

The Importance Of Nationalism In The Era Of Modern Indonesia

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In the era of modern Indonesia which is marked by the swift currents of globalization and technological advances that are celebrated in an uproar, Indonesia faces huge challenges in terms of national and state awareness.

The onslaught of the onslaught of foreign culture facilitated by the media and internet technology can be freely present in the midst of our society and has the potential to dominate and influence local culture.

Coupled with other state issues that threaten national sovereignty, especially after 1998, such as the emergence of ideologies that are at odds with state ideologies, terrorism, radicalism, and social conflicts based on ethnicity, race and religion.

In short, some of the nation's problems above explain to a degree that Indonesia is facing serious challenges related to nationalism.

The decline in the values of nationalism in the community is actually not a new case, but a classic problem that has continued to be experienced by this nation since Indonesia's independence from colonial rule until now.

The results of the LSI Denny JA survey are worth pondering. The survey shows that from 2005-2018 the number of pro-Pancasila residents has decreased by at least 10%.

At the level of formal education, especially young people, the number of pro-Pancasila has also declined. LSI 2019 research results provide quite a bit of fresh air because when compared with previous years, nationalism has increased.

66.4 percent of residents who still identify themselves as part of the Indonesian nation, 19.1 percent of citizens identify themselves as a group of adherents of a certain religion, and 11.9 percent of residents identify themselves as part of a particular ethnic group.

Although the survey results show that the development of nationalism is quite positive in 2019, we must not forget that 33.6 percent of citizens who do not prioritize nationalism are not small numbers and this means that nationalism is still under challenge, therefore this topic is still relevant to voice.

Nationalism in the history of the Indonesian people

In an effort to establish Indonesia as an independent and sovereign nation, Sukarno adopted Ernest Renan's idea of nationalism which refers to a political agreement to achieve the ideals of the future together as a nation that is the same fate and willingness to sacrifice to maintain the national spirit.

Nationalism in his view is not narrow nationalism, but rather reflects humanism and internationalism born of three conditions namely the existence of economic exploitation, political disappointment due to the dominance of foreign powers, and the loss of the right to develop local culture under the grip of the colonial education system.

In the colonial era, nationalism was built on a shared consciousness that was fostered on the basis of ethnic, religious, racial, and inter-group differences to be free from the shackles of colonial colonialism.

In the Old Order government, nationalism was built to develop Indonesia in a better direction by prioritizing local and national culture and as hard as possible to close the tap against the influence of foreign culture.

While in the New Order era, nationalism was fostered and shaped in top-down doctrines and seemed to be used as the legitimacy of militaristic power.

Nationalism faced significant challenges in the reform era. This is marked by the beginning of the marginalization of Pancasila content at the level of formal education which is mostly focused only on technological and economic development.

The waning of nationalism in this era can also be highlighted from the rise of racial-based social conflicts such as the Poso, Ambon, Aceh, Papua, and the liberation of East Timor from Indonesia, the emergence of mass organizations that emphasize cultural identity, and the many alternative ideologies that often conflict with the ideology of the nation.

Not to mention, the rise of various primordial narratives and SARA issue-based sentiments that developed in the community during the last two presidential elections seemed to make cultural barriers stronger and inevitable.

Departing from this reality, nationalism needs to be voiced again to safeguard national sovereignty and bring Indonesia to a better direction because if not unity and unity will be threatened and future generations will be apathetic towards their own country.

Strategy for strengthening nationalism

If nationalism in the context was built to form a collective consciousness in order to liberate itself from colonialism, in this contemporary era nationalism must be built to bring Indonesia into a developed and sovereign nation.

Therefore, appropriate and efficient strategies are needed in the effort to re-develop nationalism in contemporary Indonesian society, especially among young people.

The first thing that can be done is to strengthen nationalism at the level of formal education. Pancasila content must be given and practiced at all levels of formal education with proper application.

Secondly, it is still at the level of formal education, historical narratives about heroism that are required to re-emerge, be known and understood by the younger generation.

For example, the story of the Pledge of Youth Oath related to national and state awareness that was initiated by young groups and became the forerunner to the proclamation of Indonesian independence. In addition, the character education model carried out by K.H. Dewantara who focuses on character education in the arts and culture in an effort to refine character and humanity is still relevant to be applied.

Third, strengthening nationalism can be done by using popular culture approaches, such as sports activities, music, films, educational competitions, and many more. The successful celebration of the Asian Games in Indonesia 2018 coupled with increasing the achievements of Indonesian athletes proved successful in fostering a spirit of nationalism and pride in being part of the Indonesian nation among the people.

In addition, the victory of Indonesian students in winning the gold medal at the Math Olympiad in Lucknow India and the victory of young Indonesian singer, Claudia Emmanuela Santoso, in the talent search event in Germany was also successful in building nationalism among the people.

As a nation consisting of various cultural elements, Indonesia has advantages in the field of artistic and cultural creativity so that nationalism can be internalized and processed in a contemporary manner by highlighting cultural diversity in the form of creative activities on the international scene for a sense of pride for Indonesia.

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