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Mobilizing for Violence:

The Escalation and Limitation of Identity Conflicts

The Case of Lampung, Indonesia

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The Case of Lampung, Indonesia

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Following the fall of Suharto's New Order regime, identity-based violence emerged throughout the Indonesian archipelago with the ethnic cleansing in Central and West Kalimantan to the pogroms of Maluku and Central Sulawesi. Many commentators have attributed the increased violence to the weakened state institutions which allowed latent conflicts to explode from what began as seemingly minor incidents. There have been few comprehensive attempts at characterizing the processes by which identity-based violence is produced and escalated or at examining these conflicts through a bottom-up perspective. Much of this is due to the methodological problems of data collection in highly traumatized societies. This paper represents an attempt at examining the micro-processes that lead to the type of identity-based violence witnessed throughout the post-New Order Indonesia by focusing on the case of Lampung Province.

Although Lampung is not typically associated with identity-based violence, a closer examination reveals that many such stories of conflict instigation and escalation have striking similarities to the more well known cases. The vast majority of the literature on identity-based violence in Indonesia typically focuses on cases that have experienced violence at a wider, provincial level. While this is important, studies that focus on highly violent cases do not tell us what causes violence to escalate or not escalate to the provincial level. Comparisons with cases that exhibit lower levels of violence (sub-district level in the case of Lampung) are necessary to shed light on what causes violence to escalate. By better characterizing the case of Lampung, we can not only understand the processes of escalating violence from catalyst to sub-district level, but we can also then make useful comparisons with more highly escalated cases of violence.

This paper has two primary aims: 1) To characterize the processes by which individuals are mobilized for violent identity-based conflict and 2) To identify the most salient factors which limit the inter-village identity conflicts. Towards the first objective, weak state capacity to provide security coupled with hardened lines of identity are observed to have led to norms and narratives that are used to mobilize individuals into potential fighters for militias and (inter-)village vigilante groups. In particular, small incidents within a village may serve to catalyze much larger inter-village identity-conflicts. Small incidents are easily interpreted by coethnics as identity conflicts, which require individuals to align themselves with their coethnics based on these norms of solidarity. These norms and narratives as well as a lack of employment opportunities produce a large supply of young men who can be easily mobilized for violence. When coupled with a demand for security resulting from the deteriorated security situation

3

(from weakened institutions of security and justice), self-sustaining institutions of village vigilante groups and a market for paid militias arise.

To address the second aim of this paper, I then argue that elites are strategically positioned to limit the escalation of conflicts and that they are more likely to do so if they have working relationships with members of the opposed identity (transmigrant or native Lampungese) and if they have an incentive to avoid conflict. Elites are able to reshape norms of conduct through decree, social pressure and social narratives so that non-elites are less likely to join vigilante mobs. With their positions of authority, elites at the village-level are able to negotiate with each other to end violent spirals of violence and even establish mechanisms that prevent future escalation.

Key policy implications following this analysis are to explore the following possibilities: 1) Inter-village leadership forums in which best practices on mediation are shared, local leaders can forge working relationships with each other and problem-solve on common issues, 2) Self-policing which exploits social pressure to self-regulate individuals from violence and crime, and 3) Progressive, equitable and productive investments that diversify employment opportunities for segments of the population that are higher risks for violence especially young men. The first recommendation helps stop violence and its escalation once it has begun by fostering communication and coordination among elites. The second recommendation of self-policing would help prevent small episodes of crime from being reinterpreted by existing norms and narratives as requiring mobilization along identity. The third recommendation of diversifying employment opportunities would help in reducing the supply of potential combatants available to vigilante mobs and particularly to militias.

Acknowledgements

1. Introduction

"Other transmigrant villages in the area had heard that the four neighboring [indigenous] villages were planning to attack our village. The heads of about fifteen transmigrant villages called me over the radio with offers of providing fighters to help protect our village within a day and many began coming to our village."
--Village Chief, transmigrant village in Way Kanan District

"The police never did anything to stop [transmigrant fighters] from attacking us. [The fighters from an indigenous people's organization] came to help our struggle and helped defend us. Lampungese from far away came to help fight the transmigrants."
--Teenage Boy, Lampungese village in Lampung Timur District

"We need to seriously consider and adopt sufficient measures so that the requests of citizens to defend themselves, especially in certain parts of the country which have security problems, can be given a just place in our system."[1]

--President Megawati Sukarnoputri

Since the fall of Suharto's New Order regime in Indonesia, identity conflicts[2] have cropped up throughout the archipelago into the semi-anarchic conditions left by the withdrawal of the central state. Although the most severe identity conflicts have occurred in Maluku, North Maluku, East Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, and Central Sulawesi, conflicts appear to be occurring throughout the country, albeit at lower intensity, at the village and inter-village levels. Such conflicts often are precipitated by a small spark, which sets off a cascade of escalating events, from a single incident into a broad conflict. The Maluku conflict between Christian and Muslim communities appears to have started out as a scuffle at a bus-stop. In Kalimantan the conflict between the indigenous Dayaks and migrant Madurese can be traced back to a couple of murders. The evolution from such small events into devastating identity conflicts has resulted in over thousands of dead, over 1.3 million internally displaced persons (IDPs)[3], millions of dollars in lost economic activity and immeasurable psychological and emotional damage.

The question arises, then, why have these conflicts escalated? Why did they not stay localized to the small events that precipitated the conflicts in the first place? One common explanation is that the withdrawal of the state since the fall of Suharto has left a power vacuum in which the state no longer has the capacity to maintain the monopoly of violence. Thus, in such an anarchic setting, individuals and communities

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[1] Reuters, July 1, "Indonesia Hints at Civilian Militias in Some Areas"
[2] Here I use the term identity conflict to refer to intrastate conflict between two collectivities defined by exclusive identities. I include ethnic, communal, national and even migrant/indigenous conflicts within this definition of identity conflict as they can exhibit similar characteristics.
[3] United Nations (2002)

must provide for their own security, creating conditions where force is applied to ensure one community's security, simultaneously threatening the security of another community.[4] While this explanation predicts that conflict will occur, it does not shed light on which communities will be involved in such conflicts. In addition, this explanation does not address why there is great variation in intensity of conflicts throughout the Indonesian archipelago, despite the fact that similar anarchic conditions exist throughout the country since the fall of Suharto's authoritarian regime.

Much of the conflict research in Indonesia has concentrated on the major conflict areas mentioned above.[5] This has resulted in a case selection process of selecting on the dependent variable (i.e. escalated conflict),[6] while relatively little attention has been paid to areas with moderate or low levels of conflict. Thus, there is a dearth of knowledge about what factors help to mitigate conflicts and a lack of useful comparisons identifying the mechanisms that lead to conflict. This research paper aims at helping to fill this gap by examining the case of Lampung, Indonesia, a province that has experienced some degree of escalated identity conflict, but not to the extent of the most severe cases of identity conflict. Specifically, the main question I address in this work is:

What factors limit the escalation of identity conflicts in Lampung?

In order to address this question, it is important first to understand the dynamics of conflict and its escalation in Lampung. A key requirement essential to understanding the dynamics of identity conflicts is that individuals can be mobilized along lines of identity. I attempt to characterize the mechanisms of collective mobilization for the objective of providing security, which may then be used as a collectivity to escalate conflicts from limited incidents into wider, more dangerous conditions.

This paper is divided into two parts: the first attempts to characterize the dynamics of conflict in Lampung, specifically focusing on the formation and mobilization of conflicting collectivities through a

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[4] This is commonly referred to as the Security Dilemma. See Posen (1993) for a treatment of the security dilemma in the context of ethnic conflict.

[5] Notable exceptions include Madden and Barron (2003) and Smith (2004).

[6] Asking this question of the cases in which escalated identity warfare actually occurred makes sense in theory because the dependent variable actually exhibits the value we want to explain (escalation). However, empirically these cases present measurement difficulties that arise from the fact that escalated conflicts become so complex and fluid that piecing together a coherent story can be an unwieldy task. In addition, once identity conflict has extended to the macro-level it is difficult to separate local-effects and macro-effects. For these reasons, I have chosen to study the case of Lampung, a province in Indonesia that exhibits low-intensity identity conflicts in the hope that lessons about the escalation of violent identity conflict can be gleaned from simpler sources of data. The case of Lampung can also give us a picture of intermediate levels of escalation, a necessary precursor to wider escalation.

process-tracing methodology;[7] the second attempts to show how, given these conflict dynamics, specific factors limit (or foster) the escalation of conflicts through a comparative case methodology.

1.1. Hypothesis

This section describes two hypotheses: the first explains how large groups of individuals are mobilized along lines of identity and the second identifies factors that limit or foster the escalation of conflicts between opposing groups. Briefly, the mobilization of identity groups for violence in Lampung can be described in the hypothesis below in which there are two types of mobilizations: 1) Village Alliances and 2) Militias. The following hypothesis describes how identities and their norms are both constructed and exploited to mobilize individuals, forming village alliances and militias that can be used for conflict and violence:

> A weak state authority coupled with strong identity divisions leads to insecurity and chauvinistic norms, respectively, which in turn fosters the mobilization of large groups of individuals along lines of identity. These groups (vigilante groups of village alliances and militias) are further driven by security dilemma behavior (a spiral where one group increases their security forces, causing the opposing group to increase their own) and, for militias, an emergent market for security, which build their capacity for even larger groups.

Given this description of the dynamics of conflict escalation in Lampung, I offer the following hypothesis on the factors that mitigate the escalation of inter-village conflicts:

> Areas where elites of different villages have strong ties across identity lines, incentives to cooperate and the willingness and ability to change chauvinistic perceptions and norms are more likely to be able to mitigate the escalation of inter-village conflicts than those that lack these factors.

I give support for my characterization of the dynamics of conflict escalation in the first empirical section below using process-tracing. I then use comparative methods to identify specific factors in support of the cross-cutting factors hypothesis.

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[7] Here, I am interested in the factors that raise the likelihood of larger conflicts occurring. I emphasize this point because of empirical evidence in Indonesia (See Barron and Madden (2003) and Smith (2003)) which shows that larger conflicts between identities appears to erupt from small grievances. These small grievances require a mechanism that mobilizes larger groups of individuals in order to escalate into larger violent conflicts. The first part of this paper attempts to address this question.

2. Approach

My research process is necessarily iterative, weaving deductive and inductive approaches throughout, while being, fundamentally, empirically driven. This helps to ensure that it is empirically tenable and theoretically progressive. I use an interpretivist approach for tracing the process of my theory, piecing together the larger story of how identity conflict escalates in Lampung, Indonesia. This approach is most appropriate in identifying and analyzing the interplay of identities, norms, duties and narratives that are central to understanding this issue.

