *PT Abdi Bangsa* on 28 November 1992 and a month later, 19 December 1992, *Republika* got SIUPP, *Surat Izin Usaha Penerbitan Pers* or the Press Publication Business Permit, and it was formally established on 4 January 1993. The establishment of *Republika* as a funnel of Islam interests has reflected the political development in that time; (2) the presence of B.J. Habibie, the Head of ICMI, marked the resurgence of Islam politic which was stepped aside until 1980s by New Order government; and (3) until 2000, *Republika* was a newspaper supporting Islam interest and its adherent, and was supported by well-known Islam businessmen (Hamad, 2004:120; and Keller, 2009:82-84).

THE NEWSPAPER OF KOMPAS

Kompas was firstly published in Jakarta on 28 June 1965. This newspaper was founded by a number of journalists who were experienced in publishing *Intisari* monthly magazine; they were Auyong Peng Koen, or well-known as P.K. Ojong, and Jakob Oetama who were the Director-General and Editor-in-Chief of *Kompas* respectively. Before publishing the first edition, this newspaper had published trial edition that was done four days previously. The trial edition was published to know the initial response presented by the readers. Editorial staff and journalists in its early publication were J. Adi Subrata, Mr. Lie Hwat Nio, Threes Soesilastoeti Padmo, Theodoris Ponis Purba, Tinon Prabowo, Marcel Beding, and August Parengkuan (Mallarangeng, 2010:50).

Historian of LIPI, *Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia* or Institute of Indonesian Sciences, Asvi Warman Adam (2002:139) described Jakob Oetama and P.K. Ojong as “duumvirate of Soekarno-Hatta” who were completing each other. Jakob Oetama managed editorial matters, while P.K. Ojong managed administration matters. Actually, P.K. Ojong was unexpected person who was disliked in Soekarno government era (1945-1965) because he was assumed that he did not have the spirit of MANIPOLIS (*Manifesto Politis*), Soekarno’s political framework in 1960s. Thus, the name of P.K. Ojong was not included in the editorial structure of *Kompas* at that time.

The birth process of *Kompas* as the newspaper was started by the idea of General Ahmad Yani, the leader of Indonesia National Army (TNI-AD, *Tentara Nasional Indonesia Angkatan Darat*). He stated that Catholics should try some ways to be able to balance out the power of PKI (*Partai Komunis Indonesia* or Indonesia Communist Party) and its colleagues. One of the ways was by establishing a daily or newspaper (Ishwara, 2001:182). Besides that, *Kompas* was established in historical situation in which the politics became a very considered commander. Only political party was the only organization that could express society aspiration. Every published newspaper should relate itself to the political party. In this case, *Kompas* chosed to affiliate with the Catholic political party (Mallarangeng, 2010:51). Formerly, the name chosen for the newspaper was *Bentara Rakyat* (People Herald). Then, based on the recommendation of President Soekarno, it changed into *Kompas* that means “*petunjuk arah*” or directional signal (Adam, 2002:140).

Although *Kompas* had associated with the Catholic political party and gained the support of Frans Seda, as Plantation Minister at that time, it had not got the permit to be published. To get the permit, Frans Seda collected 3,000 signatures coming from the members of Catholic political party, school teachers, and the members of *Kopra Primer* (main economic enterprise of copra) in three regencies in Frans Seda’s hometown. Having collected 3,000 signatures, finally the permit of KODAM (*Komando Daerah Militer* or Regional Military Command) V JAYA (*Jakarta Raya* or the Great Jakarta) was approved to publish the newspaper (Adam, 2002:134).

The newspaper of *Kompas* was firstly printed on the simple duplex printing machine, then it is changed into rotation printing machine. Initially, *Kompas* only consisted of 4 pages, similar with other newspaper. Then, it included 16 pages, the maximum limit of pages allowed by the government. The first printing of *Kompas* was 4,800 exemplars and then, in three months, it increased by 8,003 exemplars (Mallarangeng, 2010:51). The important note was that although *Kompas* was founded among

Catholic people, it did not position itself as Catholic nuance newspaper. In contrast, *Kompas* was open-minded and independent, with its reader segment was middle class; it is because the newspaper in Indonesia, in fact, marked the one's social class.

