

DISASTER COMMUNICATION IN COMMUNITY SOCIAL SYSTEMS (Study on Mount Semeru Eruption Case)

¹Anindya Septiana Arfiani, ²Sayyaf Nasrul Islami

¹²Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

¹arfianianindya@gmail.com, ²sayyaf1516@gmail.com

Abstract: The eruption of Mount Semeru that occurred in Lumajang Regency in 2021 has claimed 51 lives and dozens are missing. Disaster Communication is present in an effort to minimize victims and affected areas. The purpose of this study is to determine the form of disaster communication carried out in a state social system during a volcanic eruption disaster. This research uses a descriptive qualitative research method with a case study approach that specifically discusses the case of the eruption of Mount Semeru. The author describes disaster communication carried out by the government and related parties in order to respond to the disaster and then minimize its impact. The author also finds the role of online media both social media and news media in maximizing this disaster communication. The government as the center of the social system uses direct communication. The choice of language and diction that is firm and focused is intended so that those engaged in the field do not hesitate in making decisions in accordance with pre-disaster procedures that have been directed beforehand.

Keywords: Disaster Communication, Semeru Mountain, Social System

A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country with the nickname ring fire because it is surrounded by many volcanoes that are still active today. One of them is Mount Semeru which is located in Lumajang, East Java. In 2021, there was a large eruption of Mount Semeru which destroyed hundreds of buildings, claimed the lives of 54 people and dozens of others went missing. The highest mountain on the island of Java also forced thousands of heads of families to flee, a total of 1027 housing units were damaged by hot clouds and cold lava and as many as 9417 people were forced to flee.¹ This incident caused deep sorrow and became the focus of the government at that time. President Joko Widodo immediately ordered an emergency response to deal with this national disaster.

In this case, communication is very necessary at various levels of the social system to overcome the impact of the disaster. Direct communication through a structured social strata structure makes the speed of response to the Semeru disaster one of the best. On the KOMINFO website, it was reported that the President had received the report and continued to monitor the situation from time to time and ordered "Mr President has ordered the Head of BNPB, the Head of Basarnas, the Minister of Social Affairs, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Public Works and Public Housing, and also the Commander of the TNI ", the

¹DetikNews.com, 'Peristiwa Pulu Erupsi Gunung Semeru Di Penghujung Tahun 2021', 2021 <<https://news.detik.com/berita-jawa-timur/d-5877972/peristiwa-pulu-erupsi-gunung-semeru-di-penghujung-tahun-2021/2>>.

National Police Chief, Governor and Regent to immediately take action as quickly as possible, carry out emergency response steps, search for and find victims, provide care to injured victims, and handle the impact of the disaster," explained Minister of State Secretary Pratikno who provided a statement representing President Joko Widodo, Sunday (05/12/2021).²

The social system itself is the entire organization of systemic relationships between positions or social groups in society. The patterns of relationships between individuals and groups that arise in social interactions constitute a social system as a social organization.³ The behavior of individual and group relationships in society that is accepted by the majority of society because it originates from cultural values that have become part of the daily lifestyle of the society itself is what is meant by the socio-cultural system.

Society from a social system perspective will lead to discussions regarding the pluralism of society based on the social structure that forms it, social integration or conflict in society. A process that occurs in society can have social and political impacts that are not simple.⁴ A social system can be a large system such as a nation, ethnic group, or small in scope such as an organization. To be able to interact with each other and create social relationships, each individual in a social system needs to communicate with one another. Communication is one way for humans to socialize with others.

The eruption of one of the mountains on the island of Java has moved our social souls to empathy. The eruption of Mount Semeru in early December 2021 resulted in residents living around the mountain slopes being affected by volcanic ash and hot clouds. As a result, residents had to evacuate to safer areas to avoid volcanic ash and hot clouds. Because of this, the government is making efforts in disaster management through ministries and also BNPB to minimize the impact caused by the Mount Semeru eruption. In this case, the government provides direct instructions which constitute disaster communication and are accepted and forwarded by BNPB to the wider community as part of a social system in Indonesia.

Good communication to the public in order to understand the objectives of the policies set is very necessary, therefore in this writing we will discuss in more depth how public communication is carried out to encourage the public to control the social system regarding the problems that arise. What was the role of disaster communication built by the

²KOMINFO, 'Presiden Perintahkan Gerak Cepat Tangani Dampak Erupsi Gunung Semeru', 2021 <<https://www.kominfo.go.id/content/detail/38517/presiden-perintahkan-gerak-cepat-tangani-dampak-erupsi-gunung-semeru/0/berita>>.

³ Thohir Yuli Kusmanto and Misbah Zulfa Elizabeth, 'Struktur Dan Sistem Sosial Pada Aras Wacana Dan Praksis', *JSW (Jurnal Sosiologi Walisongo)*, 2.1 (2018), 39–50 <<https://doi.org/10.21580/jsw.2018.2.1.2252>>.

