

**SHRINKING CIVIC SPACE AMIDST THE
COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN INDONESIA**



LOKATARU FOUNDATION

2020

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January-April 2020

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Lokataru Foundation has compiled incidents and cases on shrinking civic space issues as well as the overall civic space condition in Indonesia from January to April 2020. We mainly identified six clusters civic space issues:


1. Restriction to freedom of assembly through unnecessary and excessive use of force by the authorities
2. Criminalization of human rights activist and government critic, and citizens allegedly spreading hoax or insulting the presidents/public officials
3. Stigmatization, persecution, and criminalization of certain social/ideological groups ("anarcho-syndicalist")
4. Securitization of COVID-19 pandemic, for example through the president's civil emergency proposal and the army contingency plan
5. Social conflicts caused by stigmatization of COVID-19 victims


Key cases, regulations, Government statements and measures that reflect restrictions and attacks against civic freedoms in Indonesia can be found below.

Note:

Each entry is color-coded

: Government statements related to COVID-19 preparedness and handling, including the securitization issue

: Incidents, arrests, and policies related to freedom of expression (human rights defenders, hoax-related, insults against the President/Government officials, rights to seek/receive/impart information,)

: Incidents, arrests and policies and related to freedom of expression (dispersal of crowds, arrests of those violating Large-Scale Social Restriction, violent and repressive measures used by police, etc)

: Social conflicts caused by stigmatization towards COVID-19 victims:

: Arbitrary arrest against alleged anarcho-syndicalist members

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JANUARY 2020		
Date	Events	Details
24 January 2020	Government officials such as Minister of Health Terawan Agus Putranto, Presidential Chief of Staff Moeldoko, and Vice President Ma'ruf Amin called on residents to remain calm. ⁱ	Any positive case of COVID-19 in Indonesia has not been found but the Government claimed that they had anticipated the spread of the COVID-19 virus and requested the public not to panic.
27 January 2020	Despite the increasing number of COVID-19 cases worldwide, Transportation Minister Budi Karya Sumadi claimed he has not closed flights to China other than to and from Wuhan. ⁱⁱ Minister of Health Terawan urges people to eat enough and 'just enjoy' life. ⁱⁱⁱ	
FEBRUARY 2020		
1 February 2020	KR posted via his Facebook account, Kazahea Tanzania on Thursday (1/30/2020) about one corona virus positive patient at Kanujoso Hospital, Balikpapan, East Kalimantan. FR, a domestic worker, was also arrested on suspicion of spreading hoaxes similar to KR.	Both were charged with Article 14-15 of Law Number 1 of 1946 concerning false information with a maximum threat of imprisonment of 7-10 years. ^{iv}

3 February 2020	Minister Terawan said that hoax about coronavirus is more dangerous than the virus itself. ^v	
11 February 2020	Minister of Health Terawan criticised the results of Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health research which questions why Indonesia has not yet recorded any case of coronavirus. Minister of Health Terawan said that the research is insulting and invited the Harvard researchers to come to Indonesia and prove by themselves.	According to Marc Lipstich, an epidemiologist from Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Indonesia should have reported a coronavirus outbreak and could have undetected cases given its extensive air links to China and the city of Wuhan, the epicenter of the outbreak. He added that this might be because Indonesia's health system is unable to detect the virus. ^{vi}
17 February 2020	Some public officials, including the Minister of Health Terawan, are still joking about COVID-19.	Transportation Minister Budi Karya Sumadi said that Indonesians' habit of consuming cat rice (<i>nasi kucing</i> , Indonesian local dish consisting of rice, sambal, dried fish, tempeh, famous for its serving in small portion) prevented COVID-19 from entering ^{vii} while the Health Minister Terawan claimed that Indonesians are immune to coronavirus because of our prayers. ^{viii}
26 February 2020	Indonesian Vice President Maruf Amin said the prayers of the kyai and ulama (Islamic religious leaders) and reading a lot of qunut prayers prevented Indonesia from COVID-19 outbreak.	This was conveyed in his opening remarks during the VIIth Indonesian Muslim Community Congress at Novotel Bangka, Wednesday Night, February 26, 2020. ^{ix}
28 February 2020	The Indonesian Government issued 298 Billion Rupiah as First Economic Stimulus instead of allocating funds to prevent COVID-19.	The form of policy referred to includes hiring 'influencers' to promote Indonesian tourism (Rp. 72 billion rupiah), tourism promotion (45-50% discount on airplane tickets) to 10 tourist destinations (103 billion rupiah); and other