The motto of *Kompas* in its first publication was conveying “*Amanat Hati Nurani Rakyat*” (People’s Inner Self Mandate). Meanwhile, the mission and vision of *Kompas*, as stated by Asvi Warman Adam, were following here:

Visi Kompas adalah sebagai agen sejarah, yaitu menciptakan masyarakat Indonesia baru yang demokratis, patriotis, dan profesional. Misi Kompas adalah mengabarkan dan menyebarkan informasi (ini termasuk sumber sejarah). Melalui bisnis dalam bidang pers yang dikelola dengan manajemen yang sehat dan etika usaha yang bersih diciptakan pemberitaan yang akurat dan proporsional dalam rangka mencerdaskan dan memajukan kehidupan bangsa. Disiplin dan kejujuran menjadi kata kunci bagi para pengasuh media ini untuk menjadikan usaha mereka mampu menjadi nomor satu. Melalui sinergi sesama karyawan, juga dengan perusahaan, diciptakan layanan dan prestasi maksimal untuk menyampaikan hati nurani rakyat. Seperti dikatakan oleh Jacob Oetama, tujuan utama Kompas dengan menggabungkan antara idealisme dan profesionalisme adalah “membangunkan yang papa dan mengingatkan yang mapan” (Adam, 2000:143).

[The vision of *Kompas* is as historical agent, which is creating a new democratic, patriotic, and professional Indonesian society. The mission of *Kompas* is informing and disseminating the informations (it is included as historical sources). Through the business in press managed by good management and fair business ethics, the accurate and proportional news is created to educate and develop the national life. Discipline and honesty are the key words for the media editors to make their business number one. By the synergy among the staff, and also corporation, the maximal service and achievement are created to convey the people’s conscience. As stated by Jacob Oetama, the main goal of *Kompas*, by combining idealism and professionalism, is “awakening the poor and reminding the rich”].

Moreover, the vision of *Kompas* in presenting the information in its early publication could also be seen in some P.K. Ojong’s opinions about press, as following here:

Secara intuitif, setiap orang merasakan bahwa tugas utama dari pers ialah mengontrol dan, kalau perlu, mengecam pemerintah. [...] Tugas pers bukanlah untuk menjilat yang berkuasa, tapi untuk mengkritik yang sedang berkuasa. [...] Mereka (penguasa itu) harus bekerja dengan pikiran bahwa selalu ada pentungan (kontrol sosial) yang selalu siap sedia memukul mereka, kalau menyeleweng (cited by Mallarangeng, 2010:51-52).

[Intuitively, every one feels that the main task of press is to control and, if it is needed, to criticize the government. [...] The press’s task is not to flatter the authority, but to criticize the authority. [...] They (the authority) should work by thinking that

there is always available of cudgle (social control) that always ready to hit them when they deviated].

Along its history, *Kompas* had been banned twice to publish. After G-30-S (*Gerakan 30 September* or the 30th September Movement) event in 1965, *Kompas* and other newspapers were banned to publish, starting from edition 2 October 1965 to 6 October 1965. This ban was issued by PELPERADA JAYA (*Pelaksana Perang Daerah Jakarta Raya* or Regional War Executor for the Great Jakarta). At that time, only army-owned newspapers, namely *Angkatan Bersendjata* (Armed Forces News) and *Berita Yudha* (War News), which were permitted to publish. Meanwhile, the second ban was experienced by *Kompas* after students' demonstration events in the late 1977 and early 1978. *Kompas* was included in seven newspapers that could not be published from 21 January to 5 February 1978 (Adam, 2002:140).

After the second ban, *Kompas* had great change. Although it was not changed radically, such change was quite eminent to distinguish recent *Kompas* and past *Kompas* in its early publication times. Such change especially related to the role of newspaper as social control means. The piercing voice of *Kompas* was rarely found anymore in its recent editorial. Although it still contain social critics, but the critics are stated gently, politely, and not to the point. The change of vision was based on the idea that social critics should not always be stated hardly, because the gentle critic delivery could still convey the intended message. The change of journalistic philosophy in *Kompas* was not also apart from its pioneers, P.K. Ojong and Jakob Oetama (Lesmana, 1985:2).

THE NEWSPAPER OF REPUBLIKA

Republika was a national newspaper established by Moslem community for Indonesia society. This newspaper publication was the peak of Moslem's long effort, especially young professional journalists led by ex-journalist of *Tempo* magazine, Zaim Uchrowi. The presence of ICMI (*Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia* or Association of Indonesian Moslem Scholars), which was headed by B.J. (Baharuddin Jusuf) Habibie in 1990s, could break through the tight restriction applied by New Order government for publication permit. The newspaper of *Republika* was firstly published on 4 January 1993 (Wikipedia, 2011).

