

Resistance and Social Movement for the Rejection of Gold Mining on Mount Tumpang Pitu Banyuwangi

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Abstract. Mount Tumpang Pitu is a national park and protected forest that functions as a buffer area, a source of water absorption and is inhabited by many habitats, as well as other functions as a natural fortress that can withstand the wind, and giant Tsunami in 1994. The benefits of Mount Tumpang Pitu and the surrounding mountains are vital for the local community. In 2005, the local government of Banyuwangi aimed to extend grant gold mining activities for a mining investor. The government's policy that did not involve the public in a participatory manner in granting mining permits, triggered the community to carry out a movement to reject the gold mining activities. The rejection movement is also a response to disaster concerns, and the impacts that has been felt by the people there. This rejection movement fits to the theory of New Social Movement, considering by the characteristics of its movement. However, the Comprehensive Perspective of Social Movement Theory from McAdam et al., proves that this movement is still weak and accordingly difficult to achieve its goals.

1 Introduction

Mount Tumpang Pitu, which is located in Sumberagung Village, Pesanggaran District, Banyuwangi Regency, East Java Province is a national park and protected forest that has a function as a buffer area, a source of water absorption, windbreaks, and landslides. In the 1994 Tsunami, Mount Tumpang Pitu became a natural fortress that saved the community from the brunt of the Tsunami. The benefits of Mount Tumpang Pitu are very vital for most of the people there who work as farmers, fishermen, and tourism activists. The farmers use Mount Tumpang Pitu as a source of irrigation for their fields, and the fishermen use Mount Tumpang Pitu as a little harbor.

In addition to having a very vital function for the benefit of the local population, Mount Pitu also contains large gold deposits, so that since as early as 1991, various companies have applied to get gold mining permits from the government. From 1991 to 1994 the license was granted to PT. Gamasiantara (Golden Eagle Indonesia), then continued to Korea Toosun

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Holding from 1994 to 1997. Later, it was granted to Golden Valley Mines (1997), Placer Dome (1999-2000) and Hakman Group JV. However, the exploration carried out by these companies was only on a small scale [1].

However, in 2005, the local government granted a permit for the operation of gold mining to PT Indo Multi Cipta (IMC, which later changed its name to PT Indo Multi Niaga--IMN) to start exploration on a larger scale. The permit was then transferred to PT Bumi Suksesindo (BSI) in 2012 [1]. Upon the issuance of the exploration permit, the status of the Protected Forest of Mount Tumpang Pitu was reduced to a production forest through the Decree of the Minister of Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia Number SK.826/Menhut-II/2013 [2].

The regional and central governments consider that gold mining at Mount Tumpang Pitu is an important project to improve the local and national economy, so the government strongly supports all mining activities, by easily giving various mining business permits to gold mining corporations, without involving the public in a participatory process.

The presence of gold mining on Mount Tumpang Pitu ended up threatening the lives of the surrounding people. For example, in 2016 a giant mud flood emerged due to mining activities and destroyed rice fields, beaches, and the sea, thus making farmers, fishermen, and tourism activists suffer losses.

The gap between people's expectations and the interests of the government and corporations has finally ignited the collective awareness of the community to take the fight against the mining project.

Some sociologists distinguish between collective behavior and social movements, such as according to Spancer (1982: 481) stating that collective behavior can be defined as an act of spontaneity, temporary in nature, and not institutionalized as a group. While social movements, Locher (2002: 233) states that social movements are more than just forms of collective behavior, such as crowds, riots, and rejection or disobedience, but can be seen from three aspects, namely: organization, consideration, and endurance [3,4]. The community's resistance in carrying out a movement against gold mining in Mount Tumpang Pitu has adopted several organizational tactics, movement strategies, and lasted for a very long time, so this event might be categorized as a social movement.

The incident in Banyuwangi showed the growth of social movements in Indonesia after the 1998 reform movement which was increasingly intense and massive by grassroots communities. Apart from Banyuwangi Regency, social movements are also growing in other areas. This is shown, for example, in the movement of the people of the North Kendeng Mountains in the Pati and Rembang districts against the construction of a cement factory in their respected district [5].

Most of the social movements that occurred in Indonesia were caused by the extractive mining industry, which at that time was based on Law Number 4 of 2009 (which replaces Law no 11 of 1967) concerning Minerals and Coal. One of the mandates of this law is to give full authority to local governments to manage the mining sector as evidenced in Article 37 which states that the regent or mayor is the office granting mining business permits if the mining area is located in a regency or city area. This law is also the basis for the Local Banyuwangi Government in granting Production Operation Mining Permit (*Izin Usaha Pertambangan Operasi Produksi*) covering an area of 4,998 hectares to PT Bumi Suksesindo (BSI) through Banyuwangi Regent Decree Number 188/547/KEP/429,011/2012 dated July 9, 2012.