		tourism activities (25 billion rupiah). ^x
MARCH 2020		
2 March 2020	The first case of COVID-19 case in Indonesia has been confirmed by President Joko Widodo. ^{xi}	
3 March	The Government of Depok City claimed that Expert Staff of the Ministry of Health asked them not to disclose the identities of the first two COVID-19 patients from Depok City. ^{xii}	
3 March 2020	The Ministry of Health prohibits Regional Governments from announcing case data or the spread of COVID-19 in their regions. ^{xiii}	According to Trisakti University's Public Policy Analyst, Trubus Rahardiansyah, this ban shows that the Central Government has monopolized the information and resulted in panic among the public. This is the case because the public could not access or receive accurate information about coronavirus in time, instead they are being shown the quarrel between Central and Regional Governments over the authority to inform the public. ^{xiv}
9 March 2020	Minister of Health Terawan is accused of non-disclosure of public information regarding COVID-19 cases in Indonesia.	Minister Terawan was accused of covering up information regarding COVID-19 cases. He allegedly underestimate and ignored two government institutions that had suggested to the President to evacuate Indonesians in Wuhan and the crew of Diamond Princess Cruise Ship in Yokohama. According to Tempo sources, the suggestions which were supposed to be informed to the President was

		kept by Terawan and resulted in the delays of COVID-19 crisis handling. Additionally, Terawan allegedly failed to take adequate measures to handle COVID-19 outbreak ever since the WHO declared a pandemic. ^{xv}
10 March 2020	A housewife was arrested for sharing hoax about coronavirus patients at Soetomo District Hospital through her Facebook account on Surabaya Digital City Facebook page. ^{xvi}	She was charged with Article 28 paragraph 1 of the IT Law (consumer hoax), and/or Article 14-15 of Law Number 1 of 1946 (disturbance).
11 March 2020	Okti Even Rizki, a housewife in Lampung was arrested for spreading hoax about a COVID-19 patient in Pringsewu District, Kecamatan Pagelaran, who has just returned from Malaysia. ^{xvii}	
13 March 2020	President Jokowi admitted that he was deliberately holding back some information on the spread of COVID-19 in Indonesia to prevent the public from panicking. ^{xviii}	
19 March 2020	The Chief of Indonesian Police issued Maklumat Kapolri Number Mak / 2 / III / 2020 concerning Compliance With Government Policies in Handling Corona Virus Spread.	The Maklumat includes an appeal not to hold social activities with large numbers of people gathering, both for the public in general and the Indonesian Police officers themselves. These activities include social, cultural, religious gatherings and beliefs in the form of seminars, etc; music concert, fairs, festivals, bazaars, night markets, exhibitions, and family receptions; sports activities, arts and entertainment services; rallies, marches, and carnivals;

		and other activities in mass gathering. In addition, the Maklumat allows the authorities to take necessary actions if they find acts that are in contrary to this Maklumat, in accordance with the provisions of the applicable laws and regulations.
21 March 2020	The President's Spokesman Fadjoel Rachman asked the public to stop giving negative criticisms to the government	Fadjoel requested that the public to refrain from expressing negative criticism to the government. According to him, it is better to ask oneself whether they have properly follow the social distancing measure or help the health workers in need. ^{xix}
23 March 2020	Former Millennial Special Staff, Adamas Belva Syah Devara called on citizens not to attack, 'bully' or bring down each other in the midst of COVID-19 pandemic.	Belva stressed the importance of each party to help one another by giving an example of a junior high school student who donated a small amount of money. ^{xx}
26 March 2020	Two people became suspects for spreading hoax (a footage of a security guard fainting because of coronavirus). The information on the video states that "Sentra Latumenten Centre infected by corona and fainted". ^{xxi}	Both perpetrators were charged with Article 28 paragraph 1 jo. Article 45 a paragraph 1 of Law Number 19 of 2016 concerning IT with a possible sentence of six years imprisonment. The two perpetrators were also charged with Article 15 of Law Number 1 of 1946 (causing disturbances) with two years imprisonment.