The birth of *Republika*, as the funnel of Islam interest, at least described the political development of New Order government in 1990s. At that time, the President Soeharto was trying to consolidate his authority that was weakening and he approached to Islamic elite group that was laid aside

since 1970/1980s. The most distinct was the presence of B.J. Habibie who marked the awakening of Islamic politics in Indonesia in 1990s (Keller, 2009:83). Besides that, according to Fahturin Zen (2004:126), the establishment of *Republika* was in line with ICMI's goal, wish, and program which was established on 5 December 1990.

One of ICMI's programs was to educate the national life through improving of faith, life, job, works, and thinking qualities. To realize the above goals, some government figures and society who had high commitment and dedication to the national development and had Islamic faith established *Yayasan Abdi Bangsa* (Foundation of National Dedication) on 17 August 1990. Then, this foundation arranged the main program including IC (*Islamic Centre*) development, CIDES (Centre of Information and Development Studies) development, and *Republika* newspaper publication.

To realize the program of newspaper publication, on 28 November 1992, *Yayasan Abdi Bangsa* established *PT Abdi Bangsa*, and on 19 December 1992 got SIUPP (*Surat Izin Usaha Penerbitan Pers* or the Press Publication Permit) Number 283/SK/MENPEN/SIUPP/A.7/1992 from the Ministry of Information (Hamad, 2004:120). Previously, this newspaper was named as *Republik*, but when have an audience with the President Soeharto agreed with the launching of such newspaper, the President recommended the name *Republika* for the published newspaper.

Since its establishment, *Republika* had motto "*bukan sekedar menjual berita*" (not only to sell the news) as a slogan to describe its news principle. The "substance" of news and views tried to be presented by *Republika*, although it was recognized sometime be failure or actually deviating from its certain. The vision of *Republika* itself was to be integrated printing media corporation covered national scale and was managed professionally and in Islam manner, so that it could influence the process of educating people, cultural development, and faith and belief improvement in the new Indonesian society life. The mission of *Republika* was educating people through accurate, actual, trusted, and educative news, and provided them for justice and truth. Besides that, it was to improve and reinforce the individual achievement and dedication to be a team as a key to develop corporation and improve the prosperity (Hamad, 2004:122).

According to Mustafa Kamil as the Vice Editor-in-Chief of *Republika* in 2000, the vision of *Republika* was arranged in various life aspects as following here:

Bidang Politik, *Republika* mendorong demokratisasi dan optimalisasi lembaga-lembaga negara, partisipasi politik semua lapisan masyarakat serta mengutamakan kejujuran dan moralitas politik.

Bidang Ekonomi, keterbukaan dan demokratisasi ekonomi menjadi kepedulian *Republika*. Mempromosikan profesionalisme yang mengindahkan nilai-nilai kemanusiaan dalam manajemen, menekankan perlunya pemerataan sumber daya ekonomi dan mempromosikan prinsip-prinsip etika dan moralitas dalam bisnis.

Bidang Budaya, *Republika* mendukung sikap yang terbuka dan apresiatif terhadap bentuk-bentuk kebudayaan yang menjunjung tinggi nilai-nilai kemanusiaan dari mana pun datangnya, mempromosikan bentuk-bentuk kesenian dan hiburan yang sehat, mencerdaskan, menghaluskan perasaan serta mempertajam kepekaan nurani. *Republika* bersikap kritis terhadap bentuk-bentuk kebudayaan yang cenderung mereduksi manusia dan mendangkalkan nilai-nilai kemanusiaan.

Bidang Agama, *Republika* mendorong sikap beragama yang terbuka sekaligus kritis terhadap realitas sosial-ekonomi kontemporer, mempromosikan semangat toleransi yang tulus, mengembangkan penafsiran ajaran-ajaran ideal agama dalam rangka mendapatkan pemahaman yang segar dan tajam serta mendorong pencarian titik temu di antara agama-agama (cited by Zen, 2004:127).

[Political Aspect, *Republika* encourages democracy and optimalization of state organizations, political participation of all people, and prioritizes the political honesty and morality.

Economic Aspect, economic openness and democracy is *Republika's* attention. Promoting the professionalism by considering humanism values in management, emphasizing the need of economic source equity, and promoting ethics and morality principles in business.

Cultural Aspect, *Republika* supports the open-minded and appreciative attitude toward the cultural forms respecting humanism values, promotes art forms and good entertainment, educates and touches feeling, and aggravates the conscience sensitivity. *Republika* was critical toward cultural forms that tended to reduce human and humanity values.

