

# THE INFLUENCE OF MASS MEDIA IN POLITICAL CHANGE IN INDONESIA

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## Abstraksi

*Artikel ini memetakan perkembangan media massa di Indonesia. Analisa difokuskan pada peran media massa dalam menentukan proses politik di Indonesia. Argumen yang dibangun dalam tulisan adalah media massa mengalami perubahan yang cukup signifikan, akan tetapi media bukanlah 'pemain utama' dalam perubahan politik itu. Namun, media massa memberikan kontribusi penting pada perkembangan politik di Indonesia.*

**Key word:** mass media, politics, political change, Indonesia.

## A. PENDAHULUAN

The mass media, both printed and electronic, is sometimes described as pillar of democracy. In the post- Suharto regime, the mass media in Indonesia have undergone a profound, even radical change. From being largely repressed, censored, and psychologically battered, it became relatively unrestrained and free. This paper, however, does not investigate in 'inside' the media industry itself, rather it is attempted to evaluate the contribution of the mass media on political change in Indonesia.

In this paper, the writer will focus on answering these questions: (a) what are the roles of the mass media on political behavior? (b) to what extent the media were/are contributing factor in Indonesian political change? The first part of the essay provides a general discussion of Indonesia's mass media landscape. The historical development of mass media is outlined in some details. In the second part, how the mass media influence the political change in Indonesia - is described. Finally, this essay will be ended in a conclusion and a projection of the general election 2009 in a very brief description in Indonesia.

## B. PEMBAHASAN

### B.1. INDONESIA'S MASS MEDIA

Indonesia has been undergoing a remarkable change in terms of social, political, and cultural over the last three decades. Historically, the state had and has been ruled by different of political ideologies-from "guided democracy" in the Old Order; "developmentalism" in the New Order; "reformasi" era in the transition period; until the current regime—which directly and indirectly also shapes the development of mass media.

First of all, let us come to the definition terms. Media is the plural form of 'medium'. It is 'an intermediate agency that enables communication to take place' (O'Sullivan at all (1994:176) in Craig, 2004:3). Geoffrey Craig defines media as 'transnational corporations, communication technologies, policy and regulatory frameworks, the practices of journalists, gossip columns, television news, blockbuster movies, advertisements, business magazines, radio, newspaper and the Internet' (Craig, 2004:3). The other scholars define it as 'a whole host of modern communication systems, for example cinema, television, newspapers, magazines, advertisements, radio, and interactive multimedia. Mass media include video games, computers, mobile phones, pagers, texters, and the Internet (O'Shaughnessy and Stadler, 2006:3).

Furthermore, in the Indonesia's Media Bill, which was drafted in the 'Reformasi Cabinet' under the Habibie Administration, media is acknowledged as 'press, television, radio, film and the Internet and related forms of digital

communication' (Sen and Hill, 2000:7). Then Sen and Hill added book publishing and musical recording as form of media. In this paper, in a broad sense I define mass media as any forms of communication tools, both printed and electronic, which mainly covers newspaper, radio, television, and the Internet. These four tools - the mass media, are generally understood as one among others of the main factors in shaping the political change in Indonesian politics.

a) Print Media

It is widely believed that newspaper and magazine industry-both referred to as 'the press'-is the media (Sen and Hill, 2007:51). Since Gutenberg's invention of the printing press in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, newspaper and magazine dominated in political communication. Only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the emergence of radio, television and the Internet, the print media is challenged (Craig, 2004:69). That happens also in Indonesia. Global industry of media affected the country too.

Most print media industries are private owned. Three main private media organizations, *Kompas-Gramedia Group*, *Jawa Pos Group* and *Media Indonesia-Surya Persindo Group*, are the largest publication. It is noted that these groups have newspapers at the national level such as *Kompas* (circulation: about 600,000), *Jawa Pos* (450,000), *Republika* (325,000), *Suara Pembaruan* (350,000) and *Media Indonesia* (250,000). There is only one English-English daily, *The Jakarta Post*, is still survive nowadays (Low, 2003:17; see also Sen & Hill, 2000:57-8). The main magazines group are *Tempo* (both in Indonesian and English), *Forum Keadilan* and *Gatra* have a critical view to the government. At regional or provincial level, local newspapers also emerge with different local focus, such *Pos Kota* in Jakarta, *Sriwijaya Post* in Palembang, *Harian Fajar* and *Tribun Timur* in Makassar, and soon. Even, each province and district/municipality has its own local newspaper or tabloid.