30 March 2020	President Joko Widodo plans to declare civil emergency alongside Large-Scale Social Restriction. According to the Acting Deputy IV of the Presidential Staff Office for Political Communication, Juri Ardiantoro, this plan is only a last resort and will only be declared if there is chaos, and dissent that disrupts social stability. The plan to declare a civil emergency is only a 'warning' from the President so that the public adheres to the provisions of the Large Scale Social Restriction. ^{xxii}	
31 March 2020	The Indonesian Police claimed to have carried out 11,145 dispersion as referred to in the Police Chief's Notice (Maklumat Kapolri).	77,330 COVID-19 prevention related activities have been carried out, this consists of 18,935 educations/socialisations to the community, 35,954 publications and the like, and dispersing 11,145 mass gatherings. ^{xxiii}
31 March 2020	The President declared Public Health Emergency Status and Large-Scale Social Restrictions, a limitation of specific activities of a particular region that is suspected of COVID-19 infection. Such activities include closure of non-essential offices and facilities (malls, cinemas, recreational facilities, etc). This measure is not automatically applied throughout all regions of Indonesia. Head of Province/City/Regency must first submitted a request	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presidential Decree No. 11 of 2020 concerning Determination of Public Health Emergency Status 2. Government Regulation No. 21 of 2020 concerning Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PP No. 21/2020)

	to the Health Minister to implement Large-Scale Social Restriction by providing sufficient evidence such high number of COVID-19 infections, etc.	
31 March 2020	4 people named as suspects in Patikraja and Pekuncen Districts for provoking the refusal of a COVID-19 victim funeral. K, one of the suspects from Kedungwringin Village, Patikraja District was allegedly provoking residents to refuse a funeral of COVID-19 patients in his village. Meanwhile, A, K, and S from Tumiyang Village, Pekuncen District. They had to dig up the body and moved it to another location due to the incidents. Ironically, one of the suspects was a village government officer. ^{xxiv}	
APRIL 2020		
1 April 2020	In relation to President's plan to declare Civil Emergency status alongside Large-Scale Social Restrictions, the police arrested a man named Ali Baharsyah who made harsh comments against President Jokowi through a video circulating on Facebook. He essentially said that President's plan is a stupid move. ^{xxv}	
3 April 2020	The Indonesian National Police arrested 19 people in a crowd raid around Palmerah and Pasar Rumput area. They were taken to the police station to receive	

	socialization on Large-Scale Social Restriction. ^{xxvi} This was done even before Jakarta imposed the Large-Scale Social Restriction on 10 th April 2020.	
3 April 2020	An online motorcycle taxi driver, Muhammad Alwi, was arrested for insulting President Joko Widodo and a member of the Advisory Council for President, Muhammad Lutfi bin Yahya or Habib Lutfi on Alwi's Facebook social media account.	On his Facebook account, he urged Muhammad Lutfi bin Yahya to criticize President Jokowi's incompetence. He was charged with Article 28 paragraph 2 Jo Article 45a paragraph 2 of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 19 of 2016 on Electric Information and Transaction. This case is deemed to be as a case of hate speech. ^{xxvii}
4 April 2020	The Indonesian Police arrested 18 people for violating social distancing rules and ignored the police's warning thrice.	They are charged with Article 92 Jo Article 9 paragraph (1) of Law No. 6 of 2018 on Health Quarantine and Article 218 of the Criminal Code. . ^{xxviii}
4 April 2020	The Indonesian Police issued Telegram Letter ST/1100/IV/HUK.7.1./2020 which focuses on violations and problems that may occur in the development of the situation and opinions in cyberspace	This Telegram Letter instructs the police to carry out robust cyber patrol to monitor the situation and opinions circulating on social media. Those that become the focus of the patrols are hoax about COVID-19, government's measures in handling COVID-19, as well as insult to the President and/or other Government officials.
	Alongside the above Telegram Letter, Chief of National Police also issued Telegram Letter ST/1098/IV/HUK.7.1./2020	Instructed the police to adopt dynamic and adaptive approach in anticipating threats of crimes during COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia such as crimes of obstructing the implementation of health quarantine law,