Religion Aspect, *Republika* supports the open-minded in religious behavior and critical toward contemporary socio-economy reality, promotes sincere tolerant spirit, develops ideal religious teaching in order to get fresh and clear understanding, and encourages the searching of meeting point among religions].

With the total printing 100,000 per day in 1993 and 165,000 per day in 1994, *Republika* was hoped to be exist as the newspaper of “*Dari Umat untuk Bangsa*” (from the members of religious community to the nation). In this context, Jakob Oetama (2001:38-39) also commented that the word of “*umat*” (the members of religious community) referred to a view, attitude, and behavior of society who had great attention more than their own interest. The connotation of “*umat*” was also not exclusive because its understanding and comprehension in Indonesia and nationalism covering it was the shared-home.

Meanwhile, the connection of *Republika* and ICMI made it hard to prevent from the assumption that this newspaper was the funnel of modern Islam group in communicating various things. As stated by Reese and Shoemaker, those things influenced the text production and news content as well, besides the individual awareness and thinking way of *Republika* journalists who participatively constructed the opinion and particular frame coverage (cited by Zen, 2004:128).

The ideology of *Republika* was the ideology of its owner, PT Abdi Bangsa, namely "*Kebangsaan, Kerakyatan, dan Keislaman*" (Nationalism, People, and Islamism) in order to accelerate the construction of civil society in Indonesia. This orientation was daily conveyed by *Republika* in form of information and other opinion and news presentation. Hence, *Republika* presented the moderate Islam. The target audience of *Republika* was those who believed in Islam, professional group, manager, executive, students and businessmen by dominating national scale. All the readers, 63.36% stayed in Jakarta. According to I. Hamad (2004:122-123), for the higher educated readers, the newspaper of *Republika* reached the highest rate (36.5%) compared with other newspaper such as *Media Indonesia* (34.3%), *Kompas* (30.6%), and *Suara Pembaruan* (27.9%).

THE PROBLEM OF EAST TIMOR'S SECOND OPTION FROM THE PRESIDENT B.J. HABIBIE AND THE MASS MEDIA RESPONSES

In 1997, Indonesia was hit by economic crisis in inflation level by 77.6%. It triggered various economic problems because at that time, thousands of employee were fired or got PHK (*Pemutusan Hubungan Kerja* or discharge of the job), the lower-decreasing currency of Rupiah, the higher national debt, and the lost of investors. This condition also triggered the political and social crisis manifested in students' movement on 21 May 1998, in which the President Soeharto has transferred of power to the Vice President B.J. (Baharuddin Jusuf) Habibie (Alatas, 2006:133; and Suwirta, 2007:176).

The impact of socio-political crisis was democracy occurred when the regime in Indonesia was ended. The transfer of power from the President Soeharto to the Vice President B.J. Habibie signed the new period of democracy in Indonesia. Since that time, the political map changed along with democracy wave that was continually struggled and done by the students asking for the government free from KKN (*Korupsi, Kolusi, dan Nepotisme* or corruption, collusion, and nepotism) practices. It was similar with the issue of East Timor that its discussion was continually discussed intensively by Indonesia government and Portuguese and the United Nations as the mediator; or it was usually also called as three-parties dialogues.

B.J. Habibie, as the new Indonesia President, faced the hard task. Besides conducting the agenda of reformation government free from corruption, collusion, and nepotism practices, he should also solve the problems impeding the agenda. There were at least three national issues that could impede the performance of reformation. According to B.J. Habibie (2006:134), the problems were the status of East Timor, GAM (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* or Free Aceh Movement), and the struggle of separatist group in Irian Jaya. The last two problems, those who wanted to separate from the united Indonesia Republic did not get any support from the United Nations because it was assumed violating the constitution and sovereignty of the united Indonesia Republic. It was different with the first problem, the status of East Timor as a part of Indonesia province that was still be considered by the Security Council of the United Nations.

Surprisingly, Ali Alatas as the Indonesia Minister of Foreign Affairs announced that East Timor would be allowed to separate if its special status with wider autonomy was rejected by East Timor people. The President B.J. Habibie stated that at least before 1 January 2000, he wanted that the issue of East Timor did not disturb Indonesia. The signs that the struggle of FRETILIN (*Frente Revolucionaria do Timor-Leste Independente* or East Timor Independence Revolutionary Front) from the bullet to the ballot would be realized. Although this decision was not supported by the national politic parties, especially coming from Megawati Soekarnoputri as one of strong candidate in winning 1999 General Election, but the option from the President B.J. Habibie for the East Timor people were still conducted (Ricklefs, 2008:699-700). In turn, the option was frequently called "second option" or independence option for the East Timor people.