National and local dailies are mushrooming since the ratification of the press bill in the Reformasi era. More importantly the Publishing and Printing Licensing (SIUPP) has been concluded. It means that new print media are no longer need to gain a license (Article 19 7 AJI, 2005:28). As a result it is relatively easier nowadays to found a print industry compared to the previous regimes. Having said that it does not mean all the printed media exists; in fact, many newspapers, tabloid, and magazines do not appear in the streets outlets because of economic reason.

As Sen and Hill has demonstrated that the press in the Indonesia in the early days was 'a tool of the Revolution' to energize and mobilize public opinion to struggle against colonialism. In 1960s most newspapers were belonged to political parties. For example, in 1965 the Information Ministry instructed all newspapers to be affiliated with a political party. Furthermore, in the New Order regime, 43 of the 163 newspapers and tabloids were banned (Sen and Hill, 2000:52-3). The New Order regime was not only controlling but also requiring the media as the agent of stability within the state. However, after the Reformasi the number of print media has increased significantly from 289 dailies in the end of 1990s to 1,600 dailies in the beginning of 2005 (Oetama, 2005). Though not all these dailies are survive until today due to economic reason.

b) Electronic Media

Historically, radio had a vital role in Indonesian independence. The main function of the tool in the beginning was a medium of for political consolidation, particularly in the rural area. Radio played an important role in consolidating the struggle against the Dutch and Japanese colonialism. Then after independence, the mass media, particularly *Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI)*, was used by President Soekarno 'to consolidate his political power' (McDaniel, 2002:180 in Low, 2003:13; Sen and Hill, 2000:80). That is reasonable because to disseminate information and struggle strategy was mainly through the radio publication.

As is widely noted in the history text-books that the RRI was the first time introduced the term "life-long-time presidency" for President Soekarno; the radio announcers familiarized "*Soekarno: Panglima Besar Revolusi; Yang Mulia Penggali dan Pengawal Pancasila*" (Soekarno: the great revolution commander; His Highest the founder and guard of Pancasila). It is likely true because President Soekarno was well-known as a great speaker (orator). He used any kinds of tools to obtain political support from people. As a result, radio and the other communication medium was then became the arm of Soekarno and the Old Order.

Radio was also a vital tool when the New Order emerged in the middle of 1960s. Sen and Hill pointed out that Radio was important communication tool in 'legitimizing Suharto's rise to power in 1965'. Even, the electronic medium became a 'directly politicized' one used by the New Order and activists who were anti-Sukarno and anti-Communist (Sen and Hill, 2000:83). Besides became a political broadcast, radio was an industry and a cultural medium too. Then the role of media was shifting to agent of stability in 1960s and 1970s and in the 1980s and 1990s became agent of development. I still remember, when I was an elementary-school-boy in the 1980s, the words "*Bapak pembangunan Bangsa*" (literally: Mr. Developer of the nation) to refer to Soeharto was so familiar in our listening in the rural area.

To control the media, the Soeharto administration regularized the radio broadcasting. In 1970 private radio stations were legalized and limited campus-base radio stations. In the 1980s, with its powerful department, Ministry of Communication and Information, the New Order controlled radio stations through government regulation. The role of radio at the period was social function which was aimed to 'education, information and entertainment' and radio programs were 'not to be used for political activities' (Sen and Hill, 2000:84). Additionally, to disallow from political activities, the government regulation set three practical elements. First, private radio station were obliged to relay the news of the RRI; second, 'no relays of foreign broadcast; and third, radio stations were obligated 'to maintain recordings of all broadcast' (Sen, 2003:580). Practically, in order to regulate radio broadcasters, the Ministry of Information established the so-called *Persatuan Radio Siaran Swasta Niaga Indonesia-PRSSNI* (the Indonesian Private Commercial Radio Broadcasters Association) and Siti Hardiyanti Rukmana (President Soeharto oldest daughter) was the general chairperson).