		etc.
4 April 2020	The police arrested 20 people allegedly violating Large-Scale Social Restriction during patrols around North Jakarta area on Saturday night to Sunday morning. The arrest was the result of patrols on Saturday (4/4/2020) night to Sunday (5/4/2020) in the morning. This was done before Jakarta implemented the Large-Scale Social Restriction on April 10, 2020.	All 20 suspects were taken to North Jakarta Mapolres Metro to be given guidance on Large-Scale Social Restriction. They are also charged with Article 93 Juncto Article 9 of Law Number 6 Year 2018 concerning Health Quarantine and or Article 218 of the Indonesian Criminal Code. The maximum sentence is one year imprisonment with 100 million rupiah fines. ^{xxix}
5 April 2020	16 people were arrested in cafes around Bendungan Hilir and Menteng areas. This was done before Jakarta implemented the Large-Scale Social Restriction on April 10, 2020.	The arrest was claimed to be conducted after the police's notice of dispersal was ignored. The cafe owner was also arrested and taken to the Metro Jaya Regional Police to be processed as a suspect. ^{xxx}
6 April 2020	The National Agency of Disaster Management (Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana) admitted that the data of the Central Government does not match with the Regional Government's data.	According to the Head of the BNPB the Ministry of Health does not disclose all data related to COVID-19 cases in Indonesia. Even BNPB was prevented from accessing the full data own by the Health Ministry. ^{xxxi}
7 April 2020	In the West Java region alone, the West Java Regional Police claimed to have conducted 5,556 dispersal of gatherings.	
8 April 2020	A labor was arrested on charges of hatred and contempt towards President Joko Widodo. The suspect commented on a facebook status with a	

	meme that allegedly insulted the Indonesian President Joko Widodo. ^{xxxii}	
9 April 2020	Five people allegedly involved in ‘anarcho-syndicalism’ were arrested for vandals and incitement. Three were arrested in Tangerang and the other two in Bekasi.	The arrest was carried out without an arrest warrant. The three suspects arrested in Tangerang were charged with Article 14 or 15 of Law No. 1 of 1946 on Criminal Law Rule or Article 160 of the Criminal Code (incitement). The group allegedly painted graffiti inciting people to riot with messages such as “time to burn,” “kill the rich,” and “die ridiculously or fight” on the walls around Tangerang Kota (Pasar Anyar, Jalan Kisamaun, etc.). Latest information explains that Rio Imanuel AP, Aflah Adhi M, and Muhammad Riski have been detained for 16 days without access to legal assistance. YLBHI's public lawyers are prevented by the Metro Jaya Regional Police to meet the suspects and provide their rights to legal assistance. Aflah, who is still considered as a minor, is placed in a correctional center while Riski and Rio are detained in the Metro Jaya Regional Police detention center without legal assistance. ^{xxxiii}
9 April 2020	In Semarang Regency, residents of Sewakul Village refused the funeral of a nurse who died of coronavirus. This resulted in the detention of three people believed to provoke the incident. The suspect was proven to have provoke and prevented the officer who carried out the funeral according to the	

	procedure. Some residents apologized for the incident to all nurses in Indonesia. ^{xxxiv}	
10 April 2020	A citizen in Sorong named Alforiane Reba was reported to the Papua Regional Police on defamation charges for expressing his disappointment on COVID-19 handling in Papua.	In a video circulating around social media, he commented that Governor Dominggus Mandacan was a 'loyal slave' of Jakarta (Central Government), he is greedy and has no common sense in responding COVID-19 cases in Papua. He criticized the policies of the Governor and Tito Karnavian (Former Chief of National Police, now the Minister of Home Affairs) who, according to Alforiane Reba, treated Papuans as experimental rabbits. ^{xxxv}
11 April 2020	Chief of National Police, Irjen Pol Nana Sujana, announced that anarcho-syndicalist plan to spark mass looting in Java Island.	This announcement is criticised to only cause unnecessary panic among the public since Irjen Pol Nana Sujana only relied on the testimonies of those arrested in Tangerang and their Whatsapp group chats. However, he failed to explain what kind of information obtained from the alleged Whatsapp group and whether a verification and further investigation has been carried out. ^{xxxvi}
11 April 2020	A video of several badly injured men telling testimonies of police brutality against them in Labuan Bajo, East Nusa Tenggara, as a form of COVID-19 prevention measures.	The video tells the chronology of police brutality experienced by Edo Mense and some of his friends on Saturday, April 11, 2020. Still in a state of battered and seriously injured, he said they were beaten by members of Manggarai Barat District Police because they were considered to violate the prohibition of mass gathering in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Edo and his