Some local NGO activists vowed allegations regarding violations of the implementation of Law Number 41 of 1999 concerning Forestry which prohibits open-pit mining activities in protected forests. The violation was generally suspected to connect with corruption undertaken by local authorities. Indeed, during the democratic transition era in Indonesia, there are a lot of local government officers committed to corruption. In fact, according to the Minister of Home Affairs Gamawan Fauzi in 2013, 50 percent or 278 of regional heads were

involved in corruption (Wijayanto, Setiyono and Martini, 2020: 3). But such an allegation was dismissed by the local government. The local government argued that PT BSI obtained the permit due to the Decree from the Minister of Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia Number SK.826/Menhut-II/2013 which shifted the status of Protected Mountain Forest. Tumpang Pitu into a production forest covering an area of 1,942 hectares.

As the New Social Movement (GSB), the community movement in rejecting gold mining at Mount Tumpang Pitu has the aim of revoking mining business permits and mining activities at the Mount Tumpang Pitu. This movement has started to flare up since 2007 after the government granted a mining business license to PT Indo Multi Niaga (IMN). Then in the PT BSI era, the movement's turmoil was at its largest phase in 2015 as shown by Ningtyas, describing that the social movement was in the form of demonstrations by thousands of Banyuwangi residents (especially from Sumberagung Village and Pesanggaran Village) at the PT BSI gold mining location, on November 25-26 2015 [6]. The action was the accumulation of several protests that have been going on for eight years, precisely when gold mining corporations started their exploration activities.

Following 2015, the community movement is started to be assisted by wider non-governmental organizations' networks, journalists, students, and environment activists. The movement, however, has still not been successful in realizing its goal for evoking the government mining permit in Mount Tumpang Pitu, our research tries to examine more deeply the dynamics and mapping of social movements to spot the weakness of the movement.

2 Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with primary and secondary data. The focus of this research is in Sumberagung Village and other villages in Pesanggaran Subdistrict, Banyuwangi Regency, especially at each point of conflict in the gold mining of Mount Tumpang Pitu. The subjects of this research are local residents who are involved in the movement, and other actors, ranging from non-governmental and civic organizations, students, and environmental activists involved.

3 Findings and Analysis

3.1 Movement Dynamics

Civil society movement intensified in Indonesia during the late 1990s when an upsurge of calls for reforms as the Asian financial crisis loosened Soeharto's power. Actions against corruption collusion and nepotism (KKN) took place at many major cities in 1997-98, as people started to organize themselves into the large number of informal groups intent on attacking corruption in government, including at the local level (Setiyono and McLeod 2010: 348). Such movement also took place at Banyuwangi with the context of resistance to mining exploration permits being given by local government authority.

The historical records of the dynamics of the social movement can be seen since PT Hakman Metalindo conducted its first field survey on Mount Tumpang Pitu in 1996-2000, before finally leaving because of the economic and political crisis at the beginning of the reform era. So that the mining activities were inactive for a while. Then, in 2005, the government of Banyuwangi stated that they issued a mining permit for PT Indo Multi Niaga (IMN). The company officially started its mining operation in 2007. Due to limited public participation, a large public rejection movement rose in 2008 through a combination of

student organizations and civil society, followed by fishermen groups, and religious organizations. Due to the protests, the PT. IMN then rather delayed their mining operation.

However, under the leadership of a new regent Abdullah Azwar Anas in 2010-2021, the government further granted a mining permit to PT Bumi Suksesindo (BSI) as a subsidiary of PT Merdeka Copper Gold with the title 'Seven Hills Project' which replaced the PT. IMN in Mount Tumpang Pitu. The company then carried out a full operation in the mountain. A series of negative impacts, such as mud floods, contaminated water with mercury, drying water springs, and noise sound, started to be stroked by the community. This situation then triggered a larger resistance movement and culminated in November 2015 when thousands of participants of mass demonstrations, burned down the PT BSI office facility and led to the prosecution and criminalization of several activists. In 2016, the gold mining activity of the seven hills project was designated as a National Vital Object (Obvitnas) by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, so that this project was given special security protection by the state security apparatus [7].

The mud flood incident in August 2016 made residents feel more and more disturbed by gold mining activities, but the presence of increasingly massive security forces made people more careful in carrying out their movements. In 2017 there was a women's movement in response to the planting of PT BSI's power cable, but this movement was successfully repelled by the security forces. In April 2017 there was also a theatrical 'Palu and Sickle' incident which made several residents being a suspect for an accusation of spreading the teachings of Communism/Marxism-Leninism while carrying out a movement against mining. The irregularity of this incident sparked non-governmental organizations and several public lawyers to form Tekad Garuda (The People's Movement Advocacy Team for Agrarian Sovereignty) whose advocating citizens who were criminalized and helped the movement against gold mining. The presence of Tekad Garuda also marks the joining of movement participants from various elements, so the movement continues to be intense and more creative until early 2020.

The dynamics of social movements in responding to mining activities tend to be more dynamic due to more intense pressure in the form of physical repression and criminalization by the government. The dynamics of the movement beyond 2020 showed a different situation because the activists learned from experience and involvement of new supportive actors so that the movement became more consistent and organized, the participants of the movement also became more diverse, not only from the local community.

3.2 Map of Movement

The social movement in rejecting gold mining at Mount Tumpang Pitu can be categorized as a New Social Movement (NSM) which according to Pichardo (Sukmana, 2016), the New Social Movement (NSM) or the New Social Movement (NSM) fundamentally has different characteristics from the paradigm of the Old Social Movement [8]. The special characteristics of the NSM can be seen from four aspects, namely: goals and ideology, tactics, structure, and participants of the contemporary movement

Sardini (2019) also formulated five NSM constructions, namely: area, structure, actors, tactics, objectives, and ideology [9]. If the formula is applied in the movement against gold mining on Mount Tumpang Pitu, then the mapping of the movement is as follow:

(1) The area of the movement in rejecting gold mining on Mount Tumpang Pitu is not limited to the Banyuwangi area but extends to other areas at the national to international level, this is due to the similarity of issues and factors in the network of participants;

(2) The structure of the movement against gold mining is non-hierarchical and dynamic;

(3) Local people are the key actors who are divided into 'pure refusal citizens' and 'impure rejecters' with different backgrounds and roles in the movement. While movement

participants, such as WALHI East Java played a role in non-litigation advocacy, then Tekad Garuda (The People's Movement Advocacy Work Team for Agrarian Sovereignty) consisting of WALHI, LBH, KontraS, Jatam, For Banyuwangi and several public lawyers played a role in litigation advocacy, while the Solidarity Team consisting of students and environmental activists from various regions also shared roles in the movement with the citizens;

(4) Tactics and organization, the movement against gold mining still does not have an independent movement organization, so the community only uses movement participants as a vehicle for mobilization. While the tactics used are more creative and attract public attention than revolutionary movements; and

(5) Objectives and ideology, this movement does not attach importance to a strong ideological basis but has the aim that the government revokes the mining business license of gold mining corporations in Mount Tumpang Pitu and the surrounding mountains.

3.3 Movement Analysis

The Comprehensive Perspective of Social Movements [10] is useful in analyzing the emergence and development of social movements in rejecting gold mining in Mount Tumpang Pitu which consists of three factors, namely: (1) Political Opportunities; (2) Resource Structure and Mobilization; and (3) Framing.

First, the dimensions of political opportunity show that this movement has the very little political opportunity, although the post-reform era provides political openness to carry out the movement, yet the capacity of the state to exert pressure in the form of repression and criminalization of movement actors is also very strong. Then, the business elite, politics, and the government are also very solid in siding with mining corporations, while the movement tends to have no alliance with the elite [11]. The project in Mount Tumpang Pitu is also designated as a Vital National Object (Obvitnas) which is considered an important asset by the national government to compete in international economy and politics so that indirectly this movement has a bigger opponent.

Second, the structure of this movement mobilization is only able to utilize the dimensions of informal movements as a vehicle for mobilization with less constructive organizational structure. Despite the involvement of non-governmental organizations, student and environmental activists, they still have not been able to lift a formal solid solidarity network. Accordingly, the absence of a solid network has moved to against gold mining at Mount Tumpang Pitu still less optimal in managing the movement's resources, such as financial resources, leadership, and skills.

Third, despite several creative works to frame this movement with several slogans, songs, activities, and setting up a struggle tent, the impacts are limited. Some activists applied slogans, such as: "Humans can live without gold, but not without water", "Reject Gold Mine Overlap Pitu", "Save Tumpang Pitu", "Free Budi Pego", and "Revocation IUP PT BSI and DSI". These slogans have reached thousands of uploads on social media and are voiced directly during the actions. Several creative activities are also often carried out, starting from the Cycling Action, Kliwon Arts Tuesday Action, Grand Recitation of Koran, Traditional ceremony of Kupatan Tumpang Pitu, and so on. Broadly speaking, the process of frame this movement has been able to attract public attention, but it is still difficult for this movement to framing a match from mining corporations that have larger assets and media resources.

The Comprehensive Perspective of Social Movement Theory shows that the political opportunity for the success of the movement is still very small, causing the structural factor of resource mobilization to be less than optimal as a vehicle for movement. The framing bid is sufficient to attract public attention but has not been able to significantly increase the political opportunity. The above three dimensions show that they still cannot support each

other well, so the movement against gold mining in Mount Tumpang Pitu is difficult to achieve its goals.

4 Conclusion

As the New Social Movement (GSB), the community movement in rejecting gold mining in Mount Tumpang Pitu has been going on for almost two decades with a series of very complex events and problems, but all of them came down to the presence of a gold mining corporation. The purpose of this movement is for pressuring the government to revoke the mining business license, but according to the mapping of the movement, the construction of this movement is still weak so that it might be difficult to achieve its objectives. However, as long as gold mining corporations continue to expand their expansion in Banyuwangi's southern coastal mountains, the social movements of the people need to continue with more constructive way.

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