Before the second option emerged, Indonesia government was actually negotiating in three-parties dialogues (Indonesia, Portuguese, and the United Nations) about the special status with wider autonomy for the East Timor. The offer of "*status khusus dengan otonomi luas*" (special status with wider autonomy) was firstly stated by B.J. Habibie on 9 June 1998, three weeks after he became the Indonesia President. The President B.J. Habibie was facing political instability, economic crisis, and bad assessment from international society about the human right performance in Indonesia, especially the problem of East Timor (Nevins, 2008:111). According to the offer of "special status with wider autonomy", it was planned that the East Timor would perform its own matters but still part of Indonesia nation-state.

The policy of B.J. Habibie government was well welcomed by *Republika* (29/1/1999) by publishing an editorial entitled "*Pilihan Rasional*"

(Rational Choice). From the editorial, *Republika* clearly stated that the choice of Indonesia government to release the East Timor, if East Timor people rejected the offer of special autonomy, was a good choice. The MPR (*Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat* or People's Consultative Assembly), as the people representative, was a legal institution to issue the decision of releasing the East Timor because by such institution, the East Timor was integrated in 1976. *Republika*, in its editorial, described the obstacle faced by the government after the East Timor was integrated with Indonesia in 1976, which was a lot of victims due to horizontal and vertical conflicts, and high budget for that region. Moreover, the image of Indonesia in the international community had been defaced due to conflict escalation in the East Timor after integration.

The newspaper of *Republika* tried to give an argumentation through politic and historical analysis. It means that this newspaper viewed the policy rationalization of B.J. Habibie government as development that could not be separated from historical and political context. Although *Republika* supported the option policy of government, but it also reminded the government that there were some people supporting the integration in that region, which were East Timor people who still wanted to be Indonesian. For the pro-integration and pro-independence groups, *Republika* advised them to be more mature and be able to accept other groups' option.

In the same day, on Friday, 29 January 1999, *Kompas* published an editorial entitled "*Bila Usulan Otonomi Luas Ditolak, Timor Timur Dilepas dari RI*" (if the wider autonomy option was rejected, the East Timor was released from the Republic of Indonesia). From the editorial, it could be seen that *Kompas*, with its typical language, supported implicitly the efforts done by the government. *Kompas* emphasized more that the government policy to release the East Timor, if it was rejected, was the decision of careful consideration. The consideration were, *first*, historical consideration that according to *Kompas*, the integration of East Timor towards RI (the Republic of Indonesia) was a controversial action because it was based on armed action, not based on society's political interest. *Second*, in facing opposition movement from FRETILIN (*Frente Revolucionaria do Timor-Leste Independente* or East Timor Independence Revolutionary Front) had caused a lot of victims. *Third*, the budget spent by the government to make the East Timor could be equal with other province was not effective and miss-agreed with its hope. *Fourth*, as the impact of armed opposition from FRETILIN, then the ABRI (*Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia* or Indonesian Armed Forces) as defence and security guard was frequently accused violating the human rights and it became international weapon

to counter Indonesia diplomacy. Moreover, the reformation movement made the East Timor problem come up to the surface and caught well by the international world.

Although basically *Kompas* supported the government's decision, it still reminded the government and Indonesian society that the East Timor problem was different with other regions, especially constitutionally. Therefore, what happened in the East Timor could not applied in other regions.

Besides the editorial, in the same day, *Kompas* had published "*Catatan Pojok*" (corner-note) about government's option to release the East Timor if the special status of autonomy was rejected. The content of such corner-note was following here:

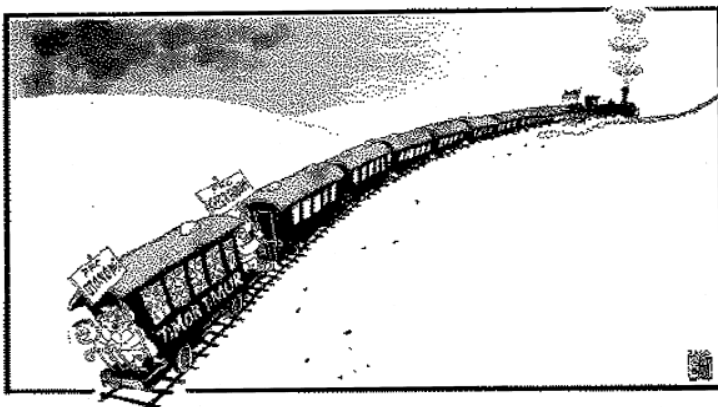
Bila usulan otonomi yang diperluas ditolak, Pemerintah Indonesia memutuskan Timtim dilepas dari Negara Kesatuan RI.