In addition, the development of radio stations industry stations was remarkable. It is noted that there were 173 radio stations in the middle of

1970s. There were about 700 stations in the 1990s (Sen and Hill, 2000:87 & 91). Currently, the number of radio broadcasting was over 1,200 stations throughout the country (Low, 2003:13). I believe that there would be increasing number of radio stations (both use FM and AM frequency) at this day because the medium remains popular in broad community. International radio programs such as the BBC, Radio Australia, and Voice of America are also available (see also Article 19 & AJI, 2005:32).

The other important electronic medium is television. As in many other countries, TV is also vital in shaping Indonesians' culture, social and politics. Initially television was introduced by US, British, German, and Japanese companies and initiated by the Department of Information in 1953. In 1960s 'Indonesia was televised for the world stage to see' by Soekarno particularly during the Asian Games in Jakarta in 1962 (Sen and Hill, 2000:109). In 1963 the *Televisi Republik Indonesia*-TVRI, which was initially a foundation institution (*yayasan*), founded under the Ministry of Information. Then the New Order provided annual subsidy for the TVRI (Sen and Hill, 2000:190). In 2003 the status of TVRI was changed into state-owned company (Low, 2003:15) and now becomes a privatized-owned company. Private-owned TVs emerged since 1988 mainly supported by the Palapa satellite to reach throughout Indonesian archipelagoes.

It is important to note that almost all private TVs are owned by Soeharto's children and cronies. For example, the first private TV, *Rajawali Citra Televisi Indonesia*-RCTI, belonged to Bambang Trihatmojo (Suharto's third child) and Bimantara Group (owned by Tomy Winata, Soeharto's "good boy"). The *Surya Citra Televisi*-SCTV (1989), the second private TV, belonged to Henri Pribadi, a Chinese businessman (Suharto's cousin associate, Sudwikatmono who also owned 20 percent of the TV). Siti Hardiyanti Rukmana owned *Televisi Pendidikan Indonesia*-TPI (1990), the third private channel. Next, *Cakrawala Andalas Televisi*-AN TV (1993) owned by Agung Laksono and Bakri, both are the main figure in the Golkar party. *Indosiar TV* (1995) was owned by Lim Sioe Liong, a Chinese conglomerate who is also a long standing Suharto's associate (Sen and Hill, 2000:112-3; see also Article 19 & AJI, 2005:90-1). After the Reformasi period, there are 'relatively' balanced TVs, namely *Trans TV*, *La TV* and *TV 7*, but now these TVs are merged into *TV One* which is owned by Prabowo Subianto (Suharto's former son-in-law). *Metro TV* is owned by Surya Paloh, a media figure and the Chairman Advisory of the Golkar party. In short, Suharto's family, his cronies, and the Golkar party figures generally control the business in the TV industries.

Locally, besides relay-transmission stations of the TVRI, many TVs emerge. For example, Bali TV in Denpasar, Makassar TV; Fajar TV and Manado TV in Sulawesi, Jawa Pos TV (JTV) in Surabaya, Lombok TV in Nusa Tenggara and Riau TV in Sumatra (see also Article 19 & AJI, 2005:31). In addition, cables TVs are accessible and remain familiar in Indonesia at the moment. So, Indonesian viewers are also able to watch global news.

Now let's look at the development of the Internet. It has been noted that in 1986 the National Research Council (*Dewan Riset Nasional*) and the Agency for Assessment and Application Technology-BPPT initiated

the information network, IPTEKnet. Along with main Indonesia's largest universities (Universitas Indonesia, Bandung Institute of Technology, and Gadjah Mada university), established the Internet connection. It is estimated that there were about 15,000 Internet users in 1995 and in 1996 twenty-two Internet Service Providers (ISPs) were listed by the Ministry of Information (Sen and Hill, 2000:195-6; see also Sen, 2003:577). In 2003 there were approximately five million Internet users in Indonesia (Low, 2003:42-3) and I believe that there must be significant increase in the number of people who use the Internet nowadays since the widespread of the tool across the country.

In addition, the ownership of provider is under the government monopoly. In fact, the Internet service is over reliant on PT Telekomunikasi Indonesia (Telkom), the national telephone network, and PT Indosat, the international telecommunication carrier. The joint-venture between PT Pos Indonesia and Telkom created the Wasantara.net to provide internet services throughout provinces (Sen and Hill, 2000:203; see also Heryanto & Adi, 2001:348-9) and now the institutions try to offer Internet services in the secondary schools in big cities. Importantly, although Indonesia has regulation on mass media, the state does not acknowledge or might be able to control and regulate the Internet. Therefore, the medium remains important one in Indonesia.