This approach to understanding identity-based mobilization is bottom-up, based on the observation that wider conflicts appear to have bottom-up roots. The hypothesis is therefore one couched in bottom-up perspectives and thus relies on empirical and theoretical methodologies that are best suited for analysis that helps to explain and verify micro-level behavior that have macro-effects. The main source of data is ethnographic data which I collected from June to August 2003 in Lampung, Indonesia using interviews and focus group methods. I synthesize these data to provide support for my hypothesis through the method of process-tracing. Because the case of Lampung has not exhibited escalated violence at the provincial level, I focus my attention on the dynamics of escalation at the inter-village level.

3. Empirical Evidence

3.1. Empirical Section I: The Dynamics of Collective Mobilization and Conflict in Lampung

In this section, I attempt to characterize how conflicts escalate in Lampung and how identity is invoked to mobilize large groups of individuals and communities in escalated conflicts. As mentioned earlier, I use process-tracing as an empirical strategy to verify my characterization of conflict. This section serves both to offer an explanation for collective mobilization in violent conflict as well as to sketch the contextual background necessary for the analysis in the next section where I explore the factors that limit the escalation of conflict.

In this section, I attempt to address the question: 'What social factors foster the collective mobilization for violence?"

Escalated identity conflict requires the opposition of at least two collectivities with disparate goals. In Lampung mobilized collectivities take one of two forms: inter-village alliances and identity-based militias. What then causes individuals to choose to join and fight for such groups? Individuals must identify with collective goals enough to join such collectivities and assume the risk of possible conflict. I address this process in this section, which is summarized in the following diagram:

Figure 1: Social Factors in Mobilizing for Violence
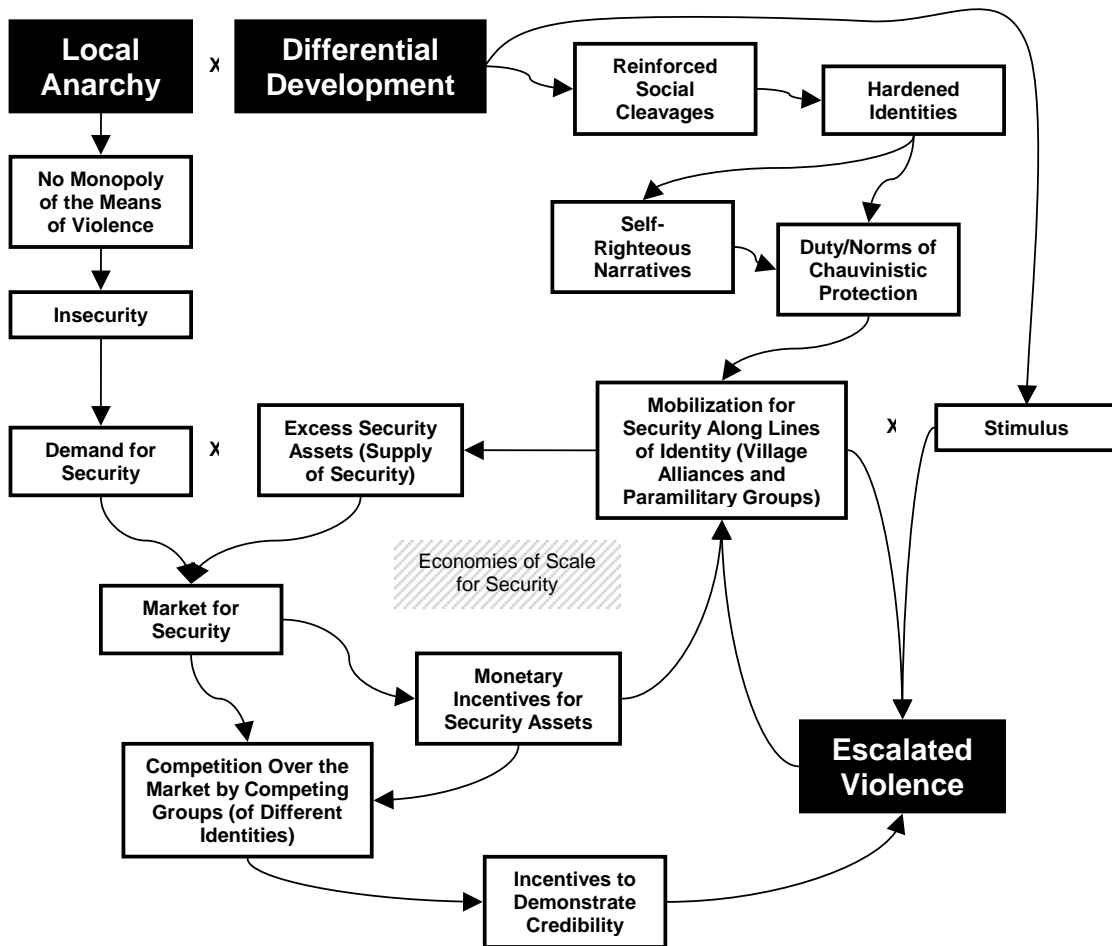
3.1.1. Background: Lampung Province

10

Lampung Province is located on the southeastern tip of the island of Sumatra near the western edge of Java island. The provincial economy is driven mainly by plantation agriculture, some tourist industry and manufacturing. Despite its strategic location between Sumatra and Java islands, Lampung's economy has a lower per capita income compared with other provinces in Indonesia. In particular monthly earnings in Lampung were at 95 percent of the national average according to the ILO.[8] According to the government (BPS), 22.6 percent of Lampung's population fell below the poverty line in 2003.[9] While the unemployment rate is reported at 9 percent in 2003,[10] these data do not reflect the number of underemployed or the likelihood that a significant proportion of these unemployed are young men (a key population in political violence).

Lampung's native communities controlled the land through institutions called *margas*, which were informal administrative units who decided on the use of land among other social functions. Migrants who moved into the area had to obtain permission from the *marga* in order to utilize any piece of land. At any time, according to the indigenous communities, the land could be reclaimed by the *marga* and the migrants would have to vacate the land. The government's transmigration program resettled large numbers of Javanese and Balinese migrants by purchasing land from the *margas* and giving incentives to migrants to participate in the program. According to the government policy, by accepting payment from the government, the indigenous communities lost their claims to these lands.[11] As a result of natural migration patterns and the government's transmigration program, Lampung was the destination of the third highest total of net migrants (closely behind Jakarta and West Java) with 1.65 million.[12] The combination of poverty, large numbers of recent migrants and disagreements over entitlement has led to serious tensions between migrant and indigenous communities in Lampung. However, Suharto's repressive government prevented many of these disagreements from surfacing until the end of his regime.

3.1.2. The Withdrawal of the State

In order to understand escalation dynamics of conflict in Lampung it is useful to note the historical record in the province. Prior to the fall of President Suharto's New Order regime in 1997, dynamics of escalated violence appear to have been far less. Rather, a common view expressed is that people were far more concerned about state-sponsored violence rather than inter-identity violence.

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[8] Dhanani, Shafiq and Iyanatul Islam, 6.
[9] See Selected Indicators of Indonesia. http://www.bps.go.id/leaflet/leaflet-may04-eng.pdf
[10] According to BPS, see http://www.bps.go.id/leaflet/leaflet-may04-eng.pdf
[11] Noveria, Mita, 2002.
[12] According to BPS, see http://www.bps.go.id/sector/population/table8.shtml

Following the fall of Suharto's regime there has been a marked increase in violent conflict throughout the Indonesian archipelago as well as in the province of Lampung. Many commentators have attributed this to the lack of a credible security apparatus and government capacity to manage these conflicts. In Lampung many informants believed that violence occurred because there is no longer the fear of punishment by the police or army. Since 1997, there have been at least 23 police stations in Lampung that have been burned to the ground by mobs for arbitrary punishment or lack of law enforcement.[13] In addition to the weakening of the central authorities, there has been a concomitant devolution of government functions and powers to the district-level following President Habibie's decentralization legislation in 1999 and subsequent redistricting. There is therefore a lack of local government capacity to fill the void of central government power. Indeed there seems to be a strong correlation between the occurrence of violence and the weakening of the central authority. I call this withdrawal of the central government authority in the provinces local anarchy. While this correlation appears to be undeniable, it fails to explain what factors and mechanisms cause incidences of violence to escalate into wider conflicts.

3.1.3. The Hardening of Identities

Identifying the causal mechanism of escalation of identity conflicts in Lampung requires another factor than just weak government authority. My review of intervillage identity conflicts showed that in all of the cases there were hardened identities with norms to protect members of one's own group and a grievance over which both sides were willing to fight. While hardened identities are a factor in explaining conflict, it is more useful to think about what caused identities to form and then harden. Identities are not static, but are constructed--otherwise there is no explanation for the origin of a 'transmigrant identity'. Without treating identities as dynamic, an explanation for identity-based conflict escalation would be incomplete and would not offer the range of policy options that may be necessary in addressing related issues.

What are the main factors affecting identity formation? What identities seem to resonate the most in Lampung? Why do divisive identities, such as migrant status, seem to take precedence over inclusive identities, such as being Indonesian? In Lampung individuals appear to identify with identities based on the degree to which the identity is useful in providing comprehensive security (economic, political and physical). That is, those whose communities become stronger internally when faced with a (perceived or real) common struggle, causing individuals to identify with the identity that describes these communities.

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[13] According to Damar, a women's NGO based in Lampung, which conducted conflict research in 2002

> *"Our destinies are tied together having struggled together to build this village from the beginning. It is*
> *our duty to fight together to protect our village."*

<div align="right">

Man, mid-twenties, Umpu Bakti

</div>

Security as well as land is seen as a collective issue, to which every group member should contribute because of external threats from the other groups. Shared struggles are coupled with social cleavages that make groups easily identified (e.g. by ethnicity, migrant-status or gender). In Lampung these social cleavages are systematically created through differential development of migrant communities vis-à-vis indigenous Lampungese. Throughout the early 1980s, the central government's transmigration program gave incentives (free land, housing, food for 1 year and other assistance) to migrants from other, more crowded parts of Indonesia in order to encourage development in less populated areas where natural resources were being 'under-utilized'. The result was indigenous and migrant communities that had different resources with which to develop economically as well as a reinforcement of social cleavages as homogenous villages cropped up with migrant villages generally performing much better than indigenous villages. In turn, these social cleavages reinforce social capital linking individuals, villages and militias of the same identities.

3.1.4. Norms and Duties

Village Alliances and the Norms and Duties that Sustain Them

Being a part of one's village and identity allowed many individuals to draw upon others who were part of the village or identity in times of need. This includes times when crops may be bad or when social events needed to be held. Individuals could also draw upon their village and identity-based social networks in times of crime and conflict.[14] Following the Suharto era, these social networks have taken on added importance as the institutions of governance have lost their ability to maintain security. Village and identity networks have thus become much stronger and have strengthened in order to confront the rising insecurity in the area. Concomitant with the post-Suharto era, the Indonesian economy struggled, leading to a loss of jobs and rising crime.