Di mata internasional, keputusan itu populer dan menjual, lho (Kompas, 29/1/1999).

[If the autonomy proposal was rejected, Indonesia government decided to release the East Timor from Indonesia Republic.

In international view, this decision was popular and marketable].

Such corner-note signaled that although the decision was welcomed well by *Kompas*, it also criticized with its simple language and quipped that the government decision was sold out in an international market. It seemed that *Kompas* viewed the other side of government option by stating the interest of B.J. Habibie as the President to get the international attentions.



Caricature of *Kompas*, 03 February, 1999

(Source: PIK *Kompas*)

Besides the editorial and corner-note, *Kompas* also published a caricature on the government option to release the East Timor if the offer of special status with wider autonomy was rejected. The caricature was contained in the edition of Wednesday, 3 February 1999, and it described a moving train (symbolized of Indonesian nation-state) and its freight cars (symbolized of Indonesian provinces). The last freight car described uncertain condition of East Timor and it was decided by the East Timor people's decision. From such caricature, *Kompas* found two different groups, pro-integration and pro-independence. The result would also describe the winner, either pro-integration or pro-independence. If the pro-independence won, according to the caricature, then the freight car of East Timor would be released.

Based on the observation of *Kompas'* and *Republika's* views, both of them had some similarities in viewing the issue of referendum. Both of them viewed that B.J. Habibie's option to offer the special status with wider autonomy or to be independent was the appropriate choice. *Republika* called that option as "rational option"; while *Kompas* called it as "peaceful option". Both newspapers wished that the government choice could realize peacefully in line with the wish of various parties (*Kompas*, 29/1/1999; and *Republika*, 29/1/1999).

THE REFERENDUM IMPLEMENTATION AND ITS RESULT

Finally, on 30 August 1999, the referendum could be done in a peaceful and calm situation as it was hoped. Such calms, according to M.C. Riklefs (2008:702), was that pro-integration group did not disturb the referendum implementation. But this peaceful condition did not continually last because the pro-integration group stated to withdrawal from the follow-up process of referendum. This step was a protest toward various violation of the United Nations officials who handled the referendum in East Timor, namely the United Nations Mission in East Timor or UNAMET (*Republika*, 1/9/1999).

Responding this situation, a day after the referendum implementation, *Republika* (31/8/1999) published the response in an editorial entitled "*Konspirasi Jajak Pendapat*" (Conspiracy of Referendum). In the editorial, *Republika* clearly responded on the referendum implementation a day before. From such editorial, it was clearly seen by *Republika* that referendum was not more than conspiracy or international scenario to release the East Timor from Indonesia. Moreover, in the first paragraph of editorial, the first thing presented by the newspaper was a field report of violation occurred during the referendum implementation. There was also

threat from Bill Clinton, the President USA (United States of America), two days before referendum conducted that he would stop the aid if there was violence after the referendum conducted in the East Timor.

Besides that, ideologically, *Republika* regreted the religion separation in deciding referendum. As stated in an editorial that ones who were eligible to be referendum voters were the Catholic-baptized East Timor people. Besides that, from the territorial interest, *Republika* assumed that the release of East Timor would give benefit to the United States for the Asia ocean traffic lane, Indian ocean, and for Australia because the East Timor could be supporting area to anticipate the disturbance from the North. *Republika* stated its support for Indonesia government. For *Republika*, the government choice to give the second autonomy option and independence for East Timor people was a policy occurred due to the strong support for national sovereignty (*Republika*, 31/8/1999).

Meanwhile, *Kompas* (3/9/1999) responded the event of referendum by publishing an editorial entitled "*Marilah Kita Hormati Sejajarnya Pilihan Rakyat Timor Timur*" (Let's respect honestly the East Timor's choice). It was different with *Republika*, the newspaper of *Kompas* with its editorial, published four days after referendum conducted, viewed that referendum was a momentum to show the significance of East Timor people's enthusiasm to join the referendum. It was seen from the number of participative people which reached 95 percent of all the voters. Therefore, whatever the result, for *Kompas*, it reflected the will of East Timor people. Besides that, *Kompas* also regreted the violence when the referendum was conducted and wished that there was no violence anymore (*Kompas*, 3/9/1999).