		<p>friends have previously explained to the police that they did not have a place to stay because the family refused their presence who had just come from COVID-19 affected areas. The police tortured them again after they arrived at the Manggarai Barat District Police Station. Two hours later, the authorities announced that they would be placed in the district office or the quarantine location owned by the Manggarai Barat Government. However, due to lack of preparation they were then returned to their original place where they were intimidated and beaten.^{xxxvii} The police had offer the victims' family 10 million rupiah as mediation efforts, but the family refused and still wanted to take legal action.^{xxxviii}</p>
13 April 2020	<p>Following the arrest in Tangerang, 3 people in Banjar, West Java were arrested on suspicion of vandalism and alleged involvement with the 'anarcho-syndicalist' group.</p>	<p>The police in a press conference showed a number of books unrelated to anarchism or the actions of perpetrators as evidence, but they later clarified that the books are only the items collected during the arrest. The books include self-help books, general fiction, and others.^{xxxix} This action was condemned by the public as unnecessary and spark many discussions on social media.</p>
13 April 2020	<p>10 people in Malang were arrested after allegedly wrote "Disband the State" and "People Don't Need a State" in the Karanglo Singosari tunnel, Malang.</p>	<p>They claimed that they were not satisfied with Government's measures in handling COVID-19.^{xl}</p>
13 April 2020	<p>Two people in West Java were accused of insulting</p>	<p>Nine people in West Java were arrested, seven were set</p>

	President Jokowi.	free and two were named as suspects. The arrests are still related to Surat Telegram issued by the Chief of National Police which emphasized hoax and insult against the president as two of the several forms of cybercrimes during coronavirus pandemic. ^{xi}
14 April 2020	In a video circulating around social media, a man named Pius Laut Labungan confessed to be the head of 'anarcho-syndicalist' group. The video is recorded by the police during Pius' arrest for theft and without any further verification the video is circulated on social media.	Initially Pius was arrested by for helmet theft. Later on, he claimed to be the head of anarcho-syndicalist because of a big A sign tattooed on his body. Pius claimed to have assistants with their respective functions such as raising funds. ^{xlii} This is still a part of the Government's securitization effort in COVID-19 pandemic by posing 'anarcho-syndicalist' group as imminent threats.
14 April 2020	The Legislative Body of the Peoples' Representative Council of Republic of Indonesia (DPR RI) held a working meeting with the government to discuss the highly controversial Omnibus Bill on Job Creation with the agenda of listening to the government's opinion regarding the draft.	Vice Chairman of the Legislative Body of DPR RI, Ahmad Badawi, claimed that the handling of COVID-19 does not prevent DPR RI to have other agenda. Related to COVID-19, Baidowi stated that it has been delegated to the DPR RI's COVID-19 Task Force. ^{xliii} Worker union stated that DPR RI's decision to continue the discussion on Omnibus Bill during the pandemic shows that DPR RI has no empathy to its people. ^{xliv}
15 April 2020	KontraS recorded since March 31 2020 or since PP No. 21 of 2020 concerning Large Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) was enacted, at least 944 people have been arrested under Article 93 of Law No. 6 of 2018	

	concerning Health Quarantine and / or Article 218 of the Criminal Code for allegedly violating PSBB. ^{xlv}	
18 April 2020	Solidaritas Pangan Jogja meeting to help the community affected by the pandemic at the WALHI Yogyakarta office was dispersed with intimidation by police.	WALHI Yogyakarta office was visited by the number of people from Prenggan Village and several regional Indonesian army officers (Babinsa). They requested the meeting to be disbanded and argued that the meeting was not in accordance with the Circular of the Mayor of Yogyakarta No: 440/820 / SE / 2020 on Prevention of Corona Virus Disease 2020. According to the Chairperson of WALHI Yogyakarta, the meeting had complied with the protocol by keeping a distance, wearing masks, all attendees were healthy, and they washed their hands prior to entering the office. After it was agreed between the parties, the meeting would only be held until 22.00 but at 20.55 the office was visited by one person claiming to be from the Kotagede District Police together with 6 people in a traffic police car and around 40 people who intimidated and forced to enter office, obviously violating the protocol to maintain distance. ^{xlvi}
18 April 2020	According to information announced by the Minister of Communication and Information Johnny Gerard Plate during the daily Press Conference, the	

	government has handled 550 hoaxes and will follow up on 162 others. 89 people have been named as suspects, some of them have been detained and some are still being processed.	
18 April 2020	Makassar Public Order Enforcers (Satpol PP) destroyed a buskers' guitar during Large Scale Social-Restriction socialization program to be implemented in Makassar on April 24.. ^{xlvi}	
19 April 2020	Three university students, Ahmad Fitron Fernanda, M. Alfian Aris Subakti and Saka Ridho, were arrested on alleged anarcho-syndicalist vandalism.	The three students of Universitas Malang are known to be active in human rights related activities such as Aksi Kamisan Malang, Save Lakardowo campaign, helping farmers facing land grabbing conflicts with PTPN in Tegalorejo Village, and local residents of Tumpang Pitu Mount against gold mining in their area. ^{xlvi}
19 April 2020	A video circulating around social media showing two men intimidating a Christian family who conducted prayers and singing in their house since the church is closed. The men insisted the prayers to be stop. This conflict is only resolved through mediation despite the obvious intimidation and threats. ^{xlv}	
20 April 2020	A month after admitting to hold back some of COVID-19 data, President Jokowi requested information on COVID-19 to be transparently inform	

	to the public. ^l	
22 April 2020	Ravio Patra, a researcher known to be actively criticizing government policies regarding transparency of COVID-19 data and conflicts of interest for millennial Special Staff, was arrested. Previously, Ravio lost access to his <i>Whatsapp</i> account. His account was hacked and used by the hacker to send a message: 'CRISIS, TIME TO BURN' and call for a nation-wide looting on 30 April.	Around 09.00 PM, Ravio was arrested by a group of police in plain clothes (not wearing uniform). They intimidated, pinned him down, and later dragged him to a car. Shortly after, a website that has been known as a government supporter (seword.com) released information that accuses Ravio of deliberately provoking people to looting. For several hours, Ravio could not be contacted and his whereabouts is unknown. A few hours later the Metro Jaya Police Public Relations confirmed Ravio's arrest on charges of incitement of violence and/or expressions of hatred through social media, without clarifying the whereabouts of Ravio. Later, it is discovered that he was undergoing an examination at the State Security Unit of the Metro Jaya Regional Police. ^{li} Ravio has been released as a witness
24 April 2020	Banjarasin Public Order Enforcers (Satpol PP) disciplines residents who violate Large-Scale Social Restriction with rattan.	Claimed to be inspired by the Indian police, Satpol PP implemented physical sanctions by beating people with rattan specially prepared for Large-Scale Social Restriction implementation. ^{lii}
24 April 2020	Sidoarjo Police Chief gave instructions to his men to shoot anyone found to be committing crime during Large-Scale Social Restriction especially the recently released inmates as a part of the Government effort to prevent COVID-19 outbreak in prison. He	

	emphasized by shooting the chest directly and ‘not the leg’. ^{liii}	
27 April 2020	Minister Budi Karya Sumadi calls on citizens to refrain from criticizing the Government because they are ‘doing the best they can’ in fighting COVID-19 outbreak. ^{liv}	
28 April 2020	The National Army claimed that they have prepared their troops to face the possibility of disturbances caused by socio-economical conflict due to the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic. In a Webinar, Major General Sisriadi said that the Army always prepared for the worst case scenario, including conflicts fueled by economical factors. ^{lv}	

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Since January 2020, the Indonesian government has been denying coronavirus danger. When worldwide coronavirus cases increased, the Government instead prioritized economic growth by allocating a significant amount of State's fund to tourism over the measures required to curb a rise in infection. This is followed by the Health Ministers' Terawan Agus Putranto denial to a research conducted by Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health which predicts that Indonesia should have already confirmed cases of coronavirus by February 2020. As other ASEAN state such as Vietnam, whose Government immediately took rigorous measures against COVID-19, has gradually lifted its lockdown, Indonesia still faces mounting deaths over coronavirus.

Restriction of access to COVID-19 information became apparent in the wake of early confirmed cases of COVID-19 on early March 2020. President Joko Widodo admitted that he was deliberately holding back some information on the spread of COVID-19 in Indonesia to prevent the public from panicking. More than a month later after the country's coronavirus death toll has spiked significantly, President Jokowi turned to urge the Government to disclose all COVID-19 related information to the public. Poor coordination between Government institutions in charge with COVID-19 pandemic handling is also evident. The Head of BNPB stated that the Health Ministry has prevented them from fully accessing COVID-19 data.

With respect to the countering COVID-19 'fake news' the Head of Indonesian Police instructed a robust 'cyber patrol' to monitor not only COVID-19 hoax, but also insults against the President and/or other Government officials. As of 18 April 2020, according to the Minister of Communication and Information Johnny Gerard Plate on a press conference, the government has handled 550 hoaxes and will follow up on 162 others. 89 people have been named as suspects, some of them have been detained and some are still being processed.

Furthermore, the implementation of Large-Scale Social Restriction brings about a rise in the arrest for those allegedly violating the rule. KontraS further recorded that at least 944 people have been arrested under Article 93 of Law No. 6 of 2018 on Health Quarantine and/or Article 218 of the Indonesian Criminal Code for allegedly violating Large-Scale Social Restriction. In implementing Large-Scale Social Restriction, police have also reportedly use excessive force and degrading treatment towards citizens. In Banjarmasin, the security force uses rattan specially prepared to give physical sanction for those allegedly violating Large-Scale Social Restriction. In Makassar, police unnecessarily destroyed a street buskers' guitar during a Large-Scale Social Restriction socialization.

The threats against and arrest of human rights activists for criticising the state's response to COVID-19 also occurred. Government officials, from President's

spoke-person to Ministers, have repeatedly warned citizens to refrain from criticizing the Government. Ravio Patra, a researcher known to be vocal in criticizing government's transparency on COVID-19 data was arrested for charges of incitement of violence and/or expressions of hatred through social media. Previously, Ravio's Whatsapp account was hacked and used by the hacker to broadcast messages 'CRISIS, TIME TO BURN' and call for a nation-wide looting on 30 April. Shortly after, a website that has been known as a government supporter (seword.com) released information that accuses Ravio of deliberately provoking people to loot. For several hours, Ravio could not be contacted and his whereabouts is unknown. A few hours later the Metro Jaya Police Public Relations confirmed Ravio's arrest without clarifying Ravio's whereabouts.

Another issue that is specific to Indonesia is the Government securitization effort by framing 'anarcho-syndicalists' group as an existential and imminent threat during COVID-19 pandemic. This can be seen as an effort to divert the public attention from the real issue, i.e. Government failure in curbing COVID-19 outbreak, use of excessive force, repression against critics, etc. Arrests were made against people allegedly involved in such group on charges of vandalism, and disturbances. The Chief of National Police, Irjan Pol Nana Sujana, publicly announced 'anarcho-syndicalist' grand plan to hold a mass looting in Java Island on 18 April 2020 without further investigation on the matter. Police also circulated a video of a man named Pius confessing to be the head of Indonesian anarcho-syndicalist group, again without verifying the validity of Pius' account.

Another looming social conflict includes the refusal from local residents to have COVID-19 victims' buried in nearby graveyards close to their residents. Several people have been arrested for provoking the incidents. Just recently, the National Army claimed that they have prepared their troops to face the possibility of disturbances caused by socio-economical conflict due to the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic

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