A common story of inter-village conflict in Lampung is as follows: a villager from a Lampungese village in desperation robs a villager from a migrant village. The migrant village locates the perpetrator of the crime and lynches him to "teach him a lesson" and create credible threats of violence against future perpetrators. The Lampungese village from which the perpetrator came becomes alarmed by the incommensurate and arbitrary punishment levied by the migrant village, draws upon its villagers and

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[14] See Varshney (2002) for a treatment of the effects of social capital in mitigating ethnic conflict.

mobilizes a mob of its own to attack the migrant village. Observing the rising threat, the migrant village calls upon other migrant villages in the area to aid them militarily in protecting their security. The Lampunese village then calls upon other Lampungese villages into another alliance to balance the security threat of the migrant alliance. This should seem familiar to those who know the international relations literature. This phenomenon is a security dilemma in which one side's actions toward improving its own security leads to greater perceived insecurity felt by the other side. In such a process, villagers began to take security into their own hands in responding to the rising insecurity, making revenge a normalized part of "how things are done in Lampung" and lynchings a deterrent against crime and attacks on fellow villagers.

> *"Thefts had become commonplace after the [monetary crisis]…we needed to kill the thief so [Lampungese] would stop stealing from us."*
>
> --Transmigrant man, forties, Negara Jaya

Villagers can then draw upon norms of violence and revenge to help mobilize fellow villagers and group members for violence.

> *"The tradition here is to avenge the death of one's brother. Like karma, souls should be paid with souls. Blood paid with blood."*
>
> --Man, early-thirties, Negeri Besar

Furthermore, villagers exhibit norms of chauvinistic protection. That is, avenging one's brother or villager is expected in the tight-knit communities of rural Lampung. As documented in the previous section, these tight-knit communities define themselves by their shared identities (usually migrant and indigenous Lampungese status) and sense of shared struggle. The norm of protecting members of one's village or identity group is a survival mechanism, connecting individual welfare to the collective welfare of the village. Individuals may find it reasonable to fight for someone else if there is a social norm which ensures that such obliges others to reciprocate in times of need. Villagers who fight on behalf of fellow villagers expect to be repaid later if they themselves face insecurity from being attacked by an outsider. In addition, there are more incentives for individuals to join in a lynch mob or fighting groups in response to a common threat. In such cases, appeals to group duty and obligation are further enhanced.

These norms of chauvinistic protection are exhibited by all of the villages I visited, including both Lampungese and transmigrant. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that these norms are not specific to one identity group, but may be a product of the security and social environment in Lampung.

14

This same obligation for villagers to fight for the village is seen in an obligation for villages to fight on behalf of other villages, sharing the same identity. Thus villages of the same identity come to the aid of similar villages, facing attack by villages of a different identity.

> *"10-15 Javanese migrant villages contacted me through the two-way radio with offers of fighters to help defend my village. I told them, 'not yet, maybe later', because there was still a possibility of resolving it peacefully. Had they come to my village, I would have had difficulty maintaining control over the situation because it was hard enough holding my own villagers back."*
>
> --Village chief, Negara Jaya

The escalation of fighting alliances from the village level (in which fighters belong to only one village) to the inter-village level (with fighters from many villages united by a common identity) represents a dangerous step in the ability of individual elites to limit violence. As the village chief of transmigrant Negara Jaya explained to me, his ability to prevent his villagers from attacking members of the Lampungese village was based on the respect and authority the village chief received. His authority would not necessarily be respected by fighters from other villages, who answer to their own chiefs. The village chief maintains influence over his fellow villagers because they have a stake in remaining on good terms with him. Outsiders, however, have less at stake. When many villages are involved, collective mobilization and the maintenance of peace both involve complex negotiations with various groups having divergent stakes. Such multiparty negotiations are much more difficult to negotiate than village leaders negotiating bilaterally on behalf of their constituents with leaders from opposing villages.

Militias and the Norms that Foster Their Growth

A similar dynamic is seen in the urban areas, especially in the capital city Bandar Lampung in which rather than a series of village-alliances as the manifestation of collective mobilization, there is an increase in the size of militias or paramilitary organizations. Lampungese react to increasing perceptions of insecurity vis-à-vis migrants by joining Lampungese paramilitary organizations and vice versa.

> *"I feel a sense of brotherhood with the other fighters. If they need help I will help and if I need help, I know they will help me."*
>
> --Participant, late-teens, Paramilitary fighting organization

As in the case of village alliances and mob formation, urban youths rely on bonds of identity to ensure group protection in the insecure environment of the city. In this way, urban youths comprise a ready target for recruiting new militia members.

3.1.5. Self-Righteous Narratives

In addition to norms and duties, narratives are used by elites to motivate individuals to join a collectivity. Self-righteous narratives are dangerous because of the degree to which they not only make individuals feel more justified in attacking others, but they also make others feel more threatened, often eliciting the greater mobilization of opposing identities as well as the use or development of counter narratives.

Often these narratives, which integrate identity, duty and shared struggle, become reified by being retold many times by respected members of the community. These stories become a powerful tool by which individuals can be motivated to join security groups, forge inter-village alliances and even go to war against another group.[15] The elites who advance these stories either believe them themselves or use them to their benefit for an ulterior motive. As a young man from the village of Umpu Bakti said regarding fighting over land the chief claimed is their land by rights, "The chief told us we must be willing to fight for our land or we would lose it." A large group of young men from his village then organized into a mob and mobilized to attack the neighboring village. The potential beneficiary of winning the conflict would be the village chief, who could then sell it at a high price and keep a large portion of the profits. Thus, it is evident that a narrative which gives a sense of entitlement over a contested resource can be instrumental in mobilizing individuals to join chauvinistic groups to attack others.

3.1.6. The Emergence of a Market for Security

During non-combat periods, village alliances and militias can be conceived of as an excess of security assets. In the case of militia groups, this excess can be seen as a supply of security, which when present with the demand for security due to the insecurity caused by anarchy, creates a market for security. Security services are bought and sold as commodities. Militias use their 'security assets' (mobilized and trained young men) in protection rackets to earn large amounts of income. The formation of a market for security creates an additional (monetary) incentive for further mobilization and growth of paramilitary organizations. Independent gangsters are consolidated into these militias at the risk of being killed by them. There are increasing returns-to-scale for militias as greater military strength leads to greater power and credibility, which in turn leads to greater monetary rewards, which can be used to recruit more

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[15] See Brass (1997) for a treatment of how norms and discourses have institutionalized ethnic violence in Hindu-Muslim riots in northern India.

members and add to militarization by these militias. Eventually, expanding militias run up against each other as do village alliances.

Militias or Mobs?

In urban areas, militias are able to sustain themselves financially because there is enough cash on hand in the population to facilitate the market as a means of meeting supply (of security) with demand (of security). Shop owners and richer individuals will pay the militias for protection racket services (or they may be extorted). Militias can then gain resources to fund their activities as well as give financial incentives for some members to join. In the villages, militias are rare as cash is simply much scarcer than in urban areas. This cash-scarcity and the low density of the population make militias much less profitable in rural areas. It is less profitable to form standing security forces like militias than to form *ad hoc* mobs and inter-village alliances to provide security. There is no significant market for security in the villages. Instead, the private response to insecurity relies more heavily on norms of duty and obligation to protect one's own village or fellow members of a shared identity.

Credibility

Alliances and militias both have an incentive to establish credibility by showing their force. In the villages, allied villagers make examples out of those suspected of committing a crime such as theft, rape or murder by vigilante lynchings.

> *"Motorcycle robberies happen to us so much that we've become very tired of it. Eighty percent of the time it's someone from one of the Lampungese villages. The police don't do anything about it—they really can't do anything anyway. So whenever we hear that it has happened people yell 'begal!'[16]' and ring the alarm bell, which draws people into the streets to try to catch the thief. It's usually too hard to catch them, but when we do catch them, the only way to keep it from happening again is to burn them—that way they don't come back and other thieves see that it's not worth it."*
>
> --Village Secretary, Forties, Gunung Makar

Such examples are common and, in addition to a sense of justice, are partly intended to serve as deterrents to people from villages outside of their alliance. Often village versus village vigilantism is not only a way to achieve justice on behalf of the attacking village, it is seen as necessary to deter further attacks by the other village.

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[16] Begal refers to the theft or robbery of a motorcycle—a common occurrence in Lampung

17

Similarly, militias are concerned with demonstrating credibility because they can draw power merely demonstrating their willingness and ability to inflict hurt others. The largest militia first gained prominence by putting down demonstrators against the governor.

> *"After the request came from the government, I dispatched about 3000 of our fighters to scare away the 7000 protestors who were there. It was a great success…Our membership really began to increase after people heard about that incident."*
>
> --Head Master, Militia

Following this, their recruiting accelerated due to the visibility and demonstrated capacity of the militia. They also maintain credibility by periodically threatening and killing independent gangsters (preman) unless they join militias.

> *"[Gangsters] are afraid of us. When our organization moves into an area, [they] leave because they are afraid of what may happen if they clash with us. They know that we can just kill them if one of our members is injured by them. Instead of clashing with us, they just decide to join us. We're happy to help them respect law and order. Once they join us, we give them security jobs, guarding various locations instead of being involved in crime."*
>
> --Head Master, Militia

Furthermore, militias maintain credibility by periodically doing a show-of-force. I witnessed such a show-of-force in June 2003, when approximately 50 large trucks, each filled with up to 20 uniformed militia fighters, paraded through the streets of the provincial capital, Bandar Lampung.

These demonstrations of credibility are effective in establishing fear of these organizations and thereby enhancing their coercive capacities. Many young men either despise but fear them, or envy their strength and wish to join such militias.

> *"Even after graduating from a vocational school three years ago, I still haven't managed to find a job. I'll take anything…[This organization] has given me something to do and has helped me stay disciplined."*
>
> --Participant, early-twenties, Paramilitary fighting organization

> *"I joined the organization because I wanted to learn to fight like Jet Li."*
>
> --Participant, late-teens, Paramilitary fighting organization

18

Those who join militias choose the militias based mostly on how closely they identify with the organization—often along the indigenous-transmigrant line. The largest militia is, as the headmaster stated, 95 percent transmigrant. Its rival, is based on Lampungese pre-eminence and is overwhelmingly comprised of indigenous Lampungese.

Militias, however, have an additional incentive to demonstrate credibility as they compete with opposing militia groups over the same market for security. By demonstrating their strength through various shows-of-force, demand for their 'protective services' increases, enabling them to earn more money. As power is a relational property, i.e. one group's power is measured in relation to another's, those who can demonstrate their strength relative to a competing group will have greater credibility. This greater credibility translates into greater ability to earn a greater share of the security market. During a show-of-force on its 5-year anniversary one powerful militia earned Rp130 million from businesses and wealthy individuals for 'protection' from crime.

3.2. Empirical Section II: The Organization of Violence

Section 3.1 has presented a macro-level view of how various social factors interact to mobilize various collectivities for violence in Lampung. While this view identifies various underlying social factors that could be addressed towards the prevention and resolution of violent conflict, it does not provide insights on the specific mechanisms of collective mobilization. That is, it does not describe how, specifically, violence is organized as a social process in Lampung. This section asks the following question about the process of organizing violence:

How are large numbers of individuals collectively mobilized for violent purposes?