For the security of East Timor, *Kompas* reminded the government that as responsible nation-state, Indonesian government should be alert to all security potential threat in East Timor. Based on the Agreement of 5 May 1999, Indonesia was responsible to the East Timor's security before its government changed and Indonesia government should firmly do all responsibility. More than that, the editorial inspired that all parties should accept the result of referendum wisely and peacefully (*Kompas*, 3/9/1999).

In responding the event of referendum, based on the observation of such editorials, there were different views of *Kompas* and *Republika* in Jakarta. *Republika* viewed that the referendum and all its implementations were parts of great conspiracy for interested parties, especially international community. In contrast, *Kompas* viewed that the referendum implementation was conducted peacefully and there was no violation. *Kompas* chose more

the society's point of view as the target of its view to accept all result of referendum (*Republika*, 31/8/1999; and *Kompas*, 3/9/1999).

Based on the agreement between Secretary-General of the United Nations, Koffi Annan, and Indonesia President, B.J. Habibie, that the announcement of referendum through press conference was done on 7 September 1999, which was three days after the referendum known. Meanwhile, the announcement was actually done three days before the agreed time. The result was not disappointing for the ones who still wanted to integrate in Indonesia Republic because 78,5 percent rejected and 21,5 percent accepted. Therefore, the majority of East Timor people rejected the offer of wider autonomy from Indonesia government (Habibie, 2006:256).

Responding the result of referendum, on Monday, 6 September 1999, *Kompas* published an editorial entitled "*Pilihan Rakyat Timtim Berimplikasi Tiga Faktor: Timtim, PBB, dan Domestik*" (East Timor people's choice implied three factors: East Timor, the United Nations, and domestic". In the editorial, it seemed that *Kompas* wanted to inform the psychological effect possibility for the East Timor people in particular and Indonesia people in general. Although society was in opposite side, happy, disappointed, painful, and being ashamed of, they should be able to accept the result of referendum, considering the East Timor people's security was the most important thing. *Kompas* also questioned the announcement of referendum result by Koffi Annan due to the higher prestige of the United Nations' Secretary-General. For Indonesia government, *Kompas* asked also the government to maintain the security in East Timor because the good name of Indonesia was taken a risk. (*Kompas*, 6/9/1999).

Besides that, *Kompas* assumed that the result of referendum will influence three factors, namely "Lorosae" (East Timor) people, foreign involvement, and domestic. The first factor had minimum proportion compared with two other factors. However, the editorial viewed that the first factor was the East Timor security. The second factor was foreign in which the impact of referendum result will involve international world, especially the United Nations which had been involved directly in early East Timor problems. The third factor, which had higher proportion, was domestic condition, especially pro-contra that emerged since the East Timor option was stated. The impact of such referendum will result in the suit of legality of B.J. Habibie's transition government that issued the autonomy or independence options for East Timor. Besides that, *Kompas* express its worry that the referendum impact would trigger the suit from other regions to be similar with East Timor. Although the President B.J.

Habibie stated that the history of East Timor was different with other regions, the newspaper of *Kompas* still reminded in order not the domino effect of disintegration wave in Indonesia (*Kompas*, 6/9/1999).

Responding the referendum result, on Monday, 6 September 1999, *Republika* also published an editorial entitled “*Sejarah Baru Timor Timur*” (the new history of East Timor). It was different with *Kompas* editorial, *Republika* strongly supported B.J. Habibie government – moreover, it gave motivation for Indonesia government – in order not to fall in sadness. It was due to the view of *Republika* that Indonesia had done a lot for East Timor, especially if it was seen from the total budget to develop the area. Different with its former colonizer, Portuguese, which did nothing for the prosperity of East Timor people; moreover, East Timor was made only as political commodity in every authority campaign in the Portuguese country (*Republika*, 6/9/1999).



