

- 4) Helping the public express its opinion
- 5) Exercise a supervisory function on the government

Dr. Yang said it was important to look at the practical implications of regulations. For example, in the 1980s, the editors of a certain journal were told to criticize party officials as part of a government policy to "let the people know." From this point the press began to take on the role of watchdogs. There remains, however, a great deal of ambiguity in the role of the Chinese press. Although there is vagueness on how far one can go, the press in China is freer and more open than it was prior to the economic reforms.

Mr. Andreas Harsono,
Alliance of Independent Journalists, Indonesia

Using an overhead projector, Mr. Harsono gave an overview of the political and demographic makeup of Indonesia. He provided a table which outlined the various socio-political groups and their overlapping institutions (Muslim, Nationalist and Christian, and Military).

He said that historically, the print media had been critical of the government, and somewhat left-leaning. Since 1945 the press has become more liberal. The government adopted the Japanese licensing system. No foreign ownership shares is permitted in the Indonesian press. Due to military interference in politics there is tight censorship. Foreign publications are censored before being released for sale in Indonesia.

In June 1994, the news weeklies Tempo, Detik, and Editor were closed due to their critical stance towards the government during the APEC meetings. Over 80 journalists lost their jobs or bylines, five were imprisoned and one was killed. The state sanctioned journalists' union PWI said publicly that this action was "understandable." A number of younger journalists set up an alternative union and began to establish independent publications.

Currently, there are some "relatively independent" media in Indonesia, as well as "pockets of resistance" in "middle-of-the-road," and pro-government media. The six television stations are owned by relatives or close friends of the president. An "Open Skies" policy has permitted the broadcast of foreign networks such as CNN, BBC, ABN, ABC and STAR. However, the rights to all of these are also owned by close associates of the president.

The Indonesian government has maintained a strict policy of not linking trade with human rights. In reality, however, there has been increased access to multi-media, increased exposure to foreigners, and increased contacts with the West. Political power, however, remains concentrated in the person of the president, and there is the potential for instability upon his succession.