⁴Nunung Prajarto, *Perbandingan Sistem Komunikasi* (Jakarta: Universitas Terbuka, 2013). h.14.

government, especially through ministries and BNPB, to control the Semeru eruption disaster situation at that time?.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative descriptive research method with a case study approach. Qualitative descriptive is used to study problems, researchers do not prove or reject hypotheses made before research but process data and analyze a problem non-numerically. Based on a series of theoretical activities regarding qualitative research, this type of research focuses on describing data in the form of sentences that have deep meaning originating from informants and observed behavior. The data resulting from this research are facts found in the field by researchers.⁵ Meanwhile, the case study approach is used to explore in depth and comprehensively a particular case within a certain period of time.

The focus of a case study is a case specification in an incident whether it includes an individual, a cultural group or a portrait of life. Case studies also have several characteristics, namely (1). Bound by time and place, (2) Identifying the case as a study, (3) using various sources of information in collecting data to provide a detailed and in-depth picture of the response to an event, (4) Researchers will focus and spend time describing the context and setting in a case.⁶ In this research, the author used a specific case study approach to the Mount Semeru eruption disaster that occurred in December 2021 in East Java, which was then reviewed through the lens of disaster communication carried out in the social system at the location of the incident. Then the author explains it in descriptive form with data and arguments referring to the theory before drawing conclusions.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Disasters are categorized into several types, one of which is natural disasters. Natural disasters are disasters caused by an event or series of events caused by nature. Natural disasters are also divided into causes, including geological disasters (earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, landslides) and meteorological disasters (floods, sea waves, wild fires, droughts and storms) as well as anthropogenic disasters, namely disasters caused by human negligence.⁷ In this research The author focuses on geological volcano natural disasters or natural disasters due to volcanic activity (volcanoes) whose time of occurrence can be predicted well because volcanic activity is always monitored. Even though statistically the

⁵ Sugiyono., Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan R&D (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2016).h.22

⁶ Yani Kusmarni, 'STUDI KASUS: John W. Creswell', Jurnal Edu UGM, 17.3 (2012), 271–83
<<https://doi.org/10.1080/07263869100034611>>.

⁷ Puji Lestari, Perspektif Komunikasi Bencana, Angewandte Chemie International Edition, 6(11), 951–952., 2018
<[http://eprints.upnyk.ac.id/23779/1/Puji Lestari - Buku Komunikasi Bencana Aspek Penting.pdf](http://eprints.upnyk.ac.id/23779/1/Puji%20Lestari%20-%20Buku%20Komunikasi%20Bencana%20Aspek%20Penting.pdf)>.

condition of Mount Semeru is monitored and can possibly be predicted, this incident is still a heavy blow to all Indonesian society. Therefore, disaster communication in dealing with the eruption of Mount Semeru which will be discussed in this research will be divided into three parts, namely Pre-Disaster Communication, Communication during Disaster and Post-Eruption Disaster Communication.

1) **Pre-Disaster Communication for the Mount Semeru Eruption**

Being known as a country circled by a ring of fire, of course, makes Indonesia one of the countries that must always be ready to be alert to all disasters caused by volcanoes. Apart from that, Indonesia, which is mostly water, also increases public and government awareness of meteorological disasters. Therefore, pre-disaster preparedness must be given great attention to minimize the impact of disasters. Government Regulation Number 21 of 2008 states that disaster mitigation is a series of efforts to reduce the risk of disasters, both through physical development and awareness and increasing capacity to face disasters.⁸

In practice, disaster mitigation in handling volcanic eruptions in Indonesia has often been socialized by related institutions, one of which is the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) of East Java Province, which contains information related to Tips for Volcanic Eruption Disasters, explained in it about what is involved. The community must do this when a volcanic eruption occurs, in this case the Semeru eruption. Apart from conducting direct outreach as a form of public communication via mass media, the BMKG account is also always ready to provide messages containing information regarding meteorological and seismic status.

This is a form of disaster communication carried out by the government to all communities, especially in this case the Semeru slope community in order to minimize and reduce the risk of the Mount Semeru eruption disaster. This approach is called the Soft Power approach, namely government preparation in the form of outreach, integrated communication and providing information about disasters. Meanwhile, hard power is carried out by the government by building facilities that support disaster risk reduction.⁹ The construction of the Mount Semeru Observation Post is a real action from the government. These two things are important so that we can synergize in providing messages of disaster information and protection without causing fear and worry to the community.

⁸ Rudianto, 'Komunikasi Dalam Penanggulangan Bencana', *Jurnal Simbolika*, 1.1 (2015), h.51–61.