While the underlying factors outlined in section 3.1 foster the mobilization of militias and inter-village vigilante groups, the specific processes by which individuals are mobilized and recruited differ depending on whether they are inter-village vigilante groups or militias. Below, I describe how these groups are typically mobilized in Lampung.

3.2.1. The Organization of Mobs and Inter-Village Alliances (Vigilante Groups)

The three representative case studies (Appendices A, B, C) of inter-village conflict share a similar mode of organization. The formation of these vigilante groups can be described as a three phase process: 1)

19

Motivation, 2) Village-level Organization, and 3) Escalation. I summarize this process in the diagram below:

Figure 2: Organizing Village Vigilante Groups

1) Motivation

- Stimulus
- Grievance
- Self-Righteous Narrative

2) Village Organization

- Young Men with Grievances
- Provocateurs
- Elites with Incentives for Conflict or Without Capacity to Stop Own Villagers

3) Escalation
(To Inter-Ethnic Level)

- Rapid Communication with Other Villages
- Social Capital (or Alliances) with Other Villages of the Same Identity
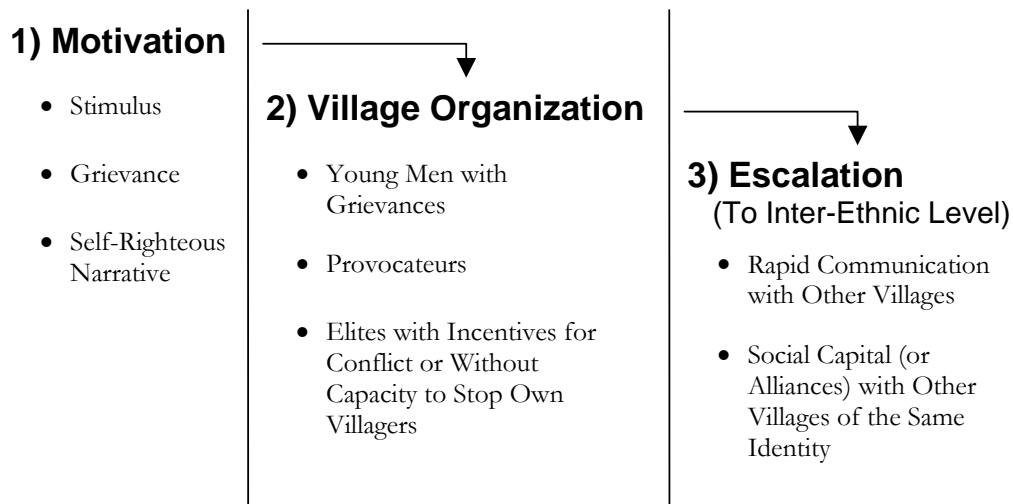
The organization of vigilante groups is generally a spontaneous response by villagers individually rather than a premeditated decision by the elite. Villagers will have been primed by narratives that describe the pertinent grievances. These grievances motivate individuals to join others in fighting to rectify or redress those grievances. These grievances are exposed and sometimes exaggerated and blamed on other villages or identity groups through self-righteous narratives. In such conditions, a stimulus such as a robbery which may also result from perceived grievances (e.g. 'The government gave *them* lot's of development aid, so *we* should be allowed to take some of what they have.') can easily become a significant event that catalyzes tensions between groups into violent conflict.

For young men with grievances, provocateurs (who may gain prestige or influence from conflict) and/or elites with incentives for conflict (or the inability to stop it) such stimuli represent opportunities to potentially settle those grievances, gain influence by provoking conflict and take advantage of incentives for conflict, respectively. This process raises conflicts from the individual level (e.g. between the robber and the victim) to an inter-village level (e.g. between the robber's village and the victim's village).

Once the conflict has started, some elites may calculate that they can draw on outside resources and help in order to tip the balance of conflict in their favor. They may ask for reinforcements from other villages

by casting what was a fight between two villages as an inter-ethnic conflict. By so doing, elites can draw upon social capital along lines of identity to increase the number of fighters on their own side. This is the process of escalation, which transforms inter-village conflicts into ethnic conflict. It requires a fast means of communication, usually either a plea for help over two-way radio or a motorcycle messenger to visit nearby villages and ask for support. Whereas elites in the inter-village stage still maintained control over their own villagers, once outside fighters come, there is no longer a recognized leader and managing fighters on one's own side becomes difficult. This is a dangerous situation as there is no longer a cohesive head with whom to negotiate.

3.2.2. The Organization of Militias

The organization of militias differs significantly from that of village vigilante groups. Structurally, village mobs and inter-village vigilante groups are amorphous, lacking any formal structure, sometimes even lacking a recognized leader. On the other hand, militias have a static, formal structure. It is thus possible to show the structure of militia organizations (although there is no uniform structure) as shown in figure 3. It is clear is that the organizations are hierarchical: The headmaster uses his charisma and power to order lower members including generals and officers. These officers in turn direct the activities of rank-and-file members for activities such as training, collecting money or violence. The headmaster raises money from various 'patrons' who either pay for security services or extortion fees. The advisor manages operational aspects of the headmaster's affairs.

Figure 3: Structure of a Militia
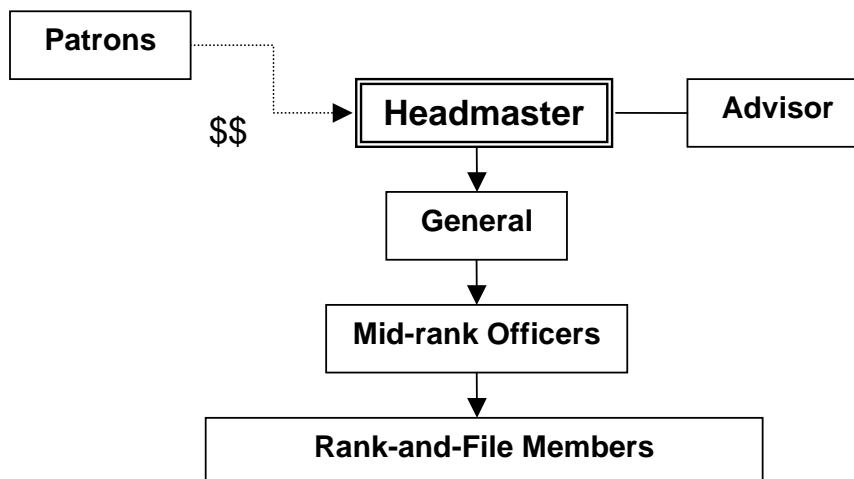
Motivation: Incentives and Discipline

The *modus operandi* of the militia examined for this report was one of fear and patronage. Those at the top of the organization (headmaster and general) are feared by those below. In particular, mid-ranking officers and rank-and-file members referred to the frightening magic that the headmaster employs to control the organization. Lower-level members are also given inducements in the form of money and the ability to use the organization's name as a means of raising money (such as through protection rackets).

Recruitment

Rank-and-file members of the militias are recruited from the large pool of un- and under-employed young men. Many members of the militia are, according to several informants, former local gangsters (*preman*) who used extortion and other forms of crime as a means of income. The militia forces these local gangsters to join them by threatening to kill them. When militias move into an area, they then coopt the protection rackets of the local gangsters by forcing them to join.

> *"Preman are afraid of us. When our organization moves into an area, the preman leave because they*
> *are afraid of what may happen if they clash with us. They know that we can just kill them if one of our*
> *members is injured by them. Instead of clashing with us, they just decide to join us. We're happy to*
> *help them respect law and order. Once they join us, we give them security jobs, guarding various*
> *locations instead of being involved in crime."*
>
> --Head Master, Paramilitary Fighting Organization

Other former gangsters use the increased clout of association with powerful militias as a means of enhancing their extortion abilities. Still others join militias to protect themselves from attacks by members of other ethnicities. The militias, which are very ethnically homogeneous, can appear as a means of security in the face of antagonism and perceived threats by members of other ethnicities.

3.3. Empirical Section III: Factors That Mitigate the Escalation of Inter-Village Conflict

Inter-village conflict is not uniformly distributed throughout the province of Lampung despite weak state authority throughout. Why do some areas of the province have a much greater degree of conflict than others? Answering this may shed light on prospects for the prevention and mitigation of conflict. In this section, I attempt to isolate the most salient factors that limit the escalation of inter-village conflict in

Lampung, given the dynamics of conflict characterized in the previous section.[17] I argue that conflict is less likely to escalate where elites of different villages have:

- Positive interactions across identity lines (cross-cutting elites)
- Incentives to cooperate
- Willingness and ability to change chauvinistic perceptions and norms.
- A clear understanding of the connections between norms governing individual behavior and the escalation of violence

Although establishing the rule-of-law through a more effective, transparent and responsive state apparatus would do much to improve the environment of conflict in Lampung, such a solution is difficult to implement in reality. Such a grand recommendation is not easily practicable and is less useful as an input to policy—albeit an important long-term goal. It is a built-in bias of this paper to focus on factors and recommendations that lie outside of the traditional realm of government intervention. As such, I focus on bottom-up factors and solutions that communities themselves have exhibited or attempted that would work as another entrypoint for policymakers. These bottom-up strategies, ideally would work in conjunction with reforms toward establishing the rule-of-law in state institutions. My empirical strategy is comparative analysis of various inter-village conflicts observed in Lampung.

As I have shown in the previous section, individuals are mobilized to join as fighters of village alliances and militias when insecurity is coupled with hardened identities, their duties of identity and the narratives that motivate action. This explanation of collective mobilization is consistent with the hypothesis here that elites' crosscutting interactions and their perceptions and norms significantly impact the escalation of conflicts.

Once formed, how collectivities interact with each other depends on how they were formed into cohesive groups in the first place. More concretely, to understand why a group of transmigrant villages fights a group of Lampungese villages requires understanding how transmigrants see themselves in relation to Lampungese and vice versa. That is, different factors contribute to how the 'transmigrant' identity is formed in opposition to the 'Lampungese' identity, which can be used by elites of both identities in their narratives to engage in conflict.

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[17] Although I explored the dynamics of collective mobilization for both village alliances and militias in the previous section, I choose to focus only on intervillage conflict in this section because there is a lack of data on conflicts between militia groups.

23

3.3.1. The Importance of Elites

In Lampung's villages, hierarchy is pervasive. In Lampungese villages, a group of a few Peningbang, who are leaders by birth, are the most influential members of the community. In transmigrant villages, the village chief (or Village chief) and hamlet chiefs are usually the community leaders. Lampungese and transmigrant communities defer to elites in many aspects of social life from political decisions (e.g. local governance) to economic decisions (e.g. the development and use of infrastructure) to cultural roles (e.g. sanctioning of marriages). Many aspects of conflict and its management are also left to the decisions of elites, such as administering justice, relations with other villages, security patrols and even the decision to attack other villages. Thus it is clear that elites play a central role in the instigation, escalation and restraint of inter-village conflicts.

