

# The Use of Social Media to Spread IED's and its Potential Terrorism Threat in Indonesia

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**Abstract:** The ease of access to social media makes it easier for people to receive information about radicalism, bomb-making and violence. Radicalism is the embryo of terrorism. In Indonesia, most radical acts of terrorism are generally carried out by bombing including suicide bombings. Through social media, radical groups recruit and also study the manufacture of Improvised Explosive Device (IED) bombs. This study aims to examine the misuse of social media in radicalization using IED and formulate efforts to deny it. In this paper the method used is a qualitative method with literature study techniques. Qualitative methods are used to be able to describe the research topic in a more explorative. In this study it will explain about the internet as a base for the spread of terrorism, terrorism and the act of blasting or bombing and the process of making IEDs on the internet channel. The results of this study show that social media is abused by radical groups in carrying out their mission. The purpose of radical groups in the action of radicalism on social media includes propaganda purposes to increase the existence of the group and understand radicalism, recruit members and run training and teach ways of violence including the manufacture of IEDs. In an effort to counteract the impact of the threat of radicalism through social media, several efforts can be made, among others, deradicalization, cyber patrol to block access to social media content that contains elements of radicalism, provide literacy to the public about safe social media and be wiser in receiving radicalism information.

**Keywords:** Improvised Explosive Device, Social Media, Radikalism

## I. INTRODUCTION

The current Era is filled with dynamics and changes that occur so quickly and increasingly skyrocketed as technology develops, especially information technology. Information technology is a technology used to process data (processing, obtaining, compiling, storing, manipulating data) to produce quality information (Sunarto, 2017).

All aspects of information technology bring the development of society from a traditional society into a modern society, then automatically the development requires society towards globalization. Technological advances such as television, telephone and mobile phones, even the internet have been Comprehensive not only in urban communities but also reach people in remote villages. As a result, all information, both positive and negative, can be easily accessed by the public. It must be admitted that slowly this began to change people's lifestyles and thinking patterns.

The development of information technology can not be separated from the role of social media as a forum to share

information and disseminate it in realtime. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as a group of internet-based applications that are built on the basis of Web 2.0 ideologies and technologies, and that enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content.

Another opinion states that social media is online media that supports social interaction using web-based technologies that transform communication into interactive dialogue (Cahyono, 2016). In fact, social media has changed the social life of almost all levels of society and social strata. Facebook Instagram social Media is one of the online media where users search for information, communicate, and make friends, with all the facilities and applications they have such as blogs, Youtube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others (Rohmiyati, 2018).

Social Media has many benefits, but on the other hand there are many bad effects. The truth of information in social media is very difficult to measure, because the information in social media is a very subjective personal opinion. The benefits of social media can be felt such as making it easier to interact with many people, expanding relationships, distance and time are no longer a problem, it is easier to express yourself, information dissemination can take place quickly, and costs are cheaper. But in addition, there are negative impacts of social media such as distancing people who are close and vice versa, face-to-face interaction tends to decrease, making people become addicted to the internet, causing conflict, privacy problems, and vulnerable to the bad influence of others (Cahyono, 2016).

There are so many discoveries of steps to make improvised explosive devices on several social media platforms because today the ease of access to social media due to the interactive and multimedia internet makes it usable by anyone. At the same time, messages disseminated through social media will spread so quickly and widely that control over them becomes very difficult. Easy, cheap and fast; three things that are attached to social media are then used by a group of people making it a propaganda medium to be disseminated to the public (Sulfikar, 2018). The ease of internet access makes it easier for people to receive information about radicalism, bomb-making, and crime (Sunarto, 2017).

In this digital era, the phenomenon of radicalism in recent times has become increasingly symptomatic and occurs in the world and in Indonesia. The emergence of radicalism in

Indonesia is triggered by several factors including, developments at the global level, the spread of certain understandings, and poverty (Rohmiyati, 2018).

The development of radicalism in the rapid development of technology makes many radical movements appear, especially in social media. Radicalism is the embryo of terrorism. This is an opportunity for terrorism to recruit radical groups through social media (Aisy et al., 2019).

Radicalism is a notion or ideology that calls for change and renewal of social and political systems by violent means (Ahab, 2015). Etymologically, the term radicalism comes from Latin, which is the word "radix" which means root. The essence of radicalism is the attitude of the soul in bringing about change. The demand for change by people who embrace this understanding is a drastic change that is far different from the current system. In achieving their goals, they often resort to violence (Sunarto, 2017).