Caricature of *Kompas*, 11 September 1999
(Source: PIK *Kompas*)

It was interesting to note here that beside its headline and corner-note, *Kompas* had also published its view through caricature. In the caricature of *Kompas* on 11 September 2011, it described three skulls floating on the water. The highest skull written by “the North – East Vietnam” with its stitch described that in the past such country had ever been separated, but finally it could be united again. The broken skull caricature in right side

written by “the North Korea – the South Korea” described the countries that were actually the same as a nation finally should be separated and cannot be united until now. The last, the lower skull, written by “the West Timor – the East Timor” described that both regions united in an island would be soon separated because the political hands (it meant the policy) were ready to separate them. It was added with broken lines between both regions that were the clear line of that separation. *Kompas* caricature wanted to emphasize that the separation of countries was more caused by the political policy in each country.

There are some distinctive features presented by two newspapers of Jakarta. Responding the escalations of post referendum, the newspaper of *Kompas* was not seemed carefully in presenting its news and views. If the *Kompas* keeps a space with government, *Republika* was in contrast. *Republika*’s editorials described clearly how this newspaper was very close to government. Every Indonesia government’s policy was always assumed positively, moreover it was praised as an advance step. It was not apart from the figure of B.J. Habibie and his service in founding and developing the newspaper of *Republika*.

CONCLUSION

The conflicts occurred in the East Timor, since it was integrated with Indonesia in 1976, could be described as the conflicts emerged between Indonesia government and pro-independence group in one side, and conflicts between pro-integration and pro-independence groups in other side. However, such conflicts were ending with referendum option in 1999; thus, it could be described as conflict resolution by “from the bullet to the ballot” mechanism. In this context, the press or mass media – as a political power and social control for government and society – participated in expressing its views toward the events in the East Timor.

In responding the option policy for East Timor, initially *Kompas* seemed to support the government. *Kompas* seemed to be careful in delivering the news and views so that the used word selection was arranged so that the intention conveyed did not seem to criticize the government. It might be caused by the history of establishing *Kompas* that had been closed down a few times in the New Order government (1965-1998) due to its sharp critics toward the government. Besides that, *Kompas*, in its views, frequently gave solution in order the government did social approach to win the East Timor people’s heart. But in the mid of 1999, the views of *Kompas* were quite changed to be more critical and brave in responding every government policy. Although it had similar statement style, the critics

conveyed by *Kompas* were quite different. It seemed that *Kompas* had seen the authority shift from the President Soeharto to B.J. (Baharuddin Jusuf) Habibie brought more transparent democracy nuance. It meant that the threat of closing down that were always the obstacle to criticize the mass media had been vanished.

In contrast, *Republika* emerged clearly in informing and stating its views about political dynamic in East Timor. In *Republika's* views, there is no careful image as it was seen in *Kompas*. *Republika* tended to support and take side of every Indonesia government's step in handling the political dynamic in East Timor. If it was seen from its establishment history, *Republika* had close relationship with Indonesian government, considering that ICMI (*Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia* or Association of Indonesian Moslem Scholars) as initiator organization for this newspaper was an institution that was closed with government. The alignment was getting clear when B.J. Habibie, the influenced person who had important role in establishing the *Republika* in Jakarta, became the Indonesia President to substituted of Soeharto. In its views, *Republika* clearly and firmly supported every government policy of B.J. Habibie. It was almost no critic for this government. Moreover, *Republika* tended to construct *self-image* of B.J. Habibie in one side, and criticize the parties who were against B.J. Habibie such as the United Nations, the United States of America, and Australia. It was quite difficult for *Republika* to be objective due to the significance of B.J. Habibie's service for this newspaper, although he did not have any position anymore in the ICMI.

In viewing the implementation and result of referendum, either *Kompas* or *Republika* assumed that the policy option of B.J. Habibie to offer the special status with wider autonomy or independence was the good choice. *Republika* called such choice as "*pilihan rasional*" (rational option), while *Kompas* called it as "*pilihan damai*" (peaceful option). Both newspaper hoped that this option could be going well in line with peaceful wish from all parties. However, *Republika* assumed that the referendum and its implementation were parts of great conspiracy of interested parties, especially international world. In contrast, *Kompas* assumed that the referendum implementation was going well and there was not violation. *Kompas* more emphasized society's views as the target of its views in order to accept all result of referendum.

Based on the observation on the editorials about the referendum result, either *Kompas* or *Republika* suggested that government accepted with open minded and wisely. However, *Kompas* tried to give analysis on the

impact caused by the winning of pro-independence group. Such impact included the East Timor, the United Nations, and domestic affairs. Those things, according to *Kompas*, should be considered by the government. It was different with *Republika* that praised the government of B.J. Habibie. According to *Republika*, the government of B.J. Habibie gave a new history for the East Timor people's life.

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