⁹ *Ibid*

The role of communication during pre-disaster times has certainly been clearly illustrated above. The media helps to socialize in order to provide an understanding of the threat of danger, reduce the risk of disasters, communication for preparation, for example, by providing active signals regarding Semeru. Change of status from Alert II to Caution. In other messages, social media accounts from related institutions also help inform the current situation of active mountains. This seismic activity provides knowledge to the public in general, and especially the people on the slopes of Mount Semeru, to be alert and prepared to evacuate if an eruption occurs. These messages are pre-disaster messages which aim to minimize casualties and the impact of future eruptions. By providing information about the condition of Mount Semeru and what to do first during a disaster emergency, the government aims to provide provisions to the community so that when an eruption occurs, the community can be more prepared to deal with it.



(source: <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/indonesia-63852937>)

Education in the form of counseling and regular outreach continues to be carried out by the government in collaboration with related parties to provide an understanding of disasters. Until now, the very fluctuating status of Mount Semeru is the reason why this communication continues to be carried out by the Lumajang Regency BPDB.



(sumber:<https://www.pantura7.com/2023/12/06/erupsi-hantui-warga-lereng-semeru-bpbd-galakkan-sosialisasi-kebencanaan/>)

Apart from open and horizontal communication with the wider community, the government and related parties also continue to coordinate and communicate vertically in order to maximize the information that will be shared with the public. The Sabo Technical Center under the Directorate General of Water and Mineral Resources under the Ministry of Public Works and Public Housing, for example, coordinates the response to the Mount Semeru disaster. This meeting discussed how to maximize the role of the community in reducing the risk of lava disasters, including maintaining river morphology and the infrastructure within it.¹⁰

2) Communication during the Mount Semeru Eruption Disaster

The social situation of the community around Mount Semeru is being hit by a volcanic eruption. Mount Semeru erupted suddenly and was not even detected by the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) previously. The role of disaster communication is very necessary, to provide information to the public at the time of the incident, calm the public, so as not to panic in the face of an eruption disaster. At the time of the incident, the community was continuously accompanied by field officers to carry out evacuations under the direction of the Regional Head and Government Officials. President Joko Widodo himself as head of the social system is directly involved in monitoring the current conditions of the Mount Semeru eruption. At the time of the incident, a communication mechanism that ensured information was conveyed precisely and accurately when the Semeru eruption disaster occurred became important.

¹⁰ Balai Sabo, 'Rapat Koordinasi Tanggap Bencana Gunung Semeru', 2023
<<https://sda.pu.go.id/balai/tekniksabo/public/berita/detail/rapat-koordinasi-tanggap-bencana-gunung-semeru>>.

This information is a communication message containing the latest status response, survivors' jump, assistance and the fastest evacuation.

The state, through the regional government and BNPB Lumajang Regency, was quick to respond in evacuating the victims in order to minimize the number of victims. Various mass organizations, institutions and political parties also took part in responding to the Semeru eruption disaster. Appeals and recommendations for victims and communities on the slopes of Mount Semeru are carried out in various ways, especially through mass media and online as intermediaries. In accordance with government instructions through ministries and BNPB in responding to the Mount Semeru eruption disaster, perceptions about the Government's readiness and seriousness need to be conveyed to the public through comprehensive and periodic explanations, explaining what the Government has done and will do. This is done with the aim of creating a calm and alert community, and understanding what they should do in a post-eruption situation. Then build the public's perception that the State is present and responsive in controlling the crisis situation that occurs.

The four pillars of communication related to the Semeru eruption that the government has carried out directly with the community are (1) Appeal to the community to remain calm and alert. (2) Coordination with related agencies. (3) Providing access to information to the media. (4) Convey information on disaster management activities to the community. Apart from that, BNPB, as one of the social system institutions responsible for disaster follow-up in Indonesia, has taken several actions to maximize its role in disaster communication, namely (1) following up on direct orders from the government regarding efforts to accelerate aid and repairs. (2) BNPB urges the public, visitors or tourists not to do activities within a radius of 1 km from the crater or peak of Mount Semeru and a distance of 5 km towards the crater opening in the southeast - south sector. (3) BNPB urges the public to stay away from or not carry out activities in areas affected by hot cloud material because currently the temperature is still high. (4) BNPB urges you to be aware of the potential for sliding along the valley of the Besuk Kobokan hot cloud path. (5) BNPB urges you to be aware of the threat of lava in river channels or valleys that originate at Mount Semeru, considering the large amount of volcanic material that has been formed. (6) The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources communicates with mining companies to participate in helping restore areas affected by the eruption of Mount Semeru.¹¹

¹¹BNPB, 'LAPORAN HARIAN PUSDALOPS BNPB', 2021<<https://pusdalops.bnpb.go.id/2021/12/15/laporan-harian-pusdalops-bnpb-selasa-14-desember-2021/>>.