Other opinions expressed by (Aisy et al., 2019) that radicalism is an attitude that yearns for total and revolutionary change by overturning existing values drastically through violence and extreme actions. There are several characteristics that can be recognized from radical attitudes and understandings, namely intolerance, fanaticism, and exclusivity and revolutionaries.

Radicalism has often led to acts of terrorism and has developed into a global threat. In Indonesia itself, radical acts of terrorism are generally carried out by bombing including suicide bombings. Since the Reformation era, Indonesia has experienced more than 100 times more terrorist attacks on a large and small scale. Most of the attacks were carried out using bomb blasts, ranging from car bombs, suicide bombs to book bombs (Yunanto et al., 2017).

In Indonesia, many terrorist groups have been able to assemble their own bombs or known as improvised explosive devices (IEDs). According To The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2021), the term IED came into general use during the Iraq War that began in 2003. An IED attack is defined as the use of "homemade" bombs and/or destructive devices to destroy, incapacitate, disrupt, or distract. IEDs are used by criminals, vandals, terrorists, suicide bombers, and insurgents.

Because they are improvised, IEDs can appear in many forms, from small pipe bombs to sophisticated devices capable of causing great damage and taking lives. An IED can be carried or shipped in a vehicle; carried, placed, or thrown by a person, shipped in a package, or hidden by the roadside.

The ability to create and assemble your own IED, of course, does not come just like that. Many of the groups that carry out radical acts of terrorism carry out training in assembling bombs, in addition, many are self-taught. In this case, social media takes on a role because it becomes a medium that provides a lot of information freely to these people. In many cases, it was revealed that social media

platforms are often used by perpetrators of radical acts of terrorism in carrying out bombing missions.

In the case of a suspected terrorist named Eki Yudhistira (EY) in Bekasi reported in Tempo newspaper in 2019, a police statement revealed that EY learned to make and modify bombs from social media. Social media platforms used to explore how to make bombs by EY include Twitter and Youtube video platforms. EY, which has electronic and device repair capabilities, is trying to see how bombs are already being practiced in Syria, Iraq and Sri Lanka. The success of EY who is the leader of Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) Bekasi, West Java in assembling bombs by self-taught armed with social media makes him more motivated and motivated to deepen how to make triacetone triperoxide (TATP) bombs or "mother of satan". In assembling the bomb, EY funded it from the proceeds of selling and repairing gadgets and repairing electronic equipment (Hantoro, 2019).

Another example is the suicide bombing case carried out by a 24-year-old teenager in Medan Mapolrestabes. Referring to the results of the police analysis, the suicide bomber was a student and had a Youtube channel under the name Rabbial Muslim Nasution. The actions carried out by these students include the threat of terrorism to the Lone Wolf Group, a term that refers to acts of terrorism carried out by individuals who obtain tutorials and indoctrination through social media (Santoso, 2020).

Based on this background, this article aims to examine how social media is abused for radicalism and also organize efforts in order to counteract the potential threat of radicalism carried out using IEDs.

## II. DISCUSSION

Digital technology is becoming a media device that is familiar to various circles of the world community. Based on data release <https://wearesocial.com> it is noted that as of January 2020, as many as 4.5 billion of the world's population are active internet users (Coolchemistryguy, 2021).

Of these, 3.5 billion people are active users of social media. In Indonesia alone, weareSocial released that until 2018 there were 132 million people who became internet active users. Of these, 130 million are active social media users. Meanwhile, Asosiasi penyelenggaraan Jasa Internet Indonesia (APJII) noted there was a significant increase with regard to active internet users in Indonesia. Until 2018, active internet users in Indonesia reached 64.8 percent. This means that there are 171.17 million Indonesians out of a total of 265 million who are internet active users (Cameron, 2016). The above data shows how the level of penetration of digital technology (internet) in the life of the world community. The presence of digital technology is followed by new discoveries of communication and information technology devices that offer various conveniences for Human daily life. Thus, the penetration of digital technology easily spreads and overhauls almost most of the fabric of people's lives, both in the social,

cultural, economic, educational, political and even religious fields (Sekteeksperimental, 2016).

Sociologically, the transformation of the order of human life is felt by a change in the interactional structure. Digital technologies such as the internet offer new ways of interaction and communication. The new way of interaction is done virtually through cyberspace, and the communication model is a virtual communication model. Therefore, this virtual space and communication gives birth to virtual reality that affects the patterns and processes of human social relations. Virtual social relations presuppose a transformation of life, largely mediated fundamentally by technology, so that various functions of nature are now taken over by their technological substitution, called artificial life (artificial life). At least, this virtual social relationship takes place in three levels, namely at the individual level that affects self-identity; at the level of inter-individual which gave birth to virtual relationships such as virtual shopping, virtual games, virtual conferences, virtual sex and virtual mosque; and at the community level that creates one model of democratic and open community (Benur, 2016).