Although it still remains low number considered the more than two hundred million populations, the accessibility of mass media in the state gains remarkable development. The table highlights the current mass media accessibility:

Kind of media	Number of station/	Accessibility (in millions)
Television	41	13
Newspaper	172	7
Radio	803	31
Internet	-	2

Source: Press Reference, 2007

Studying the role of Indonesia's mass media, Romano identifies five main categories. The first category is a watchdog who 'scutinises and critique the powerful'; second is as the agent of empowerment who attempt to enlighten and strengthen the public; the third is the nation builder who try to support the unity and encourage the nation's social and physical development; the fourth role is truth defender who aims to defend their journalism and truth of news; and the fifth is entertainer who is eager to use media as public entertainment (Romano, 2003:57). In addition, the result of a survey conducted by Romano points out that most journalists are aim to be watchdog to the government as shown in the table below:

<i>Perceived role</i>	<i>Number of journalists</i>	<i>Percentage of journalists</i>
Watchdog	33	50.8
Agent of empowerment	14	21.5
Nation building	12	18.5
Defender of truth	5	7.7
Entertainer	1	1.5

Source: Romano, 2003:57

Above all, after the Reformasi era, the mass media 'found themselves in a radical situation' and remain 'more industrialized and less politicized' (Heryanto, 2001:98). Furthermore, Jacob Oetama states that 'we in Indonesia find ourselves in our new environment'. That 'electronic media, radio, television, the Internet and the others now enjoy new momentum: freedom and revolution in the era of information technology' (Oetama, 2005).

## **B.2. THE MASS MEDIA AND INDONESIA'S POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT**

The critical question in the case of Indonesia's mass media and political discourse is whether the media influence the politics or politics influence the media. In the liberal theory, the main function of the media is 'to act as a check on the state' (Curran, 2007:27). Liberal theorists believe that the 'free and independent press can play a vital role in the process of democratization by contributing towards the right of freedom of expression, thought and conscience, and strengthening the responsiveness of governments to all citizens, and providing a pluralist platform of political expression for multiplicity of groups' (Center for Democracy and Governance, *The role of media in democracy: a strategic approach*, 1999:3 in Low, 2003:23). The mass media in this case play their 'watchdog' role.

According to James Curran, the watchdog role is to conduct a monitoring to all of the state activities. The watchdog argument holds that the government is 'the sole object of press vigilance'. This might happen if the government is generally viewed to be the main source of oppression (Curran, 2007:28). The pattern seems occurring in both the Old and New Order. Since the transition period (Reformasi era), the mass media and Indonesia's politics has been transformed; therefore, it is difficult to obtain a precise answer to the question above.

Using the normative theory of Raymond Williams (1966), Angela Romano believes that the theory remains relevant in analyzing the relationship between Indonesia's media and politics (Romano, 2003:38). It has been argued in the normative theory that 'dominant social values and how the mass media should ideally operate if they are to encompass such values' (Romano, 2003:37). In this regard, socio-political systems and the mass media can be understood by looking at social beliefs within the country and the interactions between individuals and the state. The table below shows this relationship:

Box 1: Characteristics of society

- Historical context
- Dominant understanding of the nature of the 'masses'
- Dominant understanding of the nature of truth
- Dominant understanding of the nature of state power

Relationship mediated by the nature of the legal system, especially laws affecting the mass media

Box 2: Characteristics of the press

- Dominant understanding of appropriate forms of media ownership
- Dominant understanding of the press's social role
- Level of state, legal or community control of the press
- Taboos on reporting particular topics

Source: Romano, 2003:38 from Raymond Williams (1966).

The figure shows the interrelation of socio-political and the mass media in the normative theory. As we can see in the box 1, it is important to see particular elements of a country's socio-political characteristics. The elements of the mass media would affect the political development in that country (box 2). However, Williams argued that 'those characteristics will not emerge unless the social and political culture supports the mass media characteristics' (Romano, 2003: 37).