President Joko Widodo ordered all ministries and institutions (K/L) to accelerate assistance and improvements related to handling the impact of the eruption of Mount Semeru, East Java. Through Minister of State Secretary (Mensesneg) Pratikno, Jokowi asked that this be done by all levels of ministries and related institutions in the shortest possible time. The government also urges the public to follow the directions of officers in the field and always increase vigilance. The President, said Pratikno, reminded that Indonesia is in a ring of fire area which indicates vulnerability to natural activities. For this reason, the President asked all regional heads and government officials to always be alert to potential disasters. Apart from that, regional heads and officials are asked to invite the public to always be alert and aware of any potential disasters.¹²

Responding to President Jokowi's instructions, BNPB as a government agency that handles natural disaster issues immediately issued several recommendations. Through the Acting Head of the Disaster Information and Communication Data Center, the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB), Abdul Muhari, said that currently Mount Semeru is at level II or alert status. Therefore, BNPB recommends four things. First, people, visitors or tourists should not move within a radius of 1 kilometer from the crater or peak.

In the explanation above, it is clear that disaster communication during the eruption of Mount Semeru was carried out in a structured manner and all members of the community's social system were directly involved and made every effort to minimize the impact of the disaster. According to Hadow and Hadow, there are 5 main foundations for building effective disaster communication which have been carried out in accordance with the explanation above, namely (1) Customer Focus, that precise, fast and accurate information is needed. (2) Leadership Commitment, a leader who plays a role and is responsive. (3) Situational Awareness, effective communication is based on the controlled collection, analysis and dissemination of information related to disasters. Principles of effective communication such as transparency and trustworthiness are key. (4) Media partnerships, media such as television, newspapers, radio, and others are very important media for conveying information accurately to the public. Collaboration with the media involves an understanding of the media's needs with a trained team to collaborate with the media to obtain information and disseminate it to the public.

¹²KOMPAS, 'Jokowi Instruksikan Percepatan Bantuan Dan Perbaikan Terkait Erupsi Semeru', 2021 <<https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2021/12/05/14501051/jokowi-instruksikan-percepatan-bantuan-dan-perbaikan-terkait-erupsi-semeru>>.

So how does disaster communication help the process of achieving social system goals? Namely by carrying out what has been planned, in this case how elements of society want to help work together to jointly overcome the Semeru eruption disaster. How does the government, through ministries and BNPB, communicate with the media to provide information about recommendations that must be implemented, and the public is willing to listen and implement what is socialized so that it is hoped that they can achieve common goals.

When massive and public Disaster Communication is carried out at the same time, it has implemented a social system. Because in disaster communication there are stages that involve a number of people, both volunteers, the public and the media. The socialization carried out by the government through ministries and BNPB has certainly gone through communications management, although it is acknowledged that there have been failures in communications management. The functioning of a social system is greatly influenced by the elements involved, such as government and society. However, in terms of massive communication, the government is in a superior position compared to the community. In the context of recommendations to communities affected by the Semeru eruption, it is quite good. The recommendations issued by BNPB are relatively understood, followed and listened to by the public. So that the process of rescuing and evacuating victims, which is the goal of achieving disaster communication, is successful even though it still requires a lot of evaluation for the next emergency response.

3) Communication after the Mount Semeru Eruption Disaster and the Process of Improving the Social System Order of Affected Communities.

Furthermore, post-disaster communication is also very important in the process of returning the social order to the way it was before the impact. This communication aims to provide information in the context of rehabilitation both mentally and physically. Recovery of communities that survive eruptions is one of the government's concerns after the disaster. Restoring public facilities back to an adequate level as before requires lengthy and more structured disaster communication planning. In reality, the government can provide counseling, socio-economic empowerment and restore people's social life. This activity is an activity that really requires a precise and accurate communication approach. The

strategies and models used will be in the spotlight to restore affected communities.¹³

D. CONCLUSION

In the case of natural disasters, communication is the most important right that must be protected and can be controlled by the authorities. Because with connected communication, external parties, including unaffected communities, will also know this information. For this reason, disaster communication emerged. In the research, the author found various disaster communications carried out by various parties. Since the beginning, before the disaster occurred, the government had provided initial information as basic knowledge so that it realized that Indonesia was indeed a country that was vulnerable to disasters. Through various platforms the government makes good use of it. Furthermore, when a disaster occurs, the government as the center of the social system provides instructions immediately, even before the government communicates directly to the field. Residents responded quickly and immediately took the first action that had to be taken by affected communities as a result of fairly effective pre-disaster communication. In the aftermath of a disaster, the customs and habits of Indonesian people who highly value mutual cooperation in working together make post-eruption disaster management faster and greatly simplify the recovery process. Disaster Communication is needed quickly to channel information from the government to the community or vice versa. The social system that is formed supports it. Other parties (apart from the government) also actively take part in the disaster management process

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