Beyond just the structural sources of power by elites, it is important to note their influence on norms, duties and narratives. Lampungese villages are governed nominally by the village chief, but *de facto* by the Peningbang. Decrees by Peningbang are taken as local laws and the ideas and stories are given great weight. Peningbang have the powerful ability to ostracize members of the community (a harsh penalty in this close-knit society).

3.3.2. The Shaping of Norms

Already I have shown that duties that come from identity are important to collective mobilization, but it is important to understand how these duties are formed. Although norms and duties, including those of fighting for one's village or identity, are formed through complex cultural processes, elites are very influential in shaping such norms and duties.

In the context of weakening state capacity, many villagers I encountered explained that the relevance of local elites is much greater than even the state in terms of their impact on the lives of villagers.

> *"In this village, the Peningbang Marga are the most respected voices. The government must ask their approval on most issues because the original people here will only follow what the Peningbang Marga mandate."*
>
> --ex-Village Chief, Blambangan Umpu

Inter-Village Chiefs' Meeting and the Reshaping of Norms

In Jabung village, following an extremely tense conflict set off by the attempted lynching of suspected motorcycle thiefs, the village chief formed an inter-village organization of chiefs in which elites would meet to prevent the escalation of vigilante lynchings into wider inter-village conflicts. Village chiefs and Peningbang from transmigrant and Lampungese villages all agreed to try to stop the practice of vigilante lynchings and, instead, turn the suspects into the suspects' village chief so that his/her own chief would punish the suspect. The village chiefs communicated this agreement to their villagers. Whereas prior to the meeting, vigilante justice was the dutiful response to a motorcycle theft, in a recent theft, the suspect was, instead, arrested and punished by his own chief.

Although the intense fighting may also have deterred the villagers from making rash decisions such as lynching, the fact that arrested individual was subsequently brought to his own chief for punishment demonstrates that elites do appear to have an effect on the norm of vigilantism in Lampung. One important caveat to this observation is that this system requires the continued cooperation of village chiefs on this new system of justice. If one village stops practicing this emerging norm, it undermines the incentive for other villages to continue practicing the norm of punishing one's own villagers. In addition, if it proves ineffective at stopping crime, communities may resort again to vigilantism, thus possibly restarting a cycle of escalation and the breakdown of nonviolent norms.

3.3.3. Construction and Use of Self-Righteous Narratives

As important to mobilizing villages and individuals to fight are narratives that self-righteously justify and encourage violence against other groups. Narratives among Lampungese villages abound that point to the unequal distribution of government aid to transmigrant villages, which some Lampungese villagers use to justify robbing transmigrants. Similarly, transmigrant narratives argue that Lampungese are criminals and incapable of productive work. These stories are used to justify vigilante lynchings which are intended to deter Lampungese from committing robbery.

Again, as in the formation of norms, elites are able to propagate as well as dispel narratives much more effectively than non-elites. In some cases elites help to construct and use stories for personal political and economic gains. Elites may also use their pulpit to dispel the us-against-them, self-righteous narratives can often be used to justify attacks on other groups.

Elite Manipulation Through Narratives

In the case of the transmigrant village of Umpu Bakti, the village chief used his leadership position as a pulpit from which to create and propagate a story about that the neighboring Lampungese villagers from Blambangan Umpu were attempting to appropriate their land.

With contradictory accounts by elites on both sides of the land conflict, it is clear that one or both of the villages have reconstructed the narrative concerning to whom the land belongs. Not coincidentally, the land appreciated in value just prior to the conflict's beginning. The appreciation of land was caused by the development of new administrative buildings on adjacent land. Whichever side controlled the land would ultimately be able to sell the land for a high price with proceeds most likely benefiting the elites.

In Umpu Bakti, the village chief told his villagers that they needed to fight for their land. Without definitive proof, the village chief claimed that his village had rights to the land in question and encouraged his villagers to fight for the land. The chief incited younger men in the village to take up arms against the other village as part of their duty to protect their own village's right to land.

> *"…if [killing my friends in the other village is] necessary to protect our land [we will kill them]. We have many friends there but the land is our right so we don't care about friendships there. It is the only thing we have…The chief told us we must be willing to fight for our land or we would lose it."*
>
> Man, mid-twenties, Umpu Bakti

The expected conflict was prevented by a contingent of police, military and a government official who were secretly informed by the village chief himself of the conflict after inciting his villagers to attack the other village. Even after the incident, the village chief has continued his provocative language. Among the villagers in Umpu Bakti, the village chief stands to gain the most from gaining control over the land (which prior to its appreciation in price was left untouched). In fact he invested the village's money to pay for a private surveyor to map the land which would demarcate the land within his own village's borders. In this case the village chief had a personal economic incentive to forcibly win control over the land in question. With this economic incentive and the fact that he could share the risks of conflict by using his villagers as soldiers, there was little incentive for the village chief to try to tone down his provocative rhetoric. As a result, deep mistrust remains between the elites of both villages and aggressive language by the younger members of the Umpu Bakti. Thus, elites appear to be able to significantly influence the telling of self-righteous narratives. Elites that stand to gain from inciting conflicts are more likely to construct or at least encourage narratives that call upon villagers to engage in fighting.

3.3.4. Elites Who Cross Lines of Identity

Elites who have working relationships with elites from different identity groups are more able to quickly cooperate to find nonviolent solutions to conflicts. Here, I compare Jabung before its implementation of the inter-village meeting of village chiefs with Jabung after and the Blambangan Umpu-Umpu Bakti case with the case of Negara Jaya-Negeri Besar to find if there is a difference in terms of crisis management.

Jabung Before Inter-village Chiefs Forum vs. Jabung After

In Jabung sub-district before the intervillage village chiefs forum was instituted, there was some communication across the lines of identity because the chief of one transmigrant village was one of the few Lampungese in the village. As a long-time resident, he had won the trust of his villagers and was familiar with some of the Lampungese chiefs of the other villages. Although he knew some of the Lampungese chiefs, he did not have a working relationship or an understanding of how to manage crises. As a result, when a motorcycle robbery began to escalate into a wider conflict, although the chiefs in Lampungese and transmigrant villages tried to prevent their own villagers from fighting, they were unable to control them. Within half a day, the crisis had spiraled out of the control of any one of the elites and the elites had no protocol for coordinating with each other to manage the quickly growing crisis. The speed of such crises, driven by emotion, requires prepared norms of understanding between those who wish to limit the escalation process. That is, without knowing how their Lampungese counterparts would react, transmigrant chiefs cannot make assurances to their own villagers of their safety. Furthermore, an advanced understanding or norm of cooperation would allow for the early management of potentially explosive events, such as a motorcycle robbery. A lack of coordination among elites across lines of identity can make nonelites believe that incidents will not be punished by authorities and therefore nonelites are more likely to take matters of justice and security into their own hands, often through vigilante violence. The expectation that criminal matters would be dealt with transparently by local authorities (in this case village chiefs) helps to lessen the need of nonelites to use vigilantism to achieve some notion of justice.

Following the crisis, the village leaders from Jabung sub-district formed a forum, which met to discuss how to prevent crises and acted as a way to introduce the leaders to each other so that they could become familiar enough with each other to cooperate in the event of a crisis. The first agreement of the forum was to turn in one's own villager to the police if they were suspected of committing a crime. This would lower the moral hazard that arose when villagers could expect protection from their own village and therefore might be more willing to commit crimes. In the year after the forum was formed, villagers from all of the area villages reported a significant drop in robberies. One villager was turned over to the police

by his own community after he stole a motorcycle. This emerging norm of self-enforcement has a parallel in group micro-credit programs for the poor. In group micro-credit, lenders overcome the incentive to default on payments because defaulting would negatively impact the whole group, not just the individual. Peer pressure is employed as a self-enforcing mechanism. In Jabung, individual villages and their alliances may pay a significant cost in possible violence if one of their villagers commits a crime without being punished. This shared cost helps to ensure that villages apply peer pressure to turn in one's own villagers who are engaged in inflammatory activities such as robberies. This notion of self-regulation was conceived by the forum, which helped solve the law enforcement and vigilantism issue in a manner that was sensitive to the local political difficulties that arose when one village sought justice of a villager from another village. Loyalties and duties are difficult to overcome, but when the costs were shared, these duties became secondary to the overall wellbeing of village security.

The first incident of spiraling violence was instrumental in demonstrating to members of both villages the risk of escalation caused by individual actions and the high costs of escalation. The recognition of the potential dangers of tit-for-tat vigilantism was instrumental in the development of self-policing and the formation of the inter-village council of chiefs.

Blambangan Umpu-Umpu Bakti (BU-UB) vs. Negara Jaya-Negeri Besar (NJ-NB)

In the case of BU-UB, while there was significant interaction among non-elites (especially young people) from the Lampungese and transmigrant communities, the elites had little to no interaction across the Lampungese-transmigrant identity line. In NJ-NB, the chief of the transmigrant village of Negara Jaya was a Lampungese who had lived for many years in the Lampungese village of Negeri Besar and was well respected by both their elites and nonelites. The most significant difference between the two cases is the means by which the conflicts died down. In BU-UB, the police and military forced both sides to return to their villages, but a dialogue never occurred to bring closure to the matter. In NJ-NB, there was significant interaction between the elites of both villages (even though tensions were high between nonelites of the two villages) before and after the incident.

4. Policy Implications: Towards Comprehensive Security

Communities are not static—they continually adapt, learn and adjust to changing conditions, experimenting with coping mechanisms to meet new challenges. As communal insecurity has flared in Lampung, some communities have recognized the inadequacy of existing institutions (both cultural and

political) and have begun developing new institutions. This section culls some of the key lessons of the empirical analysis above into practicable policy recommendations.

Without earnest attempts at addressing the factors of collective mobilization for violent purposes, there will always be the potential for escalated conflict. It is a mistake to assume that identities are statically constituted and that escalated conflict can be limited by mitigating merely the proximate causes of conflict such as lack of adequate police. My analysis detailing the dynamics of collective mobilization suggests that elites are a key resource that is central to limiting polarizing factors that can lead to greater mobilization.

Inter-village Leadership Forum

Possible ways to mitigate these factors are to encourage regular leadership forums for local leaders that would also encourage the sharing of problem-solving strategies and build the capacity of local leaders to respond quickly to crises as well as to prevent the events that trigger such crises. Such a forum could also be used as a way for village leaders to show each other problems that affect their own constituencies, which may improve mutual empathy as well as lead to cooperative solutions. Although the World Bank's Kecamatan Development Program is a forum of leaders in a kecamatan that encourages the discussion of such problems, its competitive process of ranking projects may exacerbate divisions among villages (this was the case in Jabung, where KDP was cancelled). The inability by the public sector (the state) to provide security has been met by private sector responses and innovations. Greater information about what works and what does not are likely to lead to better strategies and practices. Forums through which local leaders can exchange and critique ideas promise to improve the provision of security by communities themselves.