Studying the mass media in Indonesia, according to Williams, we must firstly engage in analyzing the country's 'historic and present conditions and the processes through which media cultures may become consistent with democratic cultures, resources and institutions' (Williams, 1966:120-3 in Romano, 2003:37-8). For example, *Pancasila* (five principles), is the core value of Indonesian politics, which has a distinct value of the West cultures on free press. It has been argued that the freedom of Pancasila press is 'functional freedom'. It means instead freedom from government control; the Pancasila press is to support the programs to improve economic and social conditions. Therefore, Onong U Effendi (1993:122) in Romano (2003:45) states that the Pancasila press 'is not free *from* or free *to* but free *and*, because it is free *and* responsible' or 'double-sided' freedom (see also Oetama, 2005). Thus it is quite different concept of press freedom in Indonesia and the rest of the world.

However, since the "manipulation" of the philosophy of Pancasila by the New Order regime through mainly under control the Ministry of Information, it seems the mass media or even journalists attempt to avoid labeling themselves as the Pancasila press nowadays. It is highly likely that for a long time the Pancasila is used to indoctrinate the state power; as a consequence, to critique the state (government) is something to be avoided by the mass media in the New Order periods. Yet, the situation after the Reformasi era changed remarkably.

Thanks to the global 'openness' and the shifting of political condition, then journalists and the mass media found themselves, arguably are more independent from the state power and so they are relatively free. When Abdurrahman Wahid came to power, the first controversial policy he took is to dismantling the Ministry of Information which sometimes believed to control the mass media. Even, euphoria of the Reformasi era brought the mass media into a situation of less responsible and to some extents created socio-economical and political instability. For example, the mass media are blamed to trigger the conflicts in the number of regions such as Poso and Ambon in the beginning of 2000s (Low, 2003:33). In this regard, the mass media freedom is pretty much influenced by the changing political conditions.

Regarding the interrelationship between mass media and political change in post-Reformasi era, some observers argue that although the mass media makes significant contribution to the political change, they are not the key players in the transformation. For example, Ariel Heryanto and Stanley Adi believe that 'the main agent of change in the process is neither the state apparatus and specific state

agents, nor crusading journalists'. Instead 'it is the whole network of industrial capitalism at the global, national, and local levels that has been responsible for the transformation...' (Heryanto and Adi, 2001:328).

Nonetheless, the other scholars, such as Elizabeth Morrell and Damien Kingsbury, argue that the mass media play role as 'a catalyst for change' and 'agents of change' (Morrell, 2005:129 & 130). The fact that the mass media are able to politicize the public and 'help to overcome such compliance through providing wider knowledge of alternatives' (Morrell, 2005: 130). Studying local media since the decentralization implemented, Morrell believes that 'newspapers are well positioned to provide checks or restraints on the institutions of governance, and to urge that authorities to be more responsive to the needs and concerns of local communities' (Morrell, 2005: 130). In this case, she states that the main function of the mass media as the catalyst of change is to encourage public responsiveness on social and political policies and to develop 'social capital and strong civil society' (Morrell, 2005:129).

Further, the mass media plays an important role in the dismantling the Suharto regime. Kingsbury argues that 'Indonesia's media were an active influence on and contributor to political outcomes', though they 'did not determine those outcomes or even, in many cases, bring significant influence to bear' (Kingsbury, 2003:125). Kingsbury also adds that the influential role of Indonesia's media emerged 'in post-Soeharto period, but they were and remain one influence among many' (Kingsbury, 2003:125). This is true if we look at the role of the mass media in the general election 2004.

Indeed, Indonesia's political condition itself has changed radically in the post-Soeharto period. Observing the political change, Vedi Hadiz notes at least there are six major features:

- The decentralization of power from the presidency to political parties and to parliament
- The rise of political parties as mainly expressions of shifting alliances of predatory interests, mainly those incubated by the New Order.
- The decentralization of power from Jakarta to the regions and the associated new importance of local offices such as that of *bupati* or town mayor, and of party branches and parliaments at the local level.
- The emergence of decentralized, overlapping, and diffuse patronage networks built on the basis of competition for access and control over national and local institutions and resources.
- The rise of political fixers, entrepreneurs, and enforcers previously entrenched at the lower layers of the New Order's system of patronage.
- The related rise of hooligans and thugs organized in party militia and paramilitary forces, many of which have taken over some of the functions of the security forces proper (Hadiz, 2004:619).

