



TRENDS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

**ISERS**  
YUSOF ISHAK  
INSTITUTE

# THE ORIENTATION OF CHINESE NEWSPAPERS IN INDONESIA AS CHINA RISES

Leo Suryadinata

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# FOREWORD

The economic, political, strategic and cultural dynamism in Southeast Asia has gained added relevance in recent years with the spectacular rise of giant economies in East and South Asia. This has drawn greater attention to the region and to the enhanced role it now plays in international relations and global economics.

The sustained effort made by Southeast Asian nations since 1967 towards a peaceful and gradual integration of their economies has had indubitable success, and perhaps as a consequence of this, most of these countries are undergoing deep political and social changes domestically and are constructing innovative solutions to meet new international challenges. Big Power tensions continue to be played out in the neighbourhood despite the tradition of neutrality exercised by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

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# **The Orientation of Chinese Newspapers in Indonesia as China Rises**

By Leo Suryadinata

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- This paper examines the impact of globalization and a rising China, among other factors, on the political orientation of Chinese-language newspapers in Indonesia.
- Chinese newspapers in Indonesia have had a long trajectory, moving from a China-oriented focus to an Indonesia-oriented one over the course of Indonesian history. Their content has grown beyond the local to become regional in its outlook.
- The recent rise of China has been having a profound impact on Chinese newspapers in Indonesia. Many of their articles are pro-China while attempting to maintain the delicate balance and being Indonesia-oriented at the same time.
- With the community of Chinese-speaking Indonesian Chinese shrinking due to age, the Chinese-language dailies face challenges in circulation. The older generation that frequents them possesses significantly strong economic power, however, and while new migrants from China and ethnic Chinese from other Southeast Asian countries also read these dailies, their numbers are relatively small.
- As more and more newspaper editors, journalists and writers are now foreigners instead of being local-born, the Chinese-language newspapers in Indonesia may become newspapers for the overseas Chinese.





# The Orientation of Chinese Newspapers in Indonesia as China Rises

By Leo Suryadinata<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION<sup>2</sup>

Between late December 2019 and early January 2020, several Chinese fishing boats and coastguard vessels entered Indonesia's Natuna waters illegally, generating diplomatic tensions between Jakarta and Beijing.<sup>3</sup> Indonesian newspapers reported on these incursions from an Indonesian perspective, as one would expect, and on 2 January 2020, *Kompas*, the largest newspaper in the country, published a report with the title "Indonesia Rejects China's Claims".<sup>4</sup> The following day, *Tempo*, a leading news magazine and daily newspaper, published a report with

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<sup>1</sup> Leo Suryadinata is Visiting Senior Fellow at the ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore. He was formerly Professor in the Department of Political Science at the National University of Singapore. He has published extensively on Southeast Asian politics, ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia and China-ASEAN relations.

<sup>2</sup> This is a revised and updated version of a paper presented at the International Workshop on "Chinese Diaspora in the Age of Global Modernity", Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore on 19–20 November 2015. I would like to thank Miss Gwendolyn Yap, Research Officer in the Regional Social and Cultural Studies Programme at ISEAS for editing this paper.

<sup>3</sup> For an analysis of this event, see Leo Suryadinata, "Recent Chinese Moves in the Natunas Riles Indonesia", *ISEAS Perspective*, no. 2020/10, 19 February 2020.

<sup>4</sup> "Indonesia Menolak Klaim China", <https://kompas.id/baca/internasional/2020/01/02/indonesia-tolak-klaim-china/> (accessed 21 July 2020).

a similar headline “Indonesia Clearly Rejects China’s Claim Over the Northern Natuna Sea”.<sup>5</sup> That same day, CNN Indonesia carried a provocative report with the headline “China’s Vessels Enter Natunas, the Indonesian National Army Get Ready to Fight”.<sup>6</sup> It is apparent that Indonesian official responses were not united on this issue. While some took a hard line, Luhut Pandjaitan, then Co-ordinating Minister of Maritime Affairs and Investment, and Prabowo Subianto, then Minister for Defence, downplayed the issue. In this tense situation, one question begged to be answered: What was the response of the Chinese-language newspapers in Jakarta to this event?

All the reports in Chinese-language newspapers on the event were translations from Indonesian-language sources. Interestingly, unlike during the 2016 Chinese incursions, this time they carried no commentaries on the Natunas, indicating caution on their part in expressing their views. *Yindunxiya Shangbao* (印度尼西亚商报) published a report on its front page with the title “Indonesia Strongly Rejects the Claims of China over the Nansha Islands”,<sup>7</sup> which is the translation of the Indonesian foreign ministry statement. *Yinni Xingzhou Ribao* (印尼星洲日报) and *Yinhua Ribao* (印华日报) published a similar report on page 3. However, *Guoji Ribao* (国际日报), the largest Chinese-language newspaper in Indonesia, began to follow the events on the front page closely from 6 January 2020 for three days. The first report was with the title “Luhut: Don’t Play Up the Chinese Fishing Vessels Event”, showcasing their attempts to remain neutral.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> “Indonesia Tegas Tolak Klaim Cina atas Laut Natuna Utara”, <https://bisnis.tempo.co/read/1290758/indonesia-tegas-tolak-klaim-cina-atas-laut-natuna-utara> (accessed 21 July 2020).

<sup>6</sup> “Kapal China ke Natuna, TNI Siap Tempur”, [cnindonesia.com](http://cnindonesia.com) (accessed 21 July 2020).

<sup>7</sup> “*Yinni bochi zhongguo dui nansha qundao yongyou zhuquan yanlun* (印尼强硬驳斥中国对南沙群岛拥有主权言论)”, [www.shangbaoindonesia.com/read/2020/01/03/politics-1578065780](http://www.shangbaoindonesia.com/read/2020/01/03/politics-1578065780) (accessed 21 July 2020).

<sup>8</sup> “*Luhu cheng buke naoda zhongguo yuchuan shijian* (卢虎称不可闹大中国渔船事件)”, [www.guojiribao.com/shtml/gjrb/20200106/1513564.shtm](http://www.guojiribao.com/shtml/gjrb/20200106/1513564.shtm) (accessed 1 August 2020).

Indonesian Chinese-language newspapers are a rich source for studying the Chinese community in the country and its history. Unfortunately, studies on these newspapers are scarce; pre-World War II Indonesian Chinese-language newspapers are difficult to find and post-World War II newspapers have not been properly consolidated.<sup>9</sup> Using the available newspapers and articles that are accessible, this paper analyses the changing political orientation of the Chinese-speaking community through Chinese-language newspapers in Indonesia.<sup>10</sup> It examines the various factors which contributed to their changing political orientation, the major characteristics of Indonesian Chinese newspapers in different periods and the impact of globalization and a rising China on these newspapers.

## CHINESE LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS BEFORE WORLD WAR II (1909–42)

Before World War II, all Chinese newspapers in Indonesia were connected to the Chinese nationalist movement. *Hua duo bao* 华铎报 of Batavia (1909), *Zhaowa Gongbao* 爪哇公报 of Semarang (1909), *Hanwen Xinbao* 汉文新报 of Surabaya (1909) and *Sumendala Bao* 苏门答腊报 (1909) of Medan were all associated with Chinese revolutionary

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<sup>9</sup> For a list of post-World War II Indonesian Chinese newspapers in China, see “*Beijing guojia tushuguan cang yinni baozhi mulu* (北京国家图书馆藏印尼报纸目录)” and “*Xiamen daxue Nanyang yanjiu yuan tushuguan cang yinni baozhi mulu* (厦门大学南洋研究图书馆藏印尼报纸目录)” in *Shenghuo Wenhua Jijinhui Tongxun* (生活文化基金会通讯), Hong Kong, June 2014, pp. 80–82.

<sup>10</sup> There is a need for more studies on Chinese-language newspapers in Indonesia. My paper, which is preliminary in nature, is based on some of my past and recent field trips to Jakarta. See Liao Jianyu 廖建裕, *Yinni huawen baoye jianshi* (印尼华文报业简史); Liao Jianyu 廖建裕, *Yinni huaren wenhua yu shehui* 印尼华人文化与社会 (Singapore Society of Asian Studies, 1996), pp. 119–32; Liao Jianyu 廖建裕, *Yinni huawen baokanshi yu guojia renting* 印尼华文报刊史与国家认同, in *Wenjian huibian; Yinni Shenghuobao Chuangkan 68 zhounian jinian* 文件汇编: 印尼生活报创刊68周年纪念 (Hong Kong and Xiamen: *Yinni shenghuo bao jinian congshu bianweihui* 印尼生活报纪念丛书编委会, *Xiamen daxue Nanyang yanjiu yuan* 厦门大学南洋研究院, 2013), pp. 21–29.

organizations (such as Soe Poh Sia 书报社 or Reading Club). However, these newspapers were short-lived weeklies and are no longer available. We only know of their existence via documents from the Dutch archives.<sup>11</sup>

Chinese-language dailies in Indonesia only emerged on 12 February 1921, with the *Xin Bao* 新报, published by the Chinese community. Initially known by its Malay (Indonesian) name, *Sin Po*, the newspaper was an Indonesian-language weekly started in 1910. Eleven years later it published the Chinese-language edition *Xin Bao*. While the owners of the newspaper were Peranakan Chinese, the newspaper held Chinese nationalist views, suggesting that the Totok Chinese oversaw content.<sup>12</sup>

In the same year, another Chinese daily, *Tiansheng Ribao* 天声日报, was published. As the mouthpiece of the Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang or KMT), *Tiansheng Ribao* was oriented towards the Republic of China (ROC). After the publication of *Xin Bao*, *Dagong Shangbao* 大公报 hit the streets in Surabaya. According to a 1937 report, there were eight Chinese-language dailies in the Dutch East Indies, with *Xin Bao* and *Tiansheng Ribao* being the largest in circulation.

## POST-WAR CHINESE LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS (1945–65)

*Xin Bao* and *Tiansheng Ribao* ceased publication during the Japanese occupation but were revived after the invaders surrendered. After World War II, they maintained their political orientation towards ROC and KMT. However, *Xin Bao* gradually became left-leaning, and once the People's Republic of China (PRC) was established, its support shifted

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<sup>11</sup> Lea E. Williams, *Overseas Chinese Nationalism: The Genesis of the Pan-Chinese Movement in Indonesia, 1900–1916* (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1960), pp. 108–9.

<sup>12</sup> Not much has been written on *Xin Bao*, the Chinese version of *Sin Po*. For an official history of *Sin Po/Xinbao* up to 1935, see “Benbao ershiwu nian” 本报二十五年, in *Xinbao ershiwu zhounian jinian tekan* (新报二十五周年纪念特刊), Jakarta, 1935, pp. 1–6; For a brief history, see Zhou Nanjing 周南京, editor-in-chief, *Shijie huaqiao huaren cidian* 世界华侨华人词典 (Beijing: 北京大学出版社, 1993), p. 836.

to the PRC. The date used by the newspapers was changed from the 38th Year of Zhonghua Min'guo 中华民国 to the solar year of 1949. *Tiansheng Ribao*, on the other hand, continued to support KMT and Taiwan.

After World War II, three new Chinese dailies were published in Jakarta by the local Totok community. The first was *Shenghuo Bao* 生活报 (1945) which originally supported the ROC but switched its alliance with the PRC after the open split between KMT and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Two other dailies, *Ziyou Bao* 自由报 (1951) and *Zhonghua Shang bao* 中华商报 (1953), were financed by pro-KMT groups and aligned with Taiwan.<sup>13</sup>

Besides the Chinese papers in Jakarta, major Indonesian cities where many Totok resided also had Chinese-language dailies. They could be divided into leftist and rightist papers (see Table 1).<sup>14</sup>

The tussle between left-wing and right-wing newspapers for readership persisted till 1958. Before that year, Taiwan-backed rebellions in Sumatra and Sulawesi took place against the central government of Indonesia. In April 1958, the central government of Indonesia decided to ban all Chinese newspapers regardless of their ideological orientations. One month after the ban, only Beijing-leaning left-wing Chinese dailies were permitted to be published again. Nevertheless, the life of these dailies was short. In 1960, an anti-Chinese movement in Indonesia shut the newspapers down completely.

Between 1945 and 1960, all Chinese-language newspapers regardless of their ideological leanings—leftist and rightist—were all oriented towards mainland China or Taiwan. The only exception was *Juexing Zhoukan* 觉醒周刊 (operated from January 1954 to December 1959),<sup>15</sup> a

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<sup>13</sup> Liao Ziran 廖自然, “Yinni shehui fazhan shi” 印尼社会发展史, in *Huaqiaoshi lun ji* 华侨史论集, edited by Kao Xin 高信 and Zhang Xizhe 张希哲 (Taipei, 1963), pp. 92–93.

<sup>14</sup> Su Yi 苏艺, “Yinni huaqiao baoye cangsang shi” 印尼华侨报业沧桑史, in *Nanyang Wenzhai* 南洋文摘, Singapore, vol. 4, no. 12 (1963), pp. 50–51.

<sup>15</sup> Its Indonesian name is *Mingguan Chiao Hsing*.

**Table 1: Chinese Newspapers Outside Jakarta and Their Ideological Orientation**

<b>Name of Newspaper in Hanyu Pinyin</b>	<b>Name of Newspaper in Chinese Characters</b>	<b>Place of Publication</b>	<b>Ideology</b>
Sumendala Minbao	苏门答腊民报	Medan	left-wing
Minzhu Ribao	民主日报	Medan	left-wing
Huaqiao Ribao	华侨日报	Medan	left-wing
Liming Ribao	黎明日报	Pontianak	left-wing
Meiri Dianxun	每日电讯	Pontianak	left-wing
Kuanglu Ribao	匡卢日报	Makassar	left-wing
Da Gong Bao	大公报	Surabaya	left-wing
Qingguang Ribao	青光日报	Surabaya	right-wing
Huaqiao Xinwen	华侨新闻	Surabaya	right-wing
Xin Zhonghua Bao	新中华报	Medan	right-wing
Xing Zhong Ribao	兴中日报	Medan	right-wing
Sudao Shibao	苏岛时报	Medan	right-wing
Cheng Bao	诚报	Pontianak	right-wing

weekly newspaper initiated by a Peranakan politician Siauw Giok Tjhan 萧玉灿.<sup>16</sup> While ideologically pro-PRC and pro-communist, *Juexing Zhoukan* was Indonesian in its focus.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Siauw Giok Tjhan (Xiao Yucan) was a leftist. He was influenced by Tan Ling Djie who was the secretary general of the PKI before D.N. Aidit. Many suspected that he was a communist but he denied it. It is worth noting that Peranakan leftists and communists were influenced by the West (Dutch) while the Totok leftists and communists were associated with the Chinese Communist Party and hence were China-oriented. The Malayan Communist Party was Malaya-oriented and hence its party members tended to be locally oriented. These may explain their cooperation with the Peranakan leftists.

<sup>17</sup> *Juexing Zhoukan* was locally oriented, representing the views of Indonesian

*Juexing Zhoukan* was an important weekly, becoming the unofficial mouthpiece of the Baperki (*Badan Permusjawaratan Kewarganegaraan*) from March 1954. Baperki was led by Siau-w Giok Tjhan<sup>18</sup> and was arguably the largest ethnic Chinese organization in Indonesia in the last century. It was supported by both President Sukarno and the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI). As noted earlier, *Juexing Zhoukan* was in circulation for only six years and was banned by the authorities in December 1959. Being the only Indonesia-oriented Chinese-language weekly in a largely China-oriented industry, the unique collaboration between Chinese-educated MCP members and left-wing Peranakan Chinese which resulted in *Juexing Zhoukan* should be further examined.

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citizens. Siau-w Giok Tjhan served as the director, while the editor was a Peranakan named Go Hauw Gie 吴孝义. Although Go was the editor, he worked mainly as a translator. The person who spearheaded the content of the paper was Eu Chooi Yip 余柱业, a top leader of the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) who fled to Indonesia from Singapore. The proofreader of *Juexing Zhoukan* was his wife Zeng Aishan 曾善爱. Eu Chooi Yip was later busy with other activities and recruited a young MCP member Zhang Taiquan 张泰泉 (also known as Zhang Taiyong 张泰永 and Zhang Dayong 张大永), a Sumatran-born Chinese who studied in Singapore's Huaqiao Zhongxue 华侨中学 where he joined the MCP. Zhang was assisted by Chen Mengzhou 陈蒙洲, another MCP exile in Jakarta, and Zhang Rongren 张荣任, an MCP member from Sarawak. Gradually, Zhang took over as the de facto editor of *Juexing Zhoukan*. Zhang Taiquan 张泰泉, “Xiao Yucan yu ‘Juexing’ ” 萧玉灿与 ‘觉醒’ in *Xiao Yucan Bainian Danchen Jinian wenji* 萧玉灿百年诞辰纪念文集 (Hong Kong: Shenghuo Wenhua Jijinhui, 2014), pp. 137–38. For Zhang's background, see [www.of21.com/doku.php?id=回忆:地下航线解密](http://www.of21.com/doku.php?id=回忆:地下航线解密) (accessed 6 October 2015).

<sup>18</sup> According to the memoirs of Zhang Taiquan, *Juexing Zhoukan* was jointly initiated by both Siau-w Giok Tjhan and Eu Chooi Yip. Siau-w who did not read Chinese, wanted to have a publication in Chinese in order to reach Chinese-speaking readers in Indonesia to appeal to them to work together and fight for the rights of Chinese Indonesians. During that period, Eu Chooi Yip was in Jakarta and was looking for a job, and they came to work together. See “21 shiji chubanshe bianjibu” 21世纪出版社编辑部, ed., *Shenmai xinzhong de mimi—xinjiapo yu binlangyu de gushi* 深埋心中的秘密—新加坡与槟榔屿的故事 (Kuala Lumpur: 21 Shiji chubanshe, 2008), pp. 74–81. Eu Chooi Yip also reveals that he assigned many MCP members in exile to work for *Juexing Zhoukan*. See Yu Zhuyue 余柱业, *Langjian zhumeng* 浪尖逐梦, Kuala Lumpur, 2008, p. 187.



### *Why Were the Chinese Dailies Oriented Towards China?*

Students of Indonesian Chinese society will recognize that the ethnic Chinese in Indonesia are rather heterogeneous. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there were at least two groups of Chinese, i.e., the Peranakan Chinese and the Totok Chinese. The former was better established locally and used Malay and Indonesian as their common language while the latter was first-generation migrants from China and their immediate descendants who still spoke Chinese dialects. As such, it was the Totok elite with their good command of the Chinese language that influenced the development of Chinese-language newspapers in Indonesia.<sup>19</sup>

After Indonesia achieved independence, the Chinese dailies—particularly the major newspapers—continued to be oriented towards China. This section will look at three possible factors for this sustained direction. Firstly, Chinese nationalism among the Totok. Secondly, Indonesia's policies towards the general Chinese community and thirdly, the demographic structure of the Chinese population in Indonesia.

For a long period since the twentieth century, Chinese nationalism was the dominant Indonesian Chinese political orientation. Migrant Chinese and their Chinese-educated second-generation descendants considered themselves *huaqiao* (overseas Chinese). During the Xinhai 辛亥 Revolution and later, the establishment of the ROC, Indonesian Chinese in general aligned themselves with China. While the political orientation of the Totok Chinese remained consistent throughout, the Peranakan Chinese began to diverge in their political orientation later in the century.

The split of the Peranakan Chinese before World War II is seen in three political groups: The China-oriented Sin Po Group, the Dutch Indies-oriented Chung Hwa Hui (CHH 中华会), and the Indonesia-oriented

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<sup>19</sup> For an analysis of the Chinese community in Indonesia, see Leo Suryadinata, *Pribumi Indonesians, the Chinese Minority and China: A Study of Perceptions and Policies* (Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and London: Heinemann Educational Book (Asia), 1978), pp. 66–109.

Partai Tionghoa Indonesia (PTI).<sup>20</sup> Although there were Peranakans who supported China, the anti-Japanese war in China focused on the Totok Chinese who were patriotic towards China. During the Japanese occupation of Indonesia (1942–45), Chinese nationalism was suppressed but did not disappear. With Indonesia’s proclamation of independence after the surrender of the Japanese, some Peranakan Chinese identified themselves as Indonesians and became Indonesian citizens. Many Indonesian-born Totoks continued to consider themselves *huaqiao*. While the establishment of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) divided the Totok Chinese community in their political views, they were still fundamentally oriented towards either mainland China or Taiwan, but not Indonesia.

Apart from the impact of Chinese nationalism, the colonial structure of the Dutch East Indies also had a major bearing on the Chinese population. The Dutch East Indies was a “divide and rule” colonial society that racially divided the Dutch (Europeans), Chinese and the natives into three separate groups. While the Dutch were the rulers, and the natives the ruled, the higher economic position of the Chinese *vis-à-vis* the natives placed them in a separate category between the two groups. The Chinese had their own residing zone and their own officer (Kapitan Cina) and were governed under different laws. The latter remained true even after the abolition of the Officer System. The “divide and rule” policy arose from fears among the Dutch of rebellion by the natives supported by local Chinese. The 1740 Angke 红溪 massacre and its aftermath was an example of how the Chinese combined forces with the Javanese against the Dutch authorities.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Leo Suryadinata, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Java 1917–1942* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1980).

<sup>21</sup> Regarding the 1740 massacre, see Johannes Theodorus Vermuelen, *De Chineezten te Batavia en de Troebelen van 1740* (Leiden: Eduard Ijdo, 1938). There is an English translation by Tan Yeok Seong. In fact, the Chinese rebellion was later joined by the Javanese and lasted until 1743 when it was eventually suppressed. See Willem Remmelink, *Perang Cina dan Runtuhnya Kerajaan Jawa 1725–1743* (Yogyakarta: Jendela, 2001).

Facilitated by the existence of a Chinese society apart from the Dutch and the natives, overseas Chinese nationalism persisted. The twentieth century saw a steady growth of the Totok community with the arrival of many Totok women from China. However, many Totok men also married Peranakan women despite linguistic differences between the two groups. While the Peranakan Chinese used the local language, especially Malay and Indonesian, to communicate, the Totok community continued to use Chinese dialects and Mandarin. Some second-generation offspring of Totok/Peranakan marriages continued to live in the “Chinese world” and attended Chinese schools. Through three cultural pillars (Chinese organizations, Chinese schools and Chinese media), Chinese culture continued to flourish and develop in Indonesia until the eve of the New Order (1966–98). This allowed the Chinese community in Indonesia to remain China-oriented. Even after 1958, those who attended Chinese schools were Chinese citizens and saw little incentive in being politically inclined towards Indonesia.

Overseas Chinese nationalism emerged before the rise of Indonesian nationalism, influencing the Chinese community, both Totok and Peranakan. The colonial social stratification based on race deepened the separation between “indigenous” Indonesians and Indonesian Chinese. Through understanding the trajectory of Chinese society in Indonesia, we can comprehend why after independence, Indonesian Chinese-language dailies remained oriented towards China and considered themselves *huaqiao*.

### *The Shift from Chinese Nationalism to Indonesian Nationalism*

Although Indonesia proclaimed independence on 17 August 1945, the Dutch reimposed colonial rule till 1949. The official transfer of power from the Dutch to the Indonesians only took place in December 1949. It was only then that Indonesia became independent and started the nation-building process. Indonesian leaders wanted to integrate the multi-ethnic population, including Chinese Indonesians, into Indonesian society. However, with ethnic conflicts occurring, the nation-building process failed to take off as planned. It was only in 1958, after the central government succeeded in crushing regional rebellions, that the nation-

building process resumed. New regulations appeared that prohibited Indonesians of Chinese descent from studying at Chinese-medium schools. Chinese schools thus came to be divided into two categories: the Indonesian-type school accommodated children of Indonesian citizens, while the original Chinese school could only accept children of foreign nationals (i.e., citizens of the PRC). The Indonesian-type schools had Bahasa Indonesia as the medium of instruction and followed the curriculum of the Indonesian national schools. Thus, since July 1958, those who studied in Chinese-medium schools were of foreign nationality.

In 1959, Indonesia started the Guided Democracy Period (1959–65). Politics took command and Sukarno was the dominant leader. Not only did political nationalism become the norm, but economic nationalism was also introduced. Foreigners as retail traders in rural areas were prohibited by the 1959 regulation. Inspired by the restrictions, anti-Chinese movements began, affecting the country's economic performance and political stability. Chinese daily newspapers were banned. In 1961, only one Chinese-language newspaper, i.e., the *Zhengzhi Xuanyan Bao* 政治宣言报 was allowed to be published in Medan, and later in Jakarta as well; in Surabaya, the *Hongbai Bao* 红白报 was also allowed, but these newspapers were short-lived.

Only in 1963 when Sukarno had succeeded in consolidating his power were new Chinese dailies permitted. The first was *Shoudu Ribao* 首都日报 (*Harian Ibukota*) managed by Situ Meisheng 司徒眉生, Sukarno's Chinese interpreter. There were three other new Chinese dailies, including *Zhongcheng Bao* 忠诚报 (*Warta Bhakti*, the former *Xin Bao*), *Geming Ribao* 革命日报 (*Obor Revolusi*) and *Huoju Bao* 火炬报 (*Suluh Indonesia*). In Surabaya, there was also *Youyi Bao* 友谊报 (*Harian Persahabatan*).

All of these were managed by Indonesian citizens, differing from previous Chinese newspapers, and were now Indonesian national newspapers and oriented towards Indonesia. Some were also linked to Indonesian political parties. For instance, *Huoju Bao* was linked to the Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI). Naturally, these newspapers were oriented towards Indonesia. According to some reports, eight other Chinese newspapers obtained publication permits but before they could

publish, the 30th September Movement (G-30-S) of 1965 occurred. Blamed on the PKI, the coup changed Indonesian political history and the Chinese newspaper landscape.<sup>22</sup> The new authorities linked the coup to the PRC, and as a result, all left-wing newspapers, including all Chinese daily newspapers, were banned. This marked the end of Chinese dailies in Indonesia. New Chinese dailies would only re-emerge thirty-five years later.

## ***YINDUNIXIYA RIBAO* DURING THE NEW ORDER (1966–98)**

On 2 October 1965, however, all Chinese-language newspapers were closed down. Only in 1966 did a new newspaper which was called *Harian Indonesia* or *Yindunixiya Ribao* 印度尼西亚日报 come into being. This “Chinese-language newspaper” was unique as it was not owned or managed by the Chinese community. It was instead a government daily which was linked to the military group (some say with the Intelligence Group). The chief editor was Drs W.D. Sukisman, an intelligence officer who was a lecturer at the Department of Sinology, University of Indonesia, before the 1965 coup. Some said that he had worked at the Indonesian Embassy in Beijing before the New Order.

The unique characteristic of this Chinese daily was that it consisted of eight to twelve pages, half in Chinese and half in Indonesian. For a long period, the newspaper served as a site for government news and announcement of regulations. Since this was the only “Chinese-language newspaper”, it became the only available avenue for the Totok Chinese to market their advertisements. The Totok community often subscribed to the paper mainly for advertisements and government information. Due to a high level of subscription, it is not surprising that this newspaper

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<sup>22</sup> According to a new research paper based on China’s archives, the chairman of the PKI was behind the G-30-S; Chairman Mao knew of the plans of D.N. Aidit, the PKI leader, but did not know the details. See Taomo Zhou, “China and the Thirtieth of September Movement”, *Indonesia* 98 (October 2014): 29–58.

survived the New Order period by simply having Chinese advertisements. While the pages of *Harian Indonesia* increased in number, the contents remained largely unchanged. Within the Chinese community, the paper was also known as *Guanggao Bao* 广告报 (*Advertisement Newspaper*).

Another characteristic of *Yindunixiya Ribao* was that the editorial board was run by Indonesian Chinese who were under the strict supervision of the indigenous Indonesians who had military affiliations. Unlike the pre-1965 Chinese language newspapers which were left-wing and pro-PRC, *Yindunixiya Ribao* was anti-communist and anti-PRC.

One of the Indonesian Chinese hired by the indigenous Indonesians was Lai Tuo 赖多 (Lai Yuqi 赖裕祺) who used to work for the *Shoudu Ribao* 首都日报 (*Harian Ibukota*) before the coup. The standard of the Chinese language in general was low. As the newspaper was controlled by the indigenous military group, it was not representative of the Chinese community. However, the newspaper supplements (“Budaya”) were open to the public, and many Indonesian Chinese would publish their articles in the newspaper. More studies should be done on how this newspaper contributed to Indonesian Chinese society.

During the New Order, Indonesian Chinese who held Chinese nationality were allowed to be naturalized as Indonesian citizens. Those who were foreign nationals and came from Chinese-medium schools became Indonesian citizens during the Suharto era, especially in the 1980s when Jakarta was planning to normalize direct trade with Beijing. It was during this period of naturalization that the Chinese-educated Totoks became politically aligned with Indonesia. This was reflected in their writings in *Yindunixiya Ribao*. Even books and literary works in Chinese produced towards the end of the Suharto period by Indonesian Chinese were Indonesia-oriented and possessed an Indonesian perspective, and were mainly published in Hong Kong and Singapore.

As there was no permit for Chinese newspapers, Chinese-speaking Indonesians often read the newspapers and magazines that were published in Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan and which were brought into Indonesia illegally. In the 1990s, when Suharto relaxed control over Chinese publications, *Yinni yu Dongxie* (印尼与东协, *Indonesia and ASEAN*) was mainly printed in Indonesia. This monthly magazine, which was marked as officially published in Hong Kong, had limited

circulation in Jakarta and some other cities, and the authorities did not enforce control over it. The editor of *Yinni yu Dongxue* was Deng Tongli 邓通力, an Indonesian Chinese who received his tertiary education in Taiwan. The magazine was also Indonesia-oriented.

## POST-SUHARTO CHINESE NEWSPAPERS (1999–today)

Following the fall of Suharto, local Chinese-language daily newspapers and magazines re-emerged. Professor Huang Kunzhang argued that initially, no one was sure whether the publication of Chinese newspapers would again be allowed in Indonesia. Indonesian Chinese business groups did not dare to set up publications on that uncertainty. Understandably, the first publishers of post-Suharto Chinese newspapers were indigenous businessmen who were in the media business. Harmoko, the former chairman of Golkar, started the first Chinese daily *Xin Shenghuo Bao* 新生活报 (*Harian Hidup Baru*, February 2000) in Jakarta, followed by the Matahari group's *Long Yang Ribao* 龙阳日报 (*Harian Naga Surya*, March 2000) in Surabaya.<sup>23</sup> It was often assumed that it was after these indigenous groups had made their move that Chinese business groups followed suit. This is untrue. The first Chinese-language daily newspaper during the *Reformasi* period was *Heping Ribao* (*Harian Umum Perdamaian*) in Jakarta; this was established on 23 January 2000 by a Chinese Indonesian, Wu Nengbin 吴能彬 alias Purnomo Nurdin. He was the founder of the Partai Bhinneka Tunggal Ika Indonesia (Unity in Diversity Party).<sup>24</sup> Within one year, there were in existence at least six Chinese dailies in Jakarta, two in Surabaya and one in Medan.

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<sup>23</sup> See Huang Kunzhang 黄昆章, “*Cong longyang ribao de tingkan kan yinni huawen baoye de cangshang*” 从《龙阳日报》的停刊看印尼华文报业的沧桑, [www.chinamediaresearch.cn/article.php?id=3200](http://www.chinamediaresearch.cn/article.php?id=3200) (accessed 6 October 2015).

<sup>24</sup> See *Heping Ribao*, No. 80/Th-1-Sabtu, 27 May 2000; also Cui Guiqiang 崔贵强, *Dongnanya huawen ribao xianzhuang zhi yanjiu* 东南亚华文日报现状的研究 (Singapore: *Huayi guan and Nanyang xuehui*, 2002), p. 123.

Apart from the New Order newspaper *Yindunixiya Ribao* (*Harian Indonesia*) which gradually transformed into a full Chinese daily newspaper after the fall of Suharto, there emerged *Yindunixiya Shangbao* 印度尼西亚商报 (*Bisnis Indonesia*, April 2000), *Guoji Ribao* 国际日报 (*International Daily*, January 2001), and *Shijie Ribao* 世界日报 (*Universal Daily News*, June 2001), all were published in Jakarta. In Surabaya, the second-largest city in Indonesia where there are a lot of Totok Chinese, at least two new Chinese dailies emerged: in addition to *Long Yang Ribao*, there was *Qiandao Ribao* 千岛日报 (*Harian Nusantara*, October 2000).

Many publishers and editors of these newspapers were Chinese Indonesians, but they also collaborated with overseas Chinese newspapers. Some directors and editors of these newspapers resided overseas and collaborated with foreigners in establishing the newspapers. *Guoji Ribao*, for instance, was established by *Xiong Delong* 熊德龙 (Ted Sioeng) who also has a newspaper of the same name in the US. The US's *Guoji Ribao* was established in 1981, with the Indonesian version only materializing in January 2001. Initially, Ted Sioeng was supported by a group of Jakarta Chinese businessmen, but later in 2012, the Jakarta group withdrew. Instead, the Mayapada Group led by Tahir (Weng Junmin 翁俊民) became its major shareholder.

*Guoji Ribao* also collaborated with the Jawa Pos Group of Surabaya. While it published Indonesian news, *Guoji Ribao* is not just an Indonesian Chinese newspaper. It also partners with newspapers in Hong Kong, Beijing, and various Chinese “newspapers” from different regions.<sup>25</sup> These newspapers are put together with the *Guoji Ribao* and distributed to readers. Although Indonesia-oriented, in reality, it is an “international” Chinese newspaper.

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<sup>25</sup> These partner newspapers include: Hong Kong's *Wenhui Bao* 文汇报 (Southeast Asian edition), the overseas edition of Beijing's *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报 (People's Daily Overseas Edition), Hong Kong's *Shangbao* 商报 and various local Indonesian Chinese “newspapers” (for instance *Wanlong Kuaibao* 万隆快报 [*Bandung Express*], *Zhongzhao Kuaibao* 中爪快报 [*Central Jawa Express*], *Subei Kuaibao* 苏北快报 [*North Sumatra Express*] and *Kundian Ribao* 坤甸日报 [*Pontianak Daily*], etc.) See, for instance, *Guoji Ribao*, 9 and 10 September 2014.



*Shijie Ribao* was closely linked to Taiwan and bore the potential to become a major daily in Jakarta. However, it failed in the competition with other newspapers, eventually closing down on 1 March 2007. *Yindunixiya Ribao*, the New Order newspaper, continued to be the leading Chinese newspaper up to 2002. It saw a circulation of 20,000 while *Guoji Ribao* came second with a circulation of 10,000.<sup>26</sup> As time passed, *Yindunixiya Ribao* fell behind and was later purchased by an Indonesian media company, Mahaka Media, which also published an Indonesian-language newspaper *Republika*, a pro-Muslim daily often critical of the Indonesian Chinese community. On 17 January 2007, *Yindunixiya Ribao* partnered with the *Xingzhou Ribao* 星洲日报 (Sin Chew Jit Poh) of Malaysia. The Indonesian name of the new daily remained *Harian Indonesia*, but the Chinese name was changed from *Yindunixiya Ribao* to *Yinni Xingzhou Ribao* 印尼星洲日报 (*Indonesia's Sin Chew Daily*).<sup>27</sup> Those who only read Indonesian would think that it remained the old *Harian Indonesia*, but it is a new Chinese-language newspaper. Even though the editorial group is from Sin Chew, the newspaper offers an Indonesian perspective. The above examples show that the post-Suharto Indonesian Chinese newspapers have already been internationalized, if not globalized, both in terms of capital, personality and contents.

## **THE ORIENTATION OF INDONESIAN CHINESE NEWSPAPERS IN RECENT YEARS**

One major characteristic of post-1998 Chinese newspapers is that they are supported by both Indonesian and foreign capital investments. Another characteristic is that they are not only Indonesia-oriented, i.e., Indonesian in their writing and reporting, but they are also regional in orientation.

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<sup>26</sup> Interview with Lay Tuo, 5 February 2002, Jakarta.

<sup>27</sup> Website on *Harian Indonesia* (accessed 5 October 2015).

The rise of China appears to have had a major impact on them, and they tend to be more pro-Beijing than pro-Taiwan. Pro-Taipei newspapers such as *Shijie Ribao* were unable to survive as many Chinese business groups preferred to publish in the better-established “pro-Beijing” newspapers. It has become much more difficult for Chinese newspapers in Indonesia to be neutral regarding China.<sup>28</sup>

As the PRC no longer stresses the communist ideology, many Indonesian Chinese newspapers find it easier to accept the PRC. Also, with China appearing to encourage “overseas Chinese nationalism”, many Chinese dailies in Indonesia support the rise of China as long as it does not conflict with Indonesian national interests. For instance, Indonesian Chinese newspapers openly and enthusiastically supported the Beijing Olympics in 2008 and considered the games as the pride of the Chinese regardless of their citizenship. This coincides with Beijing’s policy to include “overseas Chinese” as part of China or the “Chinese nation”. However, tensions between Chinese nationalism and Indonesian nationalism still exist. When a Beijing official in Jakarta urged Chinese Indonesian to learn Hanyu (i.e., Beijing’s Mandarin) “to strengthen their national identity” with China, some Chinese Indonesian newspapers criticized the official for causing trouble for the Chinese community.<sup>29</sup>

All Chinese newspapers, except for *Yinni Xingzhou Ribao* (2012–20) have been supporting China in disputes between Beijing and Taipei, on the Hong Kong issue and the Beijing-Washington tussle. They are also particularly enthusiastic about economic cooperation between Jakarta and Beijing. Except for *Xingzhou*, these newspapers use Mainland Chinese news agencies’ reports on China and international events. *Xingzhou*, however, tends to use its own sources, compiling its own news reports

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<sup>28</sup> Several writers (in Chinese) and political observers in Jakarta are of the view that the majority of Chinese-speaking businessmen are Beijing-oriented partly because there are more business opportunities in mainland China than in Taiwan.

<sup>29</sup> For the story, see Leo Suryadinata, *The Rise of China and the Chinese Overseas: A Study of Beijing’s Changing Policy in Southeast Asia and Beyond* (Singapore: ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, 2017), pp. 195–96.

based on Western and China news and hence presenting more balanced reports.<sup>30</sup> *Xingzhou* has also been able to do this because its resources are shared with the Kuala Lumpur *Xingzhou Ribao*. *Yinni Xingzhou Ribao* reverted to *Yindunixiya Ribao* in 2021, and there has also been a change in their stand concerning Beijing.

With regard to the “One Belt One Road” initiative of China, Indonesian Chinese newspapers also offer their support as it is viewed as being parallel to the Indonesian “Maritime Road” (*Tol Laut*) concept. However, the recent conflict over the Natuna territorial waters between Beijing and Jakarta placed the Chinese-language newspapers in Indonesia in a difficult situation. They reported the arguments of both sides but were more on the Indonesian side.<sup>31</sup> The editorials and opinion articles expressed their hope for a peaceful settlement between the two countries, reflecting the delicate balance that Indonesian Chinese newspapers must keep<sup>32</sup>

## PROBLEMS FACING INDONESIAN CHINESE NEWSPAPERS TODAY

The excess of Chinese newspapers with limited readership and advertisements meant that many ceased publication soon after establishment. *Long Yang Ribao* was only sustained for a year and eight months, *Xin Shenghuo Bao* lasted for two years and four months and *Heping Ribao* had a lifespan of only two years.<sup>33</sup> Those that persist

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<sup>30</sup> The international reporting of *Yinni Xingzhou Ribao* from late July to early August 2020 was studied.

<sup>31</sup> *Yinhua Ribao*, for instance, published the full text of China’s statement.

<sup>32</sup> See, for instance, the editorials of *Yinhua Ribao*, 20 June 2016 and 24 June 2016; Two opinion articles in *Guoji Ribao*, 28 June 2016 by Ye Feng (椰峰), and 30 June 2016 by Yiruxiang (意如香).

<sup>33</sup> Cui Guiqiang, *Dongnanya huawen ribao xianzhuang zhi yanjiu* 东南亚华文日报现状的研究, pp. 123–25. According to Li Zhuohui, between 2000 and 2012 eight Chinese papers closed down: *Long Yang Ribao* (Surabaya), *Heping Ribao* (Jakarta), *Xin Shenghuo Bao* (Jakarta), *Huashang Bao* (Medan), *Mianlan Zaobao*

in publishing do not make money, except for *Guoji Ribao*, which is arguably the largest newspaper in Jakarta/Indonesia today.<sup>34</sup> As stated earlier, in 2012 one business group withdrew from *Guoji Ribao* and later in October 2014, established a new daily, *Yinhua Ribao* 印华日报 (*Harian Yinhua*, meaning “Indonesian Chinese Daily”). Li Zhuohui 李卓辉, formerly editor-in-chief of *Guoji Ribao*, was appointed chief editor of the new daily. Together with the *Yindunixiya Shang Bao* owned by the Sukamdani group closely linked to Suharto, and *Yinni Xingzhou Ribao*, by 2020, Jakarta had four Chinese-language newspapers.

However, like the *Shijie Ribao*, *Yinni Xingzhou Ribao* was unable to compete with other newspapers mainly due to the limited readership of the Chinese dailies in Indonesia. On 2 January 2021, *Yinni Xingzhou Ribao* was taken over by another local company, P.T. Emas Indonesia Duaribu, terminating the partnership with *Xingzhou Ribao* (*Sin Chew Daily*) in Kuala Lumpur. The Chinese name of the daily was changed back to *Yindunixiya Ribao*.<sup>35</sup> The Xingzhou Group left Jakarta and their vacancies were taken over by new staff. Due to limited resources, this newspaper has not been able to develop further.

Chinese dailies in Indonesia face many issues. With the possible exception of *Guoji Ribao*, the other three: *Yindonesia Ribao*, *Yindunixiya Shangbao* and *Yinhua Ribao* have been losing money.<sup>36</sup> Significantly, there are not enough advertisements to keep the Chinese newspapers going. One informed source noted that there are about 30,000 Chinese newspaper readers/subscribers in Indonesia, with the largest readership

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(Medan), *Yinhua Youbao* (Jakarta) and *Shijie Ribao* (Jakarta), see Li Zhuohui, “Yinni huawen baoye fazhan yu qianjing” 印尼华文报业发展与前景, in *Yihe Shiji* 《怡和世纪》 Issue 26 (June–September 2015), pp. 93–97.

<sup>34</sup> It is difficult to get the circulation number. According to one source, *Guoji Ribao* has a circulation of 10,000 copies, while the rest has only a circulation of 3,000 each.

<sup>35</sup> “Biele, Yinni Xingzhou Ribao” (“别了, 《印尼星洲日报》), in *Guoji Ribao*, 28 December 2020.

<sup>36</sup> Interviews with Chinese dailies reporters and editors in Jakarta, May 2015.

being in Jakarta. With limited resources and readership, the newspapers are in fierce competition.<sup>37</sup> Besides, there is a limited number of writers and journalists who are able to work for these newspapers. A director of one of the newspapers suggested that the existing Chinese newspapers should merge in order to survive<sup>38</sup> but this is unlikely to happen as the groups have different interests.

Apart from Jakarta's newspapers, *Qiandao Ribao* (*Harian Nusantara*) in Surabaya is locally circulated. In Medan, there are also Chinese dailies called *Xun Bao* (讯报) established in 2007, and *Hao Bao Daily* (好报), established in 2010. These newspapers fulfil the need of the local Chinese-speaking population with their small circulation.

Besides the readership problem, Indonesian Chinese newspapers now also face a shortage of editors and writers; Indonesian-born or old settlers are ageing. To my knowledge, many local editors have retired and are replaced by foreign Chinese; local graduates are not skilled enough or not interested in the job. It is a public secret that Indonesian Chinese newspapers hire mainland Chinese university students who are studying in Indonesian universities to write and edit articles.

The thirty-two years of Suharto rule almost eliminated the Chinese language in Indonesia. Chinese schools were closed in early 1966, meaning that Chinese Indonesians below 60 years old never attended Chinese schools and therefore are usually unable to read Chinese. In other words, Chinese newspapers are usually read by old Indonesian Chinese readers and new Chinese migrants/workers; not by post-1965 Indonesian Chinese. Chinese dailies, in fact, have little effect on the younger generation of Chinese Indonesians.

Nevertheless, there exists a demand for Chinese newspapers among the older generation of Indonesian Chinese. Many of them have strong purchasing power. To cater to the Chinese-speaking community, even

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<sup>37</sup> A discussion with a Chinese daily director in Jakarta, August 2015.

<sup>38</sup> The author had a discussion with one of the directors of the Chinese newspapers in Jakarta, August 2015.

Metro TV, owned by an indigenous Indonesian named Suryo Paloh, has the *Shoudu Xinwen* 首都新闻 or 美都新闻 (*Metro News*) in Chinese. Although the broadcast is limited to one hour, the programme is still welcomed by the older generation of Chinese Indonesians and foreign Chinese residing in Indonesia.

Possible targets for recruiting writers and readers of Indonesian Chinese newspapers are Chinese workers and Indonesian students who have studied in China. Since the fall of Suharto and the rise of China, Indonesia has seen a rise in foreign Chinese-language teachers. There are also many Chinese students studying in various Indonesian private universities.<sup>39</sup> These students and teachers are recruited by Chinese newspapers. However, as Indonesia still restricts new Chinese migrants, the number of Chinese-speaking new migrants remains small.

With regard to mainland Chinese workers, there are about 35,700 of them in Indonesia, and these are mainly in infrastructure and mining projects.<sup>40</sup> A few might read the printed Indonesian Chinese newspapers, but few would subscribe to the Indonesian Chinese newspapers as their interests still lie with China. Moreover, if they wish to know about China and the local situation, they can instead rely on the Internet and other sources.

A recent wave of “Mandarin fever” in Indonesia means that there is an increasing number of indigenous Indonesians who receive tertiary education in China and Taiwan. But the number is still small. Those who learned the Chinese language locally have not achieved the standard

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<sup>39</sup> The number of Chinese students from mainland China is quite small, only a thousand or so, and many were absorbed into the mainland Chinese business community in Indonesia. See Leo Suryadinata, “Xin Yimin in Indonesia: A Growing Community that Faces New Challenges”, in *Rising China and New Chinese Migrants in Southeast Asia*, edited by Leo Suryadinata and Benjamin Loh (Singapore: ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, 2022), p. 188.

<sup>40</sup> See Leo Suryadinata, “Rising China, New Migrants and Ethnic Chinese Identity in Southeast Asia”, in *Rising China and New Chinese Migrants in Southeast Asia*, edited by Leo Suryadinata and Benjamin Loh, pp. 23–24.

required for reading newspapers, and hence have not been able to sustain the readership of Chinese-language newspapers in Indonesia.

In comparison, the number of Indonesian students who study in China is quite large. It was reported that in 2019 prior to the pandemic, about 15,700 Indonesian students were in China. These students included both Chinese Indonesians and “indigenous” Indonesians.<sup>41</sup> Many of them studied the Chinese language and some others studied non-language subjects. Not all students who studied at Chinese universities were proficient in Chinese as many could use English to write papers. Many studied Chinese as a second language and their command of the Chinese language was likely to be quite limited.

The “Mandarin fever” did not produce a substantive Chinese-speaking community in Indonesia as many are satisfied with possessing just conversational skills. With students not pursuing advanced Chinese language skills, most are not proficient enough to achieve the standard required for reading Chinese-language newspapers, let alone sustain such newspapers. Thus, the declining number of Chinese-speaking Indonesian Chinese remains a major problem for the Chinese dailies in Indonesia.

## CONCLUSION

The Chinese in Indonesia are divided into many groups. In the last century, there were Peranakan and Totok; the former was Indonesian-speaking while the latter was Chinese-speaking. After Suharto came to power and banned the three Chinese cultural pillars and prohibited new Chinese migrants from China, Mandarin-speaking Chinese gradually declined in number. Indonesian Chinese society has been Indonesianized, negatively impacting Chinese dailies in Indonesia.

As stated earlier, the number of Chinese-speaking Indonesian Chinese has been declining due to age, with most being above 60 years old. It seems that Chinese-language dailies continue to be read by the old who

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<sup>41</sup> See Leo Suryadinata, “China’s Islamic Diplomacy in Indonesia Is Seeing Results”, *ThinkChina*, 9 February 2022.

still possess strong economic power. Additionally, these newspapers are also read by new Chinese migrants from China and ethnic Chinese from other Southeast Asian countries. But the latter are small in number.

In the near future, no critical mass will exist for Chinese newspapers in Indonesia. Even at this moment, Chinese newspaper editors, journalists and writers are made up of many foreigners. If this development persists over the next decade, Chinese-language newspapers in Indonesia may become overseas Chinese newspapers again. The future leaders of Chinese newspapers, from owner to editor, writer, journalist and readers are likely to be “overseas Chinese”.



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