As argued in section 3.3.4., one of the most important factors in fostering conflict-prevention strategies (such as self-policing) is the recognition of the high costs of a spiral of violence that results from norms of revenge. Without understanding the costly consequences of provocative action or vigilantism, systems such as self-policing may not be readily adopted. Thus, leadership forums should demonstrate through anecdotes how violent spirals can occur, what their costs are and how to prevent or react to crises.

Self-Policing

As the government's capacity to effectively provide security has diminished, the private sector has begun to innovate new ways of providing security for itself. Some of these private security providers actually exacerbate the overall security in Lampung, such as the rampant growth of militias. They worsen the

29

level of security by their violent *modus operandi* and are also highly volatile as they are formed along (rather than across) lines of identity. Furthermore, in a struggling economy, where cash is scarce, militias exhibit rent-seeking behavior by forming protection rackets that take money in exchange for protection (often from themselves). This introduces a further transaction cost for businesses that can afford to pay for protection rackets, making business even more difficult.

> *"Lampung is the gateway between Sumatra and Java, yet businesses are still afraid to invest here because of the lack of security here."*
>
> -Chairperson, Young Entrepreneur's Organization

The private provision of security is, as expected, poorly distributed. The best levels of security are provided to those who can best afford it—the wealthy. In the villages, the private provision of security is often based on collective deterrence backed by credible threats of vigilante violence. This is less than optimal as it can lead to spirals of escalated conflict if set off by a single inflammatory incident.

A promising and innovative means of providing security is through self-policing. Such a scheme works off of similar logic as micro-credit programs in which members of the programs share the costs and benefits and are self-regulating by members of the group applying peer pressure to each other to follow through on the terms of the scheme. These schemes do not necessarily have to be formally administered as the case in Jabung has proven. The self-regulating aspect of these schemes ensures that it is a more affordable means of providing security because scarce cash is not diverted from productive purposes to pay for rent-seeking security groups (such as militias or even the underfunded military). In addition, because of the peer pressure that arises from the shared costs of the scheme, it may be very effective in shaping norms from vigilantism to the adoption of norms that value the rule of law.

These are more of a preventative measure than a curative one. They can be useful in preventing the occurrence of events that may spark escalated violence. They require a minimum level of security and are likely to break down if the system does not have the capacity to punish suspected criminals. In addition, if individuals from outside of the villages participating in the micro-security schemes commit a crime, they are not held accountable by their own villages and therefore the system may break down.

Diversifying, Productive Investments

One key result of this analysis has been that the poor economy has created poverty and inequality. Poverty has created a large population of individuals (especially idle, disgruntled young men) easily mobilized into militias or mobs. Inequality between Lampungese and transmigrants reinforces the sense

of identity, which can be manipulated into narratives that rationalize violence. It is therefore necessary to connect the problems of poverty and inequality to that of conflict into a broader understanding of comprehensive security. In Lampung, local economies are subjected to seasonal fluctuations in the agricultural sector. Lampungese communities appear to be less diversified against these fluctuations, because they are often discriminated against in formal sector jobs (e.g. factories) and previous investments in infrastructure (such as irrigation) have been prioritized by government programs to go to transmigrant communities first. Thus, Lampungese often are unable to diversify their crops from traditional Lampungese crops of peppercorn to more lucrative and stable crops of wet-rice cultivation. Addressing the fundamental problem of unequally allocated and inadequate infrastructure may prove to increase employment of young men and decrease the inequality which reinforces identity cleavages. Investments in infrastructures that provide benefits to both Lampungese and transmigrant communities equitably may improve long-term prospects for comprehensive security. Such investments must be made in a responsive manner to ensure greatest efficacy and they may include provisos that encourage or require cross-cutting cooperation between Lampungese and transmigrant communities. This would provide elites and communities with incentives to cooperate across lines of identity, which may work against polarizing actions.

5. Conclusion

This paper has shown how weak state capacity and the construction of norms and narratives that motivate individuals to join larger groupings such as identity-based village alliances and militias in Lampung, Indonesia. Further, elites who meaningfully interact across lines of identity and have an incentive to prevent conflict can help reshape norms and narratives that can limit the catalysts and some of the causes of escalated conflict. New possibilities for intervention that aim at conflict prevention and limitation have been presented recommending: 1) creating forums through which local leaders can problem-solve and learn, 2) exploring the possibility of self-policing and 3) investing in productive and progressive employment generation are some possibilities that require further research.

While these interventions represent a sample of possible options for the prevention and mitigation of violence, it must be emphasized that they represent second-best solutions given the current institutional situation. They should be viewed as a complement rather than a substitute for building more effective and transparent institutions of justice and security.

Appendix A: Negara Jaya and Negeri Besar (Case I)

On a September night in the year 2000, what seemed at first to be a simple case of theft evolved into a vigilante lynching. This then set off a rapid escalation of tensions between two villages--one, a so-called *original village* consisting of native Lampungese and the other a *transmigrant village* of mainly Javanese transmigrants. Eventually this clash threatened to involve more than 15 villages and thousands of combatants. This case is typical of many conflicts in Lampung in which vigilantism and ethnic tensions interact to form volatile conditions that can escalate very quickly into wider conflicts.

In this case study, I attempt to piece together the events of that night and the ensuing negotiation process that helped to avert an escalated interethnic war from the stories of actors involved in this process. From these accounts I hope to gain a better understanding of how conflicts emerge, evolve and are dissipated. Like many conflict areas in Lampung, there are a multitude of violent conflicts and causes that interact with each other. In these two villages, there are three sites of conflict: intervillage land conflict, vigilantism and village-company land conflicts. Here I focus mainly on the intervillage vigilantism although the other conflicts exert some influence on the intervillage vigilantism.

As I have had to rely on eye-witness accounts, I can only present the story as told from situated perspectives that have their own biases and motivations that influence their storytelling. As much as possible, I cross-check the accounts and triangulate on a shared understanding of events. In this case, shared realities are more easily identified within each community, but there is no meta-shared reality. Instead I weave together the stories from both sides to piece together as coherent a chronology of events as possible from the data collected.

A.1. Background

A.1.1. History

Negeri Besar is a Lampungese *marga* in Way Kanan consisting of four villages. In 1982, the Transmigration Dinas decided to establish a transmigrant village on land adjacent to Negeri Besar. Prior

to the arrival of the transmigrants, the land where Negara Jaya is now had been uncultivated due to its special registered status. The transmigrant village was named Negara Jaya and was founded on government registered land adjacent to Negeri Besar. Transmigrants were attracted to the region with free land, housing, basic foodstuffs for 1 year, water wells, agricultural supplies and even livestock. These were meant to defray some of the significant start-up costs of establishing a new community. Even so, the mainly Javanese migrants struggled for many years until the community had stabilized.

Until the incident in 2000, relations between the two communities had rarely erupted into violence. Many of the original residents noted the benefits of the establishment of the transmigrant community nearby.

> *"Before the transmigrants came, there wasn't a market nearby, we had to walk long distances to get to the nearest one where we could buy everyday goods. After they moved in, the transmigrants formed a market and we could go to the market very easily."*

--Woman, mid-to-late-thirties, Negeri Besar

Despite the benefits of a nearby transmigrant village, there were underlying tensions that stoked the fires of resentment. One of the biggest sources of this tension has been the uneven development strategy followed by the government with respect to the two communities. In addition to free official land titles, the Transmigration Dinas supplied migrants with housing, food, technical assistance, agricultural support and even livestock as both an incentive to moving to the transmigration sites and as a way to overcome the significant initial obstacles of establishing a community from scratch. While conditions were very difficult in the transmigrant community in the beginning, eventually, Negara Jaya overtook the economic level of Negeri Besar creating a clearly visible economic disparity between the two communities.

A.1.2. The Economy

The economy of the *marga* is based on a mix of subsistence farming and some cash crops. Compared with the economy of the newer transmigrant village Negara Jaya, Negeri Besar is in a poorer position. Negara Jaya is more dynamic economically in the sense that more profitable cash crops such as sugar cane have been adopted as a staple of the economy as well as a vibrant local marketplace. In addition, greater numbers of transmigrants are employed in local sugar cane plantations than are native Lampungese. It is not clear to what extent there is discrimination against these communities and to what extent there are cultural reasons for this disparity in formal employment—both explanations were offered, but a more comprehensive investigation is needed to determine the reasons for this disparity. With this economic disparity came associated problems of crime and stereotyping.

33

"Thefts had become common around here after the economy became worse. Most of the time the crimes were committed by people from Negeri Besar and we were getting fed up with it.

--Man, late thirties, Negara Jaya

In addition to the tensions related to social inequality, land and ambiguous rights-to-use provided another site of contestation between the two communities.

A.1.3. Local Governance

Negeri Besar is a Lampungese *Marga*[18] consisting of four villages and a population of about 2000. Local *Adat* customs are still very much the most salient form of governance and dominate local social, political and cultural life in many *Margas* in Way Kanan such as Negeri Besar and Blambangan Umpu.

For members of the community, failure to follow *adat* customs is viewed as taboo and has serious consequences. *Marga adat* customs are enforced by various sanctions, the harshest of which is exile. For a close-knit community, this can be a devastating consequence as many support networks and relationships are lost to the individual who is punished. While outsiders such as transmigrants fall outside of the jurisdiction of Marga sanctions, failure to follow basic *adat* customs is seen as an insult to the identity of the original people.

All major decisions in the village and *marga* are deferred to the *Peningbang,* or *adat* leaders, who have the final say in social decisions and local policy. Decisions of *Peningbang* are strictly enforced by members of the *marga*. While the *Village chief* within the *marga* have official positions in the villages, their power is derived from the state rather than from the community. *Village chief* is regarded as a lower position within the hierarchy of the *marga*. The *Village chief* must consult with the *Peningbang* on all important decisions in order for them to be carried out effectively in the community.

A.2. Chronology: September 2000

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[18] *Marga* is the *adat* unit of governance in Lampung. Each *marga* follows its own rules and often contains more than one village that all follow its uniform norms, rules and obligations. It is hierarchically structured with each village having *toko adat* or *adat* leaders called *peningbang desa* and a handful of *adat* leaders for the *marga* called *peningbang marga*.

In September 2000, the underlying tensions between the villages were set off by a case of petty theft that quickly evolved into a lynching and then almost a wider inter-ethnic war. Below I present a chronology of the events of five days during which these events occurred from accounts of both sides of the conflict.

Day 1: Negara Jaya

"I heard a bell ring out that night, my neighbor ran in and yelled 'thief!' There were about 50 to 100 of us. Once we caught them, everyone wanted to kill them. Emotions were high and in the end the two thieves died after we stuck bamboo down their throats.

"Thefts had become commonplace after the krismon[19]. It's always someone from Negri Besar (nearby Lampungese village). And we had had enough—we needed to kill the thief so they would stop stealing from us.

"Some were trying to burn the bodies afterwards because they were so emotional, but we were able to bring their bodies to the police who verified that it was their fault."
--Man, forties, Negara Jaya

Day 2:

Negeri Besar

"Someone had heard from the two-way radio that two of our villagers had been lynched in Negara Jaya and that the bodies were about to be burned. Within 30 minutes 300 of us were armed with knives, sickles and fuel and assembled to plan our revenge attack."
 --Man, late-twenties, Negeri Besar.