The substantial political changes above lead us to the big question; does Indonesia become a democratic country now? The direct and simple answer is yes. Apart from weaknesses, like corruption, Indonesia has gained things that many people believe as democracy indicators such as free and direct elections (both nationally and locally), freedom of speech, relatively freedom of press, as well as free to associate. Indonesians did not obtain these things before the Reformasi era (see also Hadiz, 2008). In fact, it is been believed that political institutions 'are solid enough to accommodate both powerful and alternative actors'; reasonably,



'Indonesia may be called an emerging democracy' (Tornquist, 2008). A similar view of Krishna Sen who holds that 'beyond formal electoral politics, democratization is often linked to the rise of the civil society' (Sen, 2003:577).

Comparing the impact of print and electronic media to the political development, it is interesting to note the argument of Jakob Oetama. The prominent figure of the Indonesia's mass media states that although the electronic media emerged much later, 'its impact and influence have been phenomenal' (Oetama, 2005). By contrast, the print media, such as newspaper and magazine, readers deal with attention and interest in reading. Therefore, to read needs more effort than to watch in terms of intellectual process. Oetama argues that the pattern happens in Indonesia because 'reading habits remain poor' in the country. As a result, newspaper or magazine readership is left far behind compared with the number of TV viewers and radio listeners to obtain information. The data released by the Indonesian Statistics (BPS) proves the media accessibility. That watching TV is more favorable than listening to radio or reading newspaper as shown in the table below:

<b>Percentage Selected indicators (aged 10 years &amp; over)</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Listened to radio</b>	63.59	50.46	64.52	43.72	50.29	40.26
<b>Watched television</b>	64.77	69.31	88.72	87.97	84.94	85.86
<b>Read newspaper/magazine</b>	23.31	18.33	28.36	17.47	22.06	23.46

Source: Statistics Indonesia and Swivel Review, 2008 Online.

### **C. PENUTUP**

The discourse of whether mass media influence the political transformation or political development affects the mass media in Indonesia remains relevant to be analysed profoundly. The fact that both of them obviously and apparently interrelated each other. In my point of view, the political world had affected the mass media development in both the Old Order and the New Order. By contrast, the situation is contradiction after the collapse of the New Order. It is the mass media influence the political change in the post-Soeharto era. This is true if we look at the political behaviour and preference of many Indonesians in the 2004 general elections and local elections after that year. The mass media significantly has shaped the public opinion to political party and actors in the previous election. For instance, as is widely believed that the rise of President Yudoyono was thanks to the mass media role (Tomsa, 2007:79; Ali, 2004). This pattern remains relevant in the mapping the next year general election.

The survey report released in October 2008 by the Lembaga Survey Indonesia (LSI) shows that there has been a new competition within the mass media campagne among political parties and figures who will run for the presidency. It is because political parties believe that publication through mass media is effective and massive. Therefore, to create public image, most political parties (particularly the established ones) spend more budget for campagne through the media also increased. This trend emerges because there is a common perception that who controls the mass media they will influence the public. Interestingly, a new party (though with old elites) is acknowledged by public due to massive advertisement on

media. For example, Gerindra party (founded by former Soeharto's son-in-law, Prabowo Subianto) and Hanura party (founded by Wiranto) have been popular because of TV campagne. One data of the results of survey of LSI is about 'public memory to the political party': 51 percent respondents know Gerindra; 42 percent remember the Democrat party; 31 percent acknowledge the Golkar party; 27 percent remember the Indonesian Democratic Struggle party (PDIP) and the National Mandate party; the rest parties such the Justice & prosperous party (PKS), the National Awakening party (PKB), and the National Unity party (PPP) each shares 22, 12, 11, and 5 percent respectively. The survey institute remarks that there has been a 'silent revolution' in Indonesia's political development today. The silent revolution, according to LSI, is characterized by the trend the mass media particularly TV has changed the function of political party to reach the voters. In this case, television becomes the major medium to disseminate political information and the most massive persuasive tool.

Three are two important points in projecting the 2009 general election. Firstly, the mass media still play major role in the Indonesia's politics. This is, on the one hand, good news because the mass media are needed to reach more than two hundred million people who live in a huge different geographical and islands nation. On the other hand, the tendency of political parties to spend energy and budget on mass media publication undermines the main function and duty of political party; as a result, many political parties are arguably failed to conduct the political education. Finally, it is highly likely that the actors (both parties and figures) will be the same faces (although it might be different cover) in the 2009 general election.

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