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The Hashtag Battle over Indonesia's Omnibus Law: From Digital Resistance to Cyber-Control

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The passing of the Omnibus Law in Parliament, on 5 October 2020, prompted mass protests and a massive upsurge in online agitation. In this picture, activists take part in a protest against a government omnibus bill on job creation, which they believe will deprive workers of their rights, in Surabaya on 25 August 2020. Picture: Juni Kriswanto. AFP.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Since its announcement in February 2020, the controversy over the Omnibus Law on Job Creation has polarized the digital public sphere, as proponents and opponents exploit social media to propagate their stances, often with the use of “pro” and “contra” hashtags. The issue quickly turned into a proxy for pro- and anti-government positions.
- The passing of the Omnibus Law in Parliament, on 5 October 2020, prompted mass protests and a massive upsurge in online agitation. Opposition to the Omnibus Law initially dominated the social media landscape, but by mid-October, the government’s narrative that the Omnibus Law served the nation’s interests had prevailed in cyberspace.
- The government achieved control of the narrative through a concerted strategy of cyber-surveillance and deployment of cyber-troops against opponents of the Omnibus Law. This went hand in hand with the delegitimization of the protest in mainstream news coverage, which helped to quickly marginalize and suppress the anti-Omnibus Law movement.
- The degree of concerted effort by which the government deployed its power and resources in cyberspace to clamp down on opposition to the Omnibus Law was unprecedented. This indicates that the implementation of the Omnibus Law was of key strategic interest to Joko Widodo’s current administration. Furthermore, it indicates growing sophistication in the government’s capacity to neutralize its opponents in cyberspace.

INTRODUCTION

On 17 June 2021, the Constitutional Court started its judicial review of Indonesia’s Omnibus Law on Job Creation, which was filed seven months earlier by labour unions and civil society groups following mass protests over this sweeping piece of legislation. In the days prior to the Court’s session, activists called for combined “field action” and “virtual action” to pressure the Constitutional Court to annul the Omnibus Law. Netizens were urged to use the hashtag #CabutOmnibusLaw (“revoke Omnibus Law”) and to “like, mention and spread” the message widely, because: “Your fingertips can change the world”. Such calls for action alluded to a repeat of the protests in October 2020, which saw a turnout of tens of thousands on the streets and more than one million on social media. This time, however, the streets remained quiet; on social media, too, anti-Omnibus Law hashtags garnered little engagement. Instead, on the day of the judicial review’s opening, the mass media highlighted the news that Indonesia had climbed three places in a global competitiveness ranking, owing to “improvements in business efficiency”.¹ This seemed to validate the government’s claim that pro-business legislation was needed to lift Indonesia’s economy and global standing, thus naysaying critics of the Omnibus Law.

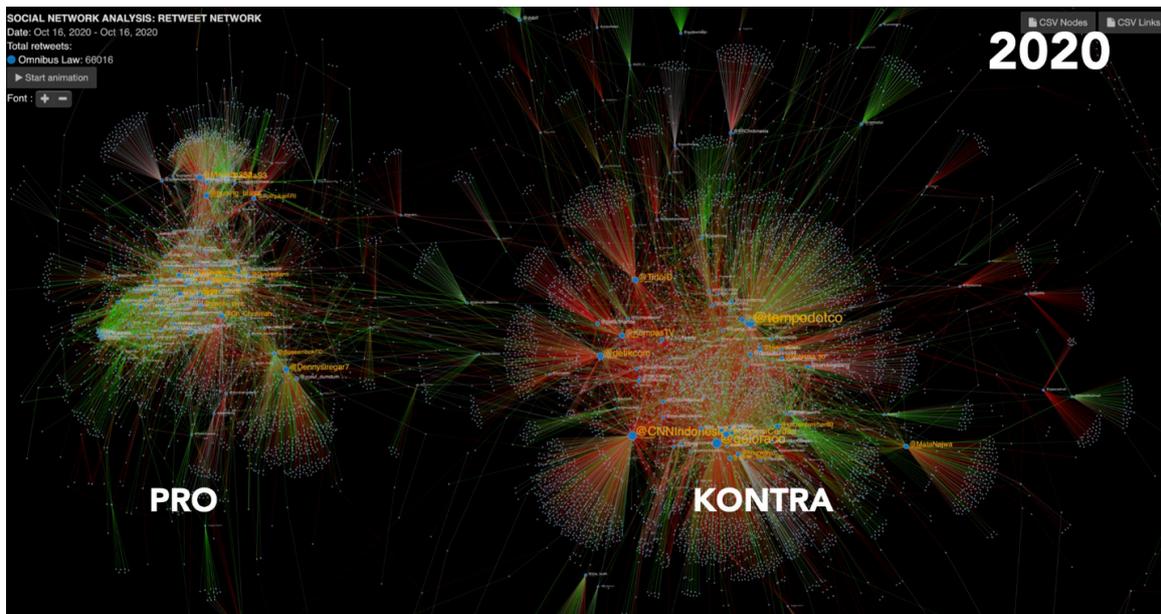


Figure 1: Social network analysis of messages on Twitter taking “pro” and “contra” stances on Indonesia’s Omnibus Law, 16 October 2020. Picture: Ismail Fahmi, “Tren Penolakan Terhadap Omnibus Law Semakin Menurun”, Drone Emprit, 18 October 2020, <https://pers.droneemprit.id/tren-penolakan-terhadap-omnibus-law-semakin-turun/>.

The government’s narrative that the Omnibus Law served the nation’s interests was long contested by activists, whose counter-narrative on the detrimental effects of the Omnibus Law strongly influenced public opinion. Following the vociferous protests in October 2020, however, efforts to organize protests on the same scale, whether on the streets or on social media, invariably failed. The government’s heavy-handed repression of the protest in October 2020, along with the delegitimization of the protest in the mass media, had effectively deterred the majority of protesters. Moreover, online criticism of the Omnibus Law was stifled through a concerted strategy of cyber-surveillance and the deployment of

cyber-troops, which proved to have long-lasting effects on activists' capabilities for online agitation.

In this article, we trace how the narrative battle over the Omnibus Law developed in the interplay between street action and virtual action, between mainstream media and social media, and between physical repression and cyber-control. We show, first, how the opponents initially dominated the social media landscape, and thereby garnered public support; and, second, how the government's strategy for winning the battle indicates growing sophistication in its capacity to neutralize opponents in the cybersphere.

#TOLAKOMNIBUSLAW: TRENDING RESISTANCE

While grassroots resistance to the Omnibus Law can be traced to long-established struggles in the fields of labour, environmentalism and indigenous rights, the popular online and offline protests that climaxed in October 2020 was the offspring of the student and youth-led #ReformasiDikorupsi ("reform corrupted") protest that erupted in September 2019.² The Reform Corrupted protest was the first social media-driven movement in Indonesia, and, as such, it continued unabated online after heavy-handed repression brought an end to the mass demonstrations. On social media, activists continued to engage netizens through a clever play with protest hashtags, memes and information-sharing, indicating that their struggle against corruption and repressive governance had just begun.

When President Joko Widodo ("Jokowi"), during his inaugural speech on 20 October 2019 for his second presidential term announced his plans to revise "dozens of laws that inhibit job creation" into an efficient Omnibus Law,³ this immediately became the new target for protest. As Jokowi's plans unfolded in the following months, labour unions, student activists and civil society groups repeatedly voiced their objections to the Omnibus Bill, which they considered a clear manifestation of the government's harmful pro-business policy, entailing the corrosion of labour rights and posing a threat to indigenous land rights and the environment by lifting restrictions on corporate exploitation of forest land. By 12 February 2020, when the bill was submitted to Parliament, the hashtag #TolakOmnibuslaw, "reject the Omnibus Law", had become a common sight on social media, and preparations for mass strikes and protests were well underway.



Figure 2: Hashtag-framed logo of the resistance to the Omnibus Law, presented as the offspring of the #ReformCorrupted movement.

All protest plans were interrupted, however, by the Covid-19 pandemic. This was a setback to the movement's momentum, but activists adapted to the situation by accelerating the protest online. Small demonstrations were still held—using creative tactics to accommodate social distancing regulations; for example, installing mannequins at the Parliament's entrance with the message “Reject the Omnibus Law!”, or putting up placards stating the building had been “infected by the oligarchy virus”⁴—but it was the online protest that spurred unprecedented mass participation. Twitter actions became especially popular, as Twitter's trending topics offered a useful platform to demonstrate mass support.⁵ For example, on 23 March 2020, student activists and other groups coordinated a Twitter action, urging netizens to catapult the hashtag #TolakOmnibuslaw into Twitter's top trending position. The action succeeded, engaging tens of thousands of netizens, who were especially charmed by the paired hashtags #LockdownDPR (“lockdown Parliament”) and #dirumahaja (“just stay home”, connoting “protest from home”). Other Twitter actions also cleverly played on the pandemic, with such slogans as “Omnibus Law and Covid-19 = Common Enemy: #CancelOmnibusLaw and #FocusOnHandlingThePandemic”. The online resistance kept expanding in the following months, producing a growing lexicon of oppositional hashtags such as #GagalkanOmnibusLaw or #JegalOmnibusLaw (“foil” or “halt” the Omnibus Law), and most prominently #MosiTidakPercaya (“vote of no confidence”). The increasing visibility of these hashtags not only popularised the activist message among netizens. Mainstream media also picked up on the growing online resistance, and they began using Twitter trends as an indicator for public opinion on the Omnibus Law.

In addition, social media became a vital information channel for public understanding of the Omnibus bill. As official communication on the bill remained sparse and fragmented, fake news about the bill proliferated online, spreading public confusion.⁶ For activists, then, raising public awareness by providing clear and accurate information on the implications of the Omnibus Law became a key concern. Thus, beyond mere agitation, they engaged in thorough fact-checking to fill the gaps in information, as well as to expose the political and economic interests behind the government's push for the Omnibus Law. In presenting their findings, they used the idiom and logic of social media, creating shareable memes and infographics that were easy to digest and disseminate.⁷ Again, such information quickly spilled over to mainstream media, providing fodder for public debate.

Meanwhile, the government attempted to sway public opinion by accelerating its online campaign. Initially, they used official government accounts and the hashtag #RUUCiptakerLindungiPekerja, “the Job Creation Bill protects workers”. But as this too overtly propagated government policy, it had little public resonance, and the hashtag was abandoned. Instead, in August 2020, prominent influencers were used to promote the bill through the hashtag #IndonesiaButuhKerja, “Indonesia needs jobs”. Without mentioning the bill, this hashtag was linked to moving stories about hardships suffered during the pandemic. On 10 August, #IndonesiaButuhKerja suddenly became top trending on Twitter and especially on the celebrity-focused platform Instagram, as celebrities tagged their posts with the hashtag, including popular *dangdut* singer Inul Daratista, rising musician Ardhito Pramono, Millennial entrepreneur Gofar Hilman, two national football players and several actors and actresses. The campaign backfired, however, when on 13 August it was revealed that at least 21 of these influencers had been paid five to fifteen million rupiah for promoting the hashtag. The backlash on social media—where netizens mocked the influencers' ignorance and publicly shamed them for “pocketing the people's money”—led most of them

to remove posts of their which carried this hashtag. Some issued a public apology, claiming they did not know the hashtag was connected to the controversial bill, or who ordered the campaign.⁸ The presidential office was quick to deny government involvement. The hashtag disappeared as quickly as it skyrocketed.

This social media blunder made resistance to the Omnibus Law all the more popular. By late September 2020, the narrative on Twitter was overwhelmingly dominated by those rejecting the bill (Figure 3). The immense volume of the online opposition could largely be attributed to the participation of tens of thousands of young “K-poppers” or Korean pop fans (Figure 4), many of whom had previously also joined the Reform Corrupted protest.⁹ Alongside student activists and civil society actors, the active participation of K-Poppers and other young netizens epitomized the organic nature of the social media-driven resistance.¹⁰ While helping to expand the ecology of the online resistance, these young participants also gained valuable political knowledge on the issues being raised in the posts they “liked” and shared.¹¹ This prepared many to continue the protest on the streets. However, it did not prepare them for the harsh cyber-attacks that followed.

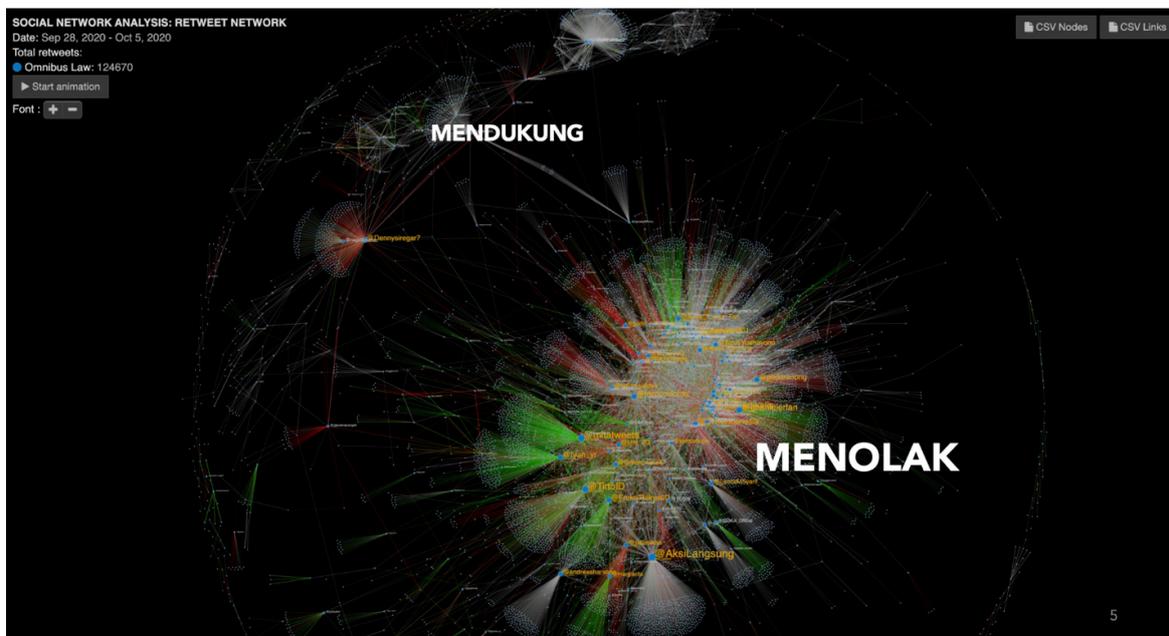


Figure 3: Social network analysis, by data scientist Ismail Fahmi, of Omnibus Law-related hashtags on Twitter from 28 September to 5 October 2020 shows netizens’ overwhelming rejection of the bill. Picture: Ismail Fahmi, “Omnibus Law Peta Aspirasi Publik di Media Sosial,” Drone Emprit, 5 October 2020, <https://pers.droneemprit.id/omnibus-lawpeta-aspirasi-publik-di-media-sosial/>.



Figure 4: Ismail Fahmi’s analysis shows the prominence of K-poppers in the online protest. “Top Avatars for the hashtag #VoteOfNoConfidence; This and other hashtags on the Omnibus Law that became trending topics are widely circulated by accounts with Korean avatars—K-Poppers Strike Back!”, <https://twitter.com/ismailfahmi/status/1313179270299086848>.

CYBER-POLICING THE NARRATIVE

By September 2020, labour unions, students and other activists were preparing for mass protests and a three-day national strike to start on 6 October—one day ahead of the parliamentary vote on the Omnibus Bill. Without warning, however, Parliament expedited its vote on 5 October, and the bill passed by a large majority, prompting an outcry across civil society.¹² In the following days, university and high-school students, alongside labour unions and other groups, staged angry demonstrations throughout the country, which occasionally turned violent.¹³ As during the Reform Corrupted protest one year earlier, the demonstrations were fuelled by online action, with over one million netizens pushing anti-Omnibus Law hashtags into Twitter’s top trending lists—both on Indonesian Twitter and globally—while footage of the protest shared on TikTok garnered up to 8.6 million views.¹⁴

This time, however, the authorities came prepared to offset the public impact of the protest.

The government's response was revealed in a leaked telegram, dated 2 October, in which the National Police Chief, General Idham Azis, issued two types of instruction to his personnel:¹⁵ First, to heighten vigilance and intelligence at "strategic risk areas"—including factories, universities and city squares—in order to nip "anarchistic action" in the bud, stressing the need to disperse disorderly gatherings amidst the Covid-19 pandemic; second, to cyber-patrol social media and conduct cyber-surveillance on activists to detect online agitation, and furthermore to actively "operate counter-narratives against issues that discredit the government", that is, to counter activists' counter-narratives against the Omnibus Law. The telegram further recommended "media management" as an effective method to influence public opinion to make it "disagree with protest actions". Thus, the police received the green light for the violent dispersal of the protest, and instructions to help delegitimize it on social media and mainstream media. For that purpose, the "anarchy" discourse, a legacy of the New Order, proved its efficacy.

On 8 October, three days into the protest, an incident occurred in Jakarta that discredited the entire movement; several TransJakarta bus stops were vandalized and some set on fire. This incident, which reporters blamed on "anarchistic elements" among the protesters, instantly overshadowed all other news on the protest; throughout the day, television stations broadcasted footage of the burning bus stops and ransacking crowds (Figure 5). On social media, it prompted widespread disapproval from netizens, who had thus far overwhelmingly supported the protest. One netizen, who was among the first to tweet images of the destruction, commented, "I would fight for your cause but this is beyond outrageous 🙄🙄🙄". The tweet went viral, garnering thousands of retweets and likes (Figure 6).



Figure 5: Images of burning bus stops were broadcast on national television throughout the day. CNN Indonesia captioned, "Video: Impact of Action: TransJakarta HI-Sarinah Stop Burned Down", <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/tv/20201008195833-409-556218/video-dampak-aksi-halte-transj-hi-sarinah-dibakar-massa>.



Figure 6: A netizen expresses disapproval of the ransacking of TransJakarta bus stops during the protest, alleging it was done by the demonstrators who thereby fell from grace.

An investigation by the independent media channel NarasiTV found that the vandalism had been coordinated by unidentified people, who were seen to manoeuvre erratically amongst the mass of protesters.¹⁶ Given the track record of government-linked actors mobilizing incognito military men or militia for inciting riots in the past, speculations about the government’s role in the incident ran wild.¹⁷ But the damage was done. The incident marked the culmination of concerted efforts to delegitimize the protest on two fronts: news coverage and online attacks by political buzzers.

After the incident, two types of coverage dominated news on the protest. The first focused on its “anarchic” nature. About 37% of the coverage highlighted vandalism during the protest, with stories abounding of violent protesters destroying public facilities and provoking clashes with security forces.¹⁸ These stories evoked a narrative about the protest as uncivil and destructive, contrary to media depictions of the Reform Corrupted protest in September 2019, which was celebrated as the rebirth of the Indonesian student movement. Within the new narrative, a group emerged as the “mastermind”: anarcho-syndicalists. News outlets thus facilitated the authorities’ story of anarcho-syndicalists as provocateurs, which first appeared in police statements during an earlier Omnibus Law protest in Jakarta in March 2020.¹⁹ Soon after that protest, television stations broadcasted a supposed confession from a person dubbed as “the chairman of anarcho-syndicalism”. It was told that a vast network of anarcho-syndicalists was conspiring to vandalize Indonesia. In actuality, as later revealed, this “chairman” was merely a motorcycle thief forced to “confess” by the police. While activists have since mocked this fabricated story, it deterred law-abiding citizens from identifying with the protest.

The second type of coverage portrayed the protesters as ignorant. In the course of the protest, the draft for the Omnibus Law was revised three times, each draft counting up to 1,052 pages. Activists struggled to keep up with the changes, which authorities exploited to depict the protesters as uninformed. As President Jokowi claimed, in a headline-statement on 9 October, criticism of the Omnibus Law was merely based on “disinformation and hoaxes spread through social media”.²⁰ Besides the anarcho-syndicalism story, the story of “gullible kids duped by online hoaxes” became a repetitive narrative in media commentary. Thus, as one critic asserted, news outlets increasingly “served as a public relations agency for the government”.²¹

Online operations by pro-government cyber-troops or political “buzzers” was the other front where government supporters attempted to control the narrative.²² Besides flooding social media with pro-Omnibus Law hashtags—often using automated bot accounts to exponentially multiply tweets—pro-government buzzers mimicked and magnified negative stories of the protest by news outlets, thus accusing the protesters of being “anarchic” and lacking proper information. One pro-government buzzer, for example, tweeted a video of Central Java Governor Ganjar Pranowo admonishing two young protesters; he patronisingly asked them whether they had read the draft. The caption read, “Demonstrating is permissible as a democratic right, but you have to know what you’re fighting for, don’t just play along and let yourself be exploited. How many [protesters] were like these?” (Figure 7). As this caption alluded, accusing the protest of being orchestrated by opposition parties seeking to exploit the situation for their own political gain, was another common tactic. Though less explicitly, this was also insinuated in mainstream media.



Figure 7: A video of the Central Java Governor admonishing young protesters for their ignorance, which went viral.

What distinguished the buzzer operations from mainstream news coverage was the harsh, and often personal, attacks on activists. Pro-government buzzers scorned the protesters as “hoax-spreaders” for posting tweets based on older drafts—or for exposing government officials’ collusion and corruption. Some buzzers also instructed their followers, and coordinated with other cyber-troops, to harass specific activists. Targeting the coordinator of environmentalist group JATAM, one buzzer wrote, “This is the account guys @Merah_Johansyah let’s beat this SLANDERER up.” Soon after the call to action, the activist’s posts were filled with comments such as “shoot the filthy pig to death!!!!” Online hostility was also frequently targeted at activist women, who had to contend with misogynistic slurs, leading some to lock their account.

Finally, buzzers tapped into existing unsympathetic public sentiment towards the protesters as well. From the outset, not all netizens supported the protest. Unsympathetic netizens often attributed the protesters with the derogatory label “SJW” (social justice warrior), caricatured as hysterical, self-righteous hypocrites. Buzzers replicated this label and made graphics ridiculing protesters as SJW clowns, further contributing to the delegitimization of the protest. Through these various tactics, buzzer operations effectively turned the online public sentiment around. By mid-October, the hashtags dominating social media were those propagating the Omnibus Law; for example, #OmnibusLawBawaBerkah (“Omnibus Law brings blessing”) and #OmnibusLawBasmiKorupsi (“Omnibus Law eradicates corruption”).²³

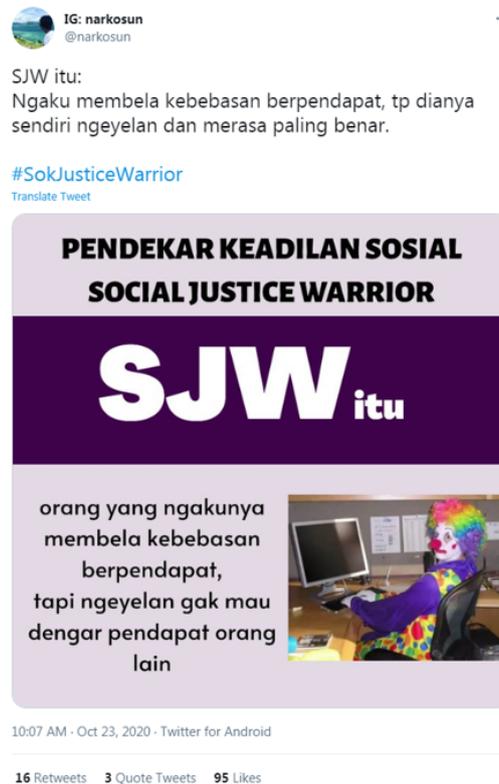


Figure 8: A buzzer post ridiculing the “Social Justice Warriors” of the Omnibus Law protest, describing them as persons who claim to defend freedom of speech, but who refuse to listen to the opinions of others.

CONCLUSION

The strategy of concerted delegitimization had a swift impact on the protest. Activists struggled to respond to the hostile situation both offline and online. The protest was challenging enough on the ground due to the police brutality, but now online, activists had to navigate through hostilities and derision, leaving them few opportunities to argue against the charge that their protest was illegitimate. In addition, the police stepped up cyber-surveillance as instructed, and many activists and netizens were prosecuted for violating the Electronic Information and Transaction (ITE) Law with its notorious “rubber articles”. Some were arrested due to buzzers framing their tweets as hoax-spreading.

Thus, during the Omnibus Law controversy, social media turned from an activist playground into an unsafe space for activists. This had a chilling effect on political criticism generally. One survey conducted on 24-30 September 2020 already indicated that some 70% of the respondents felt that citizens had become more afraid to publicly express their opinions.²⁴ Since then, this trend appears to have deepened. The lukewarm response on social media to calls for action around the judicial review in June 2021 clearly indicated the changed political climate.

The scale at which the government deployed its power and resources in cyberspace to clamp down on opposition to the Omnibus Law—as indicated by the National Police Chief’s

telegram—was unprecedented. Clearly, the implementation of the Omnibus Law was of such key strategic interest to Jokowi’s current administration that no disruptions could be tolerated. Furthermore, the methodical manner in which the government succeeded in winning the narrative battle soon after the protest erupted in October 2020—despite earlier social media blunders—indicates increasing sophistication in its capacity to neutralize opponents in the cybersphere. It is likely the government will build on this success to shore up its resources and capabilities to counter online dissent.

¹ Anonymous, “Indonesia Improves in World Competitiveness Ranking”, *Jakarta Globe*, 17 June 2021, <https://jakartaglobe.id/business/indonesia-improves-in-world-competitiveness-ranking/>.

² Yatun Sastramidjaja, “Indonesia: Digital Communications Energising New Political Generation’s Campaign for Democracy”, *ISEAS Perspective*, No. 2020/16, 17 March 2020, <https://www.iseas.edu.sg/articles-commentaries/iseas-perspective/indonesia-digital-communications-energising-new-political-generations-campaign-for-democracy-by-yatun-sastramidjaja/>.

³ Riza Roidila Mufti and Kharishar Kahfi, “Jokowi Pushes for Passage of Omnibus Laws: What Are They?”, *The Jakarta Post*, 25 October 2019, <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2019/10/25/jokowi-pushes-passage-omnibus-laws-what-are-they.html>.

⁴ Lukman Nurhadi Arunanta, “Aksi Tolak Omnibus Law, Puluhan Manekin ‘Demo’ di Depan DPR”, *Detik.com*, 29 June 2020, <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-5072315/aksi-tolak-omnibus-law-puluhan-manekin-demo-di-depan-dpr>; Ari Saptura, “Gedung DPR Disemprot ‘Vaksin Oligarki’ untuk Tolak Omnibus Law”, *Detik.com*, 9 July 2020, <https://news.detik.com/foto-news/d-5086269/gedung-dpr-disemprot-vaksin-oligarki-untuk-tolak-omnibus-law>.

⁵ Although Twitter ranked only fifth among the leading social media platforms in Indonesia (behind YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook; see “Penetration of Leading Social Networks in Indonesia as of Q3 2020”, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/284437/indonesia-social-network-penetration/>), it has been particularly popular among younger generations for public expression of their opinions.

⁶ Anonymous, “Be Careful, Your Draft of the Omnibus Bill Might be a Hoax: Government”, *The Jakarta Post*, 21 January 2020, <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/01/21/be-careful-your-draft-of-the-omnibus-bill-might-be-a-hoax-government.html>.

⁷ The environmentalist group JATAM published a scathing report exposing the business ties of 12 high-ranked government officials who supported the bill, in which information on each of them was summarised in meme-ified form; posted on Twitter with the text “Who are the actors behind #Omnibus Law”. The report and the separate memes went viral (see <https://twitter.com/jatamnass/status/1314562990360813569?s=03>). Another popular post (garnering 19.000 likes and retweeted 10.000 times) was created in February 2020 by one of the authors of this article, Pradipa R. Rasidi; titled “Ringkasan 10 Menit: Segala tentang Omnibus Law” (10-minute summary: all about the Omnibus Law), it consisted of 12 shareable memes summarising key implications of the Omnibus Law, compiled from Esther Samboh, “Guide to Omnibus Bill on Job Creation: 1,028 Pages in 10 Minutes”, *The Jakarta Post*, 24 February 2020, <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/02/21/guide-to-omnibus-bill-on-job-creation-1028-pages-in-8-minutes.html>.

⁸ Dyaning Pangestika, “Influencers Apologize for Supporting Job Creation Bill after Furore among Followers”, *The Jakarta Post*, 16 August 2020, <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/08/15/influencers-apologize-for-supporting-job-creation-bill-after-furor-among-followers.html>; Anonymous, “Polemik Buzzer Omnibus Law:

Influencer Tak Kompeten dan Netizen Mudah Lupa”, *Kumparan*, 19 August 2020, <https://kumparan.com/kumparantech/polemik-buzzer-omnibus-law-influencer-tak-kompeten-dan-netizen-mudah-lupa-1u1uiLqhkPc/full>.

⁹ Rosa Folia, “Fans K-Pop Aktif di Garis Depan Protes Pengesahan UU Cipta Kerja”, *VICE*, 6 October 2020, <https://www.vice.com/id/article/qj47ad/fans-k-pop-aktif-memrotes-pengesahan-uu-cipta-kerja-omnibus-law-di-medsos>; Ismail Fahmi, “RUU Omnibus Law Disahkan: K-Poppers Strike Back”, *Drone Emprit*, 6 October 2020, <https://pers.droneemprit.id/ruu-omnibus-law-disahkan-k-poppers-strike-back/>.

¹⁰ Yatun Sastramidjaja, “Digital Youth and Rhizomatic Protest Movements”, *IIAS The Newsletter*, No. 89 (Summer 2021), <https://www.iias.asia/the-newsletter/newsletter-89-summer-2021>.

¹¹ Ismail Fahmi discovered a remarkable trend in K-poppers’ retweets during this period, namely the widespread sharing of the poem “Resist” by leftist poet Wija Thukul, prompting many K-poppers to look up and learn about this poet and the political conditions during the New Order that led to his disappearance in 1997 (allegedly abducted and killed by the military). Ismail Fahmi, “Wiji Thukul di tengah Ava K-poppers”, Twitter, 6 October 2020, <https://twitter.com/ismailfahmi/status/1313534757427273728>.

¹² Besides labour unionists and student activists, the passing of the bill was strongly condemned by Indonesia’s two largest religious organisations, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, by academics and deans from 67 universities, and by NGOs from various sectors, including human rights, women’s, environmentalist and indigenous peoples’ organisations. Syafiq Hasyim, “Indonesian Muslim Groups Oppose Omnibus Law”, *Fulcrum*, 16 October 2020, <https://fulcrum.sg/indonesian-muslim-groups-oppose-omnibus-law/>; Max Lane, “Protests Against the Omnibus Law and the Evolution of Indonesia’s Social Opposition”, *ISEAS Perspective*, No. 2020/128, 9 November 2020, https://www.iseas.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ISEAS_Perspective_2020_128.pdf.

¹³ Aisyah Llewellyn and Tonggo Simangunsong, “Demonstrations Sweep Indonesia over Controversial Labour Law”, *AlJazeera*, 9 October 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/9/demonstrations-sweep-indonesia-over-controversial-omnibus-law>.

¹⁴ Ismail Fahmi, “Omnibus Law Peta Aspirasi Publik di Media Sosial”, *Drone Emprit*, 5 October 2020, <https://pers.droneemprit.id/omnibus-lawpeta-aspirasi-publik-di-media-sosial/>; Nuurrianti Jalli, “How TikTok Can Be the New Platform for Political Activism: Lessons from Southeast Asia”, *The Conversation*, 24 February 2021, <https://theconversation.com/how-tiktok-can-be-the-new-platform-for-political-activism-lessons-from-southeast-asia-155556>.

¹⁵ The telegram was exposed on 5 October by the independent news site Tirto.id, after which it circulated widely on social media. Adi Briantika, “Perintah Kapolri: Intai, Larang & Lawan Narasi Penolak UU Ciptaker”, *Tirto.id*, 5 October 2020, <https://tirto.id/perintah-kapolri-intai-larang-lawan-narasi-penolak-uu-ciptaker-f5As>.

¹⁶ Aqwan Fiazmi Hanifan and Arbi Sumandoyo, “62 Menit Operasi Pembakaran Halte Sarinah”, *Buka Mata* (NarasiTV), 28 October 2020, <https://www.narasi.tv/buka-mata/62-menit-operasi-pembakaran-halte-sarinah>.

¹⁷ This “tradition” dates back to the Malari riots of 1974 which quelled the 1974 student movement, and the May 1998 riots which according to human rights organizations were orchestrated by General Prabowo Subianto—Jokowi’s erstwhile rival but who has become Minister of Defense in Jokowi’s second-term cabinet. Yatun Sastramidjaja, *Playing Politics: Power, Memory and Agency in the Making of the Indonesian Student Movement*, PhD dissertation, University of Amsterdam, April 2016.

¹⁸ Muhammad Heychael and Purnama Ayu Rizky, “Lumpuh Dalam Cengkeraman Cukong: Televisi Dan Pemberitaan UU Cipta Kerja”, *Remotivi*, 30 October 2020, <https://remotivi.or.id/pantau/643/lumpuh-dalam-cengkeraman-cukong-televisi-dan-pemberitaan-uu-cipta-kerja>.

¹⁹ Purnama Ayu Rizky, “Bagaimana Media Memfasilitasi Cerita Polisi Soal Anarko?”, *Remotivi*, 30 April 2020, <https://remotivi.or.id/pantau/588/bagaimana-media-memfasilitasi-cerita-polisi-soal-anarko>.

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