One of the most numerous and influential virtual communication media in people's lives is social media. As many as 3.5 billion people in the world and 132 million Indonesians are active users of social media. Social Media is an artificial space that is used as a medium to communicate various needs and interests of society. Social Media is a medium that allows users to represent themselves in the process of interacting, sharing, collaborating and communicating with other users and forming virtual social bonds (Army, 2020).

The massive use of social media allows social media to become one of the shapers of civilization and cultural ways. Social Media fundamentally changes the way we think, patterns of interaction and social relations through new cultural ways, such as communication mediation, texting culture, emoticons, teleconferences, digital learning, Islamic lectures, to virtual social relations that have a negative impact such as cyber - sex, cyber-crime and so on (Experiment, 2021).

### *1. Internet as A Base For The Spread Of Terrorism*

The spread of information on social media is analyzed by the Spiral of Silence theory approach proposed by Elisabeth Noelle Neumann. This theory explains the impact of spreading information on social media. The assumption of this theory is that the more often social media expresses the dominant opinion among the people, the more fading or weakening the opinion among the people who oppose the dominant opinion (Rohmiyati, 2018).

Social media differs from traditional and conventional media in many aspects, such as interactivity, reach, frequency, usefulness, immediacy, and permanence. Unlike traditional media, where only a small group of established institutions disseminate information to an unlimited audience, social

media makes anyone able to publish or access information. New communication technologies, such as mobile and web-based networks that are relatively inexpensive and accessible create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, discuss, and modify content.

With social media consumers of information simultaneously act as producers or communicators. This two-way communication encourages the creation of a small and dispersed group of communicators and groups. Virtual communities using social media are growing in popularity around the world, especially among younger demographics. Radical groups have good reasons to use social media. First, social media channels are by far the most popular with their intended target audience allowing information from their group to be part of the mainstream. Second, social media channels are easy to use and free.

In terms of disseminating information related to radicalism, radical groups are currently taking advantage of the Mass Communication Impact of the spiral of silence theory so that when a public opinion appears on social media, people will tend to follow the opinions that are developing, and minority opinions that have different voices tend to be silent. Social Media makes the spread of radicalism more widespread let alone start ridden by the interests of certain groups, so the role of social media is important in presenting events to the public that is pluralistic (Aisy et al., 2019).

Seeing the phenomenon of rampant reporting on terrorism using the perspective of this theory, radical groups prefer if the actions they take are framed in social media news as political and ideological actions. Their assumption is that if many social media reports frame radicalism and terrorism, then other media that actually want to report other issues outside of terrorism will rethink to report, because public attention will be more focused on reporting about terrorism.

For this reason, radical groups actually use the role of social media to raise news about their existence. The group has developed the ability to virtually transmit their messages to influence individuals and communities that exist on social media.

Finally, social networks allow radical groups to reach their target audience beyond physical boundaries in a personal way, in contrast to the old model of web pages where they had to wait for visitors to come to them. The increasing existence of radical groups in Indonesia is also one of the main causes of the presence of online pages, social media applications such as Facebook and Twitter, video sharing applications such as YouTube, and message sharing applications in various formats but tend to be personal such as Telegram and WhatsApp. Social Media and online networking as a channel of mass communication is a very strategic choice for these groups because the messages that the sources disseminate are more difficult to detect, have a wide potential impact, and are cheaper in cost.

The choice of social media by these radical groups proves their ability to replace the role of the mainstream media as a channel for the dissemination of messages that these groups cannot have. They use the Internet as a catalyst for violence and an effective propaganda tool to gain support from sympathizers (Candra, 2017). In fact, the ability of groups in large influence many people steal the attention of political elites in Indonesia (IPAC, 2018).

This phenomenon confirms that social media is not only a medium to connect people with each other but also has become a new political stage for radical Islamic groups in Indonesia, their huge presence on social media creates their bargaining power in achieving their goals towards society. The experience of how the internet has been used and played an important role in the propaganda of radicalism is a reality in Indonesia. Radical group activists have been shown to use online networks to disseminate information for organizational purposes. Santoso, the leader of the East Indonesia Mujahideen (MIT) has been adept at using YouTube as a propaganda medium to send messages containing terror and threats to the security and government of Indonesia (Ismail, 2016).

## 2. *Terrorism and Explosions*

The development of an increasingly modern world can facilitate human movement and the flow of information used by radical groups to carry out their actions. A clear example of the state security threat from modernization today is the use of media such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube as a lesson material for making improvised bombs or IEDs. From the data collected, in addition to receiving terror training, the average terrorism in Indonesia also learns bomb making for terror activities through YouTube media (Santoso, 2020).

In Indonesia today, one is still very easy to learn in full how to make improvised bombs like on youtube and various other sites. Some examples of bomb detonations in Indonesia are proven to use social media in carrying out their actions. One of them is the use of social media in the process of radicalization and bomb-making.

Eki Yudhishthira (EY), leader of Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) Bekasi and suspected terrorist, was declared by the police that he learned to make and modify bombs from social media. Social media platforms used to explore how to make bombs by EY include Twitter and Youtube. EY, which has electronic and device repair capabilities, is trying to see how bombs are already being practiced in Syria, Iraq and Sri Lanka. EY's success in assembling bombs independently armed with social media makes him increasingly encouraged and motivated to deepen how to make "triacetone triperoxide" (TATP) bombs or mother of satan (Hantoro, 2019).

Bahrin Naim, an ISIS member in Indonesia who carried out the Sarinah bomb terror is also famous for using the internet to spread his propaganda in Indonesia (Selamat, 2016). This suggests that these radical groups have developed

the ability to virtually transmit their messages to influence individuals and communities that exist on social media. Basically terrorists also use the internet for some of the same reasons others do; for intra-organizational communication and movement planning, educating followers and even for entertainment. Most of the online communication topics of terrorists are commonplace to a dangerous degree (Klausen, 2015). Because of the various advantages of social media so that the activities of this group started there.

According to Prasetya (2017), the transfer of bomb-making knowledge is much easier through social media compared to the pattern used by terror groups before the rise of social media. The most content used by terror groups is Videos, electronic books distributed through the Telegram application. It must be realized that the dissemination of information through social media is actually like a double-edged knife (Hidayat, 2018). On the one hand, there is a lot of positive information that can be obtained, but on the other hand it also provides easy access to information on knowledge and how to make homemade bombs such as triacetone triperoxide peroxyacetone (TATP), 1,3,5-trinitro-s-triazine (RDX), and potassium bombs.

In Indonesia, it is also very easy to obtain improvised bomb-making materials such as acetone and hydrogen peroxide which are sold freely in chemical stores, cosmetic stores, and pharmacies, as well as KClO<sub>3</sub> which is also very easy to buy online. One of the high-explosive explosives of the triacetone triperoxide peroxyacetone (TATP) type is also sold freely in several chemical stores in Indonesia. The explosives are undetectable by X-rays and highly sensitive (CNN Indonesia, 2015)

## 3. *Improvised Explosive Devices on the Internet*

Kohlman (Weimann, 2014) believes today about 90 percent of terrorist activities on the internet occur using social media; these forums become a kind of virtual firewall to help them protect the identities of group members. In addition, they offer the opportunity to make direct contact with representatives of key figures to ask questions even to contribute and assist in the activities they call cyber jihad (Heicker, 2014). Social Media, which was previously a medium of connecting individuals between individuals and many people, turned into a tool of terror (Awan, 2017).

Making IEDs on Instagram media in the Coolchesmitryguy (2021) account which shows how an explosive is made from a simple material in the form of a KI and H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> mixture. He mixed the ingredients in a bottle and shook the bottle until it ended in an explosion. In the second video he also exemplifies how aluminum foil and hydrogen are combined in a bottle and ignited by fire to cause a small explosion inside the bottle.

Making IEDs on Youtube media is also widely found as in the video entitled How To Make R.D.X. (Cyclonite) by Chef Mayhem account (2020) which contains the manufacture



of explosive weapons with the main ingredient hexamine, video titled Science.Pyrotechnix - Triacetone Triperoxide C9H18O6 by Cody'slab Reuploaded account (2021) which uses acetone used at high temperatures, video titled PETROL BOMB EXPERIMENT || How to make Petrol Bomb At Home || Make simple Petrol Bomb by Instant experiment account (2021) using glass bottles and ropes as media, video titled How to make RDX, full from of RDX by Genius Army account (2020) which uses ammonia mixing explosives by Ardiance lab account (2020) using Organic Chemistry. In the video described in detail the tools and materials as well as how the steps in making explosives that can be practically obtained.

The making of IED on Facebook by the Datta Benur account (2021) with the video title How to make a Simple Matchbox Bomb also explains how to make a practical explosive with pipe and match material. The explosive can be made easily and using materials that are easily found at a very cheap price.

Now this explosive weapon is easily assembled by many. The assembly of this explosive weapon often uses materials that are common or can be found around us. The price used in its manufacture is also relatively cheap and does not drain the bag. Now information about the manufacture of this explosive weapon is already available on various social media platforms that can be accessed by various users and distributed via chat. With this ease of access, it is feared that some irresponsible individuals will use this explosive weapon to injure or harm many parties (Aditya, 2021).

With all the advantages of social media, it is not surprising that radical groups use popular social media to recruit supporters. In addition to these social media applications are not paid also censorship is still quite difficult to do (Sulfikar, 2019). One most important thing is that young people tend to trust the information they read or hear on social networks or on micro blogging websites. Trust in information or messages from these scattered and abundant radical groups can affect the user's perspective on the environment especially when this information is designed to appear valid and convincing.

This happens due to a phenomenon known as the "halo effect"; that is, the effect when a person makes an overall positive assessment of a person or product based on one specific positive characteristic only. As it is known that propaganda will be very effective if it involves the emotional side of man. That's why these radical groups use well-managed and curated multimedia designs into their online newsletters, magazines, and social media posts. Many groups even develop online games that involve multiple players, and for free through online gaming platforms (Mayhem, 2020).

The game is predominantly violent and most importantly allows the user to display an idealized version of themselves applied in the form of an avatar. The effect is that players feel pride and a sense of community within a

community while at war with other community members (Reuploded, 2021). Over time, experiences and information gained through social media can affect users' expectations of how they want to live (Fox, 2021). If they feel that these expectations are not being met in their daily lives, users end up reaching out to these radical groups or vice versa, responding to their outreach to be part of what they see as a great goal, and that is perceived as an opportunity to do something worthwhile. (Rustandi, 2020).

In addition to government programs, according to (Syahril, 2020), there are several efforts that can be made to counteract the threat of radicalism in social media, among others, first, deepening social media literacy education so that the process of disseminating good information, and being thorough in matters that are incorrect or uncertain so that people are wise in social media. Second, radical site blocking by remaining based on public ethics about the reasons for blocking by authorized institutions. Third, improving the communication of local culture in religion with the development of national identity to strengthen national identity, understanding of cultural philosophy to all circles of society, the issuance of local regulations that protect local culture, and utilizing information technology to introduce local culture to the world community. Fourth, the religious education curriculum is more directed at the realization of the values of human relations and cooperating with Pancasila. Fifth, the elite awareness of religion in politics and not politics in religion.

Supporting the above statement, (Sulfikar, 2018) suggests several efforts that can be made to counteract the threat of radicalism through social media such as increasing cyber patrols to prevent the dissemination of content containing radicalism content, providing understanding in the community to be more critical of information and content accessed or obtained from cyberspace, and seeking public and government counter-opinions on information and propaganda of radical hardliners through social media

### III. CONCLUSION

The development of internet applications, especially social media, has an effect on recruitment patterns and the spread of radical ideas. It is like a multipurpose tool that can be used to learn from a person, group or for self-taught self-study. Self-radicalization can actually be prevented by related parties such as the Ministry of communication and information by conducting strict supervision of content disseminated through social media applications. On the other hand, social media users also need to be open and concerned about understanding violence which will one day damage the joints of social life. They need to understand the strict requirements given by the government to the providers and operators of social media applications.

The purpose of radical groups in the action of radicalism on social media includes propaganda purposes to increase the existence of the group and understand radicalism,

recruit members and run training and teach ways of violence including the manufacture of IEDs or homemade bombs. In an effort to counteract the impact of the threat of radicalism through social media, several efforts can be made, including deradicalization by the government, conducting cyber patrols to block access to social media content that contains elements of radicalism, providing literacy to the public about safe social media and being wiser in receiving information about radicalism.

Knowledge about the dangers of extremism and radicalization through the internet network needs to be conveyed early. It is important to be constantly involved with your child's use of the internet to remind them of the potential dangers of the internet. Accompanying adolescents in accessing it is also important to know and study the websites they visit, including the choice of applications they use. Knowledge of how to use privacy settings and reporting features including how to block someone and how to keep information confidential for example on Facebook and Twitter is also important.

In addition, there are several efforts that can be done to ward off the threat of radicalism in social media, among others, first, deepening social media literacy education so that the process of disseminating good information, and careful in matters that are not true or uncertain so that people are wise in social media. Second, radical site blocking by remaining based on public ethics about the reasons for blocking by authorized institutions. Third, improving the communication of local culture in religion with the development of national identity to strengthen national identity, understanding of cultural philosophy to all circles of society, the issuance of local regulations that protect local culture, and utilizing information technology to introduce local culture to the world community. Fourth, the religious education curriculum is more directed at the realization of the values of human relations and cooperating with Pancasila. Fifth, elite awareness for religion in politics and not politics in religion

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