"The two men only stole some sugar, tea and coffee. Nothing more. Why would they kill someone over something so small? I still don't know.

"I was afraid that there would be a massive conflict. I knew this could easily get out of control. My duty was to find a compromise because the cost of fighting was just too high. Men of all ages from all four villages (not just Kaliawi, where the two victims were from) in our Marga spontaneously gathered as the news of the lynchings spread by word-of-mouth.

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[19] 1997-98 Asian Financial Crisis

35

Most of the men were young and very angry after some of them had identified the bodies in the police station.

I went outside with another Peningbang and the police chief hoping to calm them down and convince them not to rush into the attack. There was a truckload of police there, but there were too few of them to be able to stop 300 armed men. I said to the crowd, 'Put down your weapons and just wait. Let me see if we can find a just resolution some other way. If we can't achieve a resolution, then you should attack Negara Jaya.' That calmed them down and the crowd dispersed for the time being, but it was still very tense."

--Peningbang, fifties, Negeri Besar

Negara Jaya

"My assistant called me while I was at a wedding in Bandar Lampung late at night and told me about the problem. I rushed back as soon as possible, getting home at around 5am. I knew I had to act quickly so I took some money and went directly to the families of the two victims to apologize. They accepted the money—they are really poor, which is probably why they needed to steal basic necessities in the first place. I know a lot of them because I used to live in that village for years."

"When I got back to Negara Jaya, word had spread that Negeri Besar was getting ready to attack us. We had a large assembly where about 3000 people had gathered at the school. I addressed the crowd and said, 'Do not leave the school. Be ready for an attack but do not leave this place.' A messenger from the other village then came and said they wanted to negotiate a resolution. They demanded the condition that we follow adat procedure during the negotiations, which I accepted."

--Village chief, Negara Jaya

Days 3-5:

Negotiation

"They demanded that we catch the people guilty of lynching. It took three days of negotiations to resolve the problem. Eventually, we agreed to give the other village 2 buffalos. I didn't care about the price as long as the problem was resolved"

--Village chief, Negara Jaya

Day 1   **Day 2**   **Days 3-5**

11 pm Theft

11:30 pm Lynching

1 am Village chief leaves Bandar Lampung for Negara Jaya

5 am Village chief arrives

8 am Negeri Besar villagers learned of lynchings via two-way radio

8:30 am 300 villagers from four Lampungese villages armed and assembled to attack

9:30 am Negeri Besar Peningbang tells them to wait to try to negotiate

10:00 am Village chief brings money to victims' families and apologizes

12 pm 3000 villagers armed and assembled in Negara Jaya

1 pm Messenger from Negeri Besar requests Musyawarah for negotiating resolution

Up to 15 transmigrant villages offer help to attack

Negotiations

A.3. Case I Analysis

Obligations of 'Us'

Citizenship in Negeri Besar means different things to different segments of the *Marga*. For most, however, there is a strong sense of solidarity that comes from the long history, intermarriages and shared customs that connect the households of the Marga. For the leaders, such as the *Peningbang*, this citizenship is reflected in a sense of responsibility for the welfare and stability of the whole village.

> *"The tradition here is to avenge the death of one's brother. Like karma, souls should be paid with souls. Blood paid with blood."*
> --Man, early-thirties, Negeri Besar

Most of the men who assembled to fight in Negeri Besar were younger, although there were some older men as well.

> *"As word spread through the village [Kaliawi], men started coming onto the street spontaneously, bringing anything they could use as a weapon. We came out because we were angry one of our villagers had been killed not because someone told us to."*
> --Man, mid-twenties, Negeri Besar

> *"While the older men like myself were trying to find a negotiated resolution, the younger men were preparing strategies for revenge, thinking about the best way to attack Negara Jaya."*
> --Peningbang, Negeri Besar

Young men were not centrally involved in the process of negotiations. Instead of being engaged in negotiations to build peace, they occupied their time by planning the conflict. Even after the negotiations were completed by the *Peningbang*, many of the young men were still agitated and were not satisfied with the agreement. For this reason, the *Peningbang* allocated some of the money to these young men who demanded to be able to attack. The payment was successful in preventing them from attacking the other village. The *Peningbang* also took some of the money for themselves as a tax before giving the rest of the payment to the families of the deceased.

Solidarity among the Lampungese villagers from the *marga* comes from their shared historical, cultural and social roots. Solidarity among the transmigrants seems to come less from the cultural roots, but more from the shared sense of struggle and the social cohesion and cooperation necessary to successfully start a new community.

Escalation

During the build-up to the negotiations, news spread quickly throughout the region over the two-way radio that there was an imminent conflict between the Lampungese and transmigrant villages. Other villages offered their own fighters based on sentiments of solidarity.

> *"10-15 Javanese migrant villages contacted me through the two-way radio with offers of fighters to help defend my village. I told them, 'not yet, maybe later', because there was still a possibility of resolving it peacefully. Had they come to my village, I would have had difficulty maintaining control over the situation because it was hard enough holding my own villagers back."*

> --Village chief, Negara Jaya

The patience demonstrated by the Village chief in this case was instrumental in localizing the conflict and keeping the situation calm.

Mitigating factors

Negara Jaya's Village chief had many bonds of brotherhood with members of the other village after having lived in their village for years. In fact the Village chief was a Lampungese migrant from the nearby *kabupaten* of Lampung Utara and understood many of the adat customs and their importance to the people of Negeri Besar. The rare combination of a Lampungese man leading a transmigrant village and having deep ties to the villagers of the nearby village were instrumental in the ability of the villages to resolve the conflict. Some villagers from Negeri Besar cited the Village chief's close ties and trust as key reasons for the successful defusing of the crisis. The first step was to accept the adat procedure according to the wishes of the Negeri Besar *Peningbang*.

Leadership
Costs and Benefits:

In this case the leaders looked at the costs and benefits of fighting and clearly saw that it was not worth the costs both personally and for the community. For members of the Negara Jaya village, the lynchings had both benefits and costs. As a benefit, all of the villagers in Negara Jaya with whom I spoke noted an increased feeling of security in the village. The lynchings did have a financial cost as the villagers of Negara Jaya paid the equivalent of two buffalos to the families of the two victims, to the Peningbang of Negeri Besar and to the youths of Negeri Besar who were placated only after being receiving payment themselves for not attacking the other village.

> *"Since the lynchings, we haven't had any more problems with theft in this village [Negara Jaya], but if there is another theft or robbery, I think there's about an 80 percent chance that my villagers would lynch them as opposed to bringing them to the police."*
> --Village chief, Negara Jaya

While the *Village chief* of Negara Jaya and *Pengingbang* of Negeri Besar bore significant costs in the case of conflict, they stood to gain very little. This mutual realization that the costs of conflict far outweighed any benefits for the leaders was instrumental in getting the two villages to engage each other in talks. On the other hand, some stood to gain from the conflict as it would be an opportunity to strengthen their leadership positions within their respective villages. Some of these individuals became provocateurs especially in the transmigrant village.

Provocateurs:

> *"Within my village there were provocateurs who wanted to battle the other village. They were ambitious for gaining a greater leadership role in the village. They'd gain influence in the community by leading the village to 'victory'. Luckily the provocation failed.*
>
> *"Had we failed to reach an agreement, I guarantee there would have been civil war in this area and who knows how far it would have spread."*
> --Village chief, Negara Jaya

On the Negeri Besar side, while the Peningbang's authority was never questioned, the charged emotions from seeing their fellow villagers dead was a difficult source of provocation for the Peningbang to quell.

Reshaping Norms

Following the end of the New Order regime, the uncertainty in the area over the efficacy of the police and TNI in maintaining security and enforcing the law had led to an increased normalization of vigilante justice. But the demonstration of serious consequences from this incident seems to have reversed this normalization in at least one village involved, Negeri Besar.

> *"After the incident, people in my village have learned from the experience. We caught a villager from Negara Jaya as he was trying to steal something from us. Instead of burning or lynching him the people in my village sent him directly to the police and let the police punish him. It's best to just let the police deal with such problems."*
> --Peningbang, Negeri Besar

According to the Village chief of Negara Jaya, violence is still a likely means of punishing and deterring future thefts in his village. This is because the lynchings, while almost dragging the whole region into ethnically polarized conflict, are perceived to have been effective in stopping further acts of crime.

Appendix B: Jabung, Gunung Makar and Mumbang Jaya (Case II)

In contrast to Case I in Negara Jaya and Negeri Besar, Case II represents a case in which escalated conflict actually did occur between two collectivities. While it did not spread into a wider interethnic war, it escalated to the brink of such a situation. It is instructive to examine this case on its own to characterize the internal dynamics of this conflict as well as to compare this case with Case I from which we can cull useful lessons on how conflicts escalate.

B.1. Background

B.1.1. History: The Formation of Opposing Collectivities

Throughout Lampung Province, society is divided in many ways: by gender, religion, ethnicity, economic class, etc. However, the most salient social cleavage for conflict which has been reported repeatedly by my informants is the distinction between native, indigenous Lampungese from transmigrants (mainly from Java, Sunda and Bali). Both of these identities are constructed through an interaction of government policies, socioeconomic conditions and cultural processes. These identities are often very cohesive in the context of conflict as duties of solidarity require the protection of group members, overriding most other factors even including friendship.

Here, I attempt to unpack how these collectivities formed and which factors have reified social divisions along the Lampungese-transmigrant distinction. Lampungese villages in Jabung, generally, are old and in worse economic condition than nearby transmigrant villages. Transmigrant communities have only been in existence for little more than twenty years, during which time migrants struggled with the help of the government to establish and develop new villages. The Transmigration Dinas supplied them with land, housing, food and agricultural support, while not providing the same support for the Lampungese. This struggle to establish new villages strengthened the bond among transmigrants. As the economic condition of the transmigrant communities overtook that of the Lampungese communities, Lampungese resentment of transmigrants began to surface. Thefts of motorcycles were seen by some as a justifiable redistribution of wealth. On the other hand, greater crime led to negative stereotypes of Lampungese communities, while reifying the sense of shared struggle among the transmigrants. Dangerously, this

sense of struggle has shifted from one of general survival to one in which transmigrants feel they must struggle against the Lampungese threat of crime—thus placing the two collectivities in opposition to each other.

A common opinion among transmigrants in Jabung kecamatan is reflected in the following.

> *"Some of the Lampungese are good people, but most of them are lazy, undisciplined thieves because they don't want to work."*
>
> --Man, Twenties, Mumbang Jaya

This comment was made in the presence of the *village chief* who is one of the only Lampungese villagers in Mumbang Jaya, which highlights the level of resentment toward Lampungese pervasive among transmigrants who are tired of being victimized by crime ostensibly committed by members of Lampungese villages in Jabung. The most common crime is called *Begal*, which is the theft or robbery of motorcycles by stealth or force. Every transmigrant with whom I spoke had either been a victim or knew a close relative who had been a victim of *begal*. A quick scan of a public soccer game revealed that virtually all of the motorcycles (over 30 motorcycles) were stolen at one point.

> *"[Begal] happens to us so much that we've become very tired of it. Eighty percent of the time it's someone from one of the Lampungese villages. The police don't do anything about it—they really can't do anything anyway. So whenever we hear that it has happened people yell 'begal' and ring the alarm bell, which draws people into the streets to try to catch the thief. It's usually too hard to catch them, but when we do catch them, the only way to keep it from happening again is to burn them—that way they don't come back and other thieves see that it's not worth it."*
>
> --Village Secretary, Forties, Gunung Makar

A Common Lampungese Perspective

> *"It's so hard to find a job around here if you're Lampungese. Most of my friends don't have a job. They usually just sit around and sometimes help their parents with pepper farming."*
>
> --Man, early-twenties, Desa Negara Batin

B.1.2. The Economy

Why do you suppose the Lampungese choose to do pepper farming instead of the more lucrative wet-rice farming that the transmigrants do?

"Rice farming takes a lot of work—you have to keep working the fields throughout the year. Pepper farming doesn't take much work. Sometimes one has to de-weed the fields, but otherwise it doesn't take much since there's only one harvest per year. Lampungese are too lazy to do rice farming that's why they don't do it. That's why they're poorer."

Is that the only reason Lampungese don't switch to wet-rice farming?

It's their characteristic to take the easy way out. That's why they like to rob motorcycles and sell them because they are just too lazy. We transmigrants are different—we know what it takes to struggle. We believe in working hard on our rice fields rather than sitting around waiting for money to come to us.

This opinion that Lampungese are lazy and are criminals by nature and that transmigrants are diligent and disciplined was an opinion repeated throughout Lampung Province by transmigrants and even some Lampungese. This narrative of socioeconomic differences is a source of significant resentment for transmigrants, who believe their hard work is being stolen away by Lampungese crime, and Lampungese, who resent the inequality between the two collectivities and the negative labels as lazy and undisciplined criminals. I thus set about to understand how this narrative was formed and the truth of the statement.

A quick survey of the economy reveals that Jabung is located on very fertile land with ample clean water supplies. In fact the land is prized by large cattle ranching companies in addition to rice and pepper farming, while the water supply is a large source of mineral water for the Grand water bottling company. Even despite the notorious reputation of poor security in Jabung, large companies have been attracted by the rich natural resources to the area.

The main economic activity of Transmigrant communities is wet-rice farming. Virtually every family is involved in wet-rice cultivation, either in its production or in its distribution. Wet-rice farming takes advantage of irrigation channels and nearby rivers that feed much of the transmigrant villages' land for two harvests per year (four months per cycle). The water resources are not enough to produce a third harvest (which would be most economically efficient). In addition to wet-rice farming, transmigrant communities have a diverse range of supplementary sources of income including working in companies with operations in Jabung, such as the Grand water factory and a large cow farm. The economic

44

condition of the transmigrant community is clearly much better as evidenced by the better condition of their houses and the prevalence of more expensive items such as televisions. Employment for young people in transmigrant villages is much better than for young people in Lampungese villages.

In contrast to the transmigrant villages, Lampungese families are almost invariably engaged in pepper farming. Pepper farming is a volatile enterprise as it is an export crop with prices determined on the world market and subject to exchange rate fluctuations. In 1998, pepper prices were extremely favorable fetching a market rate of Rp35,000 to Rp40,000 per kilogram. However, the price of pepper has fallen dramatically so that in 2003 each kilogram of pepper fetches only Rp9,000, a 75 percent reduction in price. Rice on the other hand has a more stable price because there is a sufficient domestic market for rice insulating prices from exchange rate and international price fluctuations.

Furthermore, Lampungese communities have a far less diverse range of economic activities that supplement their pepper farming incomes. There are no major cash crops besides pepper farming in the Lampungese villages in Jabung. Other crops such as dry-rice cultivation (with only one annual harvest), cassava and corn provide little cash income and are used more for consumption than as cash crops. In addition, the two major companies local to Jabung have discriminatory hiring practices that make it very difficult for Lampungese to find employment. Almost all salaried positions are reserved, with a few exceptions, for transmigrant workers who are seen as more productive and less prone to crime.

"I've applied to the cow company for a couple of years for a cow pen cleaning position. They only look at one thing: whether I am Lampungese or not. When they find out I'm Lampungese, they reject my application. So the only choice I have is to do day labor unloading feed from delivery trucks, but the pay is lower and I never know when I'll have work."
--Young Lampungese man, early twenties, Negara Batin

"I didn't even have to apply for the job. Some headhunter just asked me if I wanted the job so I accepted. I even quit once and they tracked me down and begged me to return at a higher wage."
--Young Balinese man, early twenties, Negara Batin

"It's so unfair. They never hire us even though we have the same education. The only difference is our ethnicity. And if we make a mistake on the job the mistake is attributed to all Lampungese. If migrants make a mistake, it's only the migrant's fault."
--Young Lampungese man, early twenties, Negara Batin

"Ever since we protested against the company for not hiring enough Lampungese as they promised, they've discriminated against our workers." [20]

--Village chief, Negara Batin

Therefore, while transmigrant communities enjoy a relatively stable and lucrative primary cash crop, Lampungese are left to depend on the whims of the global pepper market. While transmigrants can supplement their incomes with employment at formal companies, Lampungese try to cope with unstable pepper prices by waiting up to a couple of months for the best price available. Unfortunately in recent years the price of pepper has been very low and most farmers do not have the savings necessary to wait longer to sell their pepper at a higher price.

The employment pattern of pepper farming is also very sporadic in that it is labor intensive only a few times per year: during the de-weeding and harvesting periods. This means that many youths are seasonally underemployed during much of the year. Combined with the lack of other economic activities, the employment outlook for young Lampungese in Jabung is very poor. Moreover employment outside of Jabung in the cities of Lampung is difficult for all young men from Jabung (including transmigrants) because of the poor reputation of the kecamatan. This leaves many Lampungese youths without work and a great deal of free time contributing to the negative image of Lampungese as lazy, undisciplined and prone to criminal activities. [21]

I have shown above that the different economic structure in Lampungese and transmigrant villages have been instrumental in creating an image of Lampungese as lazy and prone to crime. However, the question remains, 'Why do Lampungese not switch to the more stable, more lucrative wet-rice cultivation of the transmigrants?'

According to some of the transmigrant informants with whom I spoke, the Lampungese do not want to put in the extra work it would take to do wet-rice farming. But a review of the resources and economic conditions reveals a better explanation than ethnic stereotypes to the differentiation in economic activities. The Lampungese pepper farmers with whom I spoke all expressed their preference for farming wet-rice over pepper. They spoke of the more stable prices and higher economic returns associated with wet-rice cultivation than pepper.

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[20] In addition to actively discriminating against Lampungese villagers, the company is creating a lot of environmental problems for Negara Batin village in Jabung. There is a major infestation of flies so that it is impossible to escape the swarms of flies. The villagers with whom I spoke said that they had grown accustomed to the flies sticking on their faces, while visitors always try to leave as quickly as possible.

[21] Although young women are able to find jobs in the cities much easier, their remittances are not major sources of income supplementation.

"I do pepper farming because we don't have much choice. We don't have the proper irrigation to be able to grow rice. We'd rather be farming rice because you can harvest at least twice a year and it's much more stable."

--Pepper Farmer, Jabung

"If we had irrigation most of the pepper farmers would switch to rice farming. Wet rice farming requires more workers so we could give young people here more jobs. Right now, there's a lot of down time for young people. They just need to de-weed their parents' fields four times a year and harvest once a year. The rest of the time they just sit around and can cause trouble. I guarantee that if we could do wet-rice farming crime here would go down."

--Village Secretary, Jabung

The benefits of wet-rice farming are clearly seen in Gunung Makar and Mumbang Jaya and coveted by many in the Lampungese villages in Jabung kecamatan. Wet-rice farming is much more labor intensive than pepper farming, creating more job opportunities for young people. The employment cycle is much more stable throughout the year than that of pepper farming. In addition, except for the rare year in which world pepper prices are exceptionally high, wet-rice cultivation is much more lucrative a cash crop than pepper. Moreover, the price of rice farming is more stable due to the fact that there is a domestic market for rice, thus isolating farmers from world price and exchange rate fluctuations.

The primary obstacle to doing wet-rice farming is that there are no irrigation channels that can provide the water needed by the fields owned by the Lampungese villages in Jabung. Although irrigation was created in Jabung Kecamatan in the 1980s, it only served the transmigrant communities, while Lampungese communities were unable to do wet-rice cultivation. While the lack of irrigation is the primary obstacle to wet-rice cultivation, there are other significant factors such as the sunk costs of already investing in pepper fields.

Although pepper can be lucrative when the price is high, it takes as many as seven years before a single plant is productive. This means that farmers cannot respond to changing economic conditions flexibly because the price of pepper will fluctuate many times during the long maturation period of pepper. Once the pepper becomes productive, the opportunity cost of replacing pepper plants with other crops such as wet-rice is very high as seven years of work has been invested in raising pepper plants. Another serious obstacle is the lack of affordable credit in Jabung and particularly Lampungese villages. Local loan sharks are the only readily available sources of credit, charging as much as 75% annual interest rates. Formal

institutions such as BRI and small savings-and-loans are not readily available. People from Jabung are considered credit risks, especially Lampungese.

The wet-rice cultivation and the high productivity of the land has helped to make transmigrants relatively successful compared with the Lampungese communities.

B.2. Chronology

It was Labaran Day in December 1999, and villagers crowded the streets of transmigrant villages Mumbang Jaya and Gunung Makar and the Lampungese village Jabung in celebration of the annual Muslim holiday.

1 pm

> *"Around 1 pm three villagers from the Lampungese village Jabung rode motorcycles very fast through the crowded streets of Gunung Makar.*
>
> *"Some youths from Gunung Makar were offended by the gestures and yelled 'Begal!'[22]. As soon as the other villagers from Gunung Makar and Mumbang Jaya heard that there was a begal, they ran into the street and began to chase the three youths from Jabung."*

--Leader of the Jabung Youth Forum, late-thirties, Jabung

There was some disagreement over whether the villagers did commit the begal.

> *"One of the youths from Jabung kicked one of the young people from Gunung Makar to try to knock him over. That's why I think he probably was a motorcycle thief."*
> --Village Secretary, mid-forties, Gunung Makar

2 pm

> *"After they were chased to Mumbang Jaya, one of our village leaders caught two of them and brought them to the Mumbang Jaya Village chief so he could decide what to do with the youths."*

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[22] Begal refers to motorcycle theft and is a common occurrence in Lampung, especially Jabung.

48

--Village Secretary, mid-forties, Gunung Makar

"By this time many villagers from the four neighboring transmigrant villages were outside of my house demanding that I let them burn the three youths from Jabung. I wasn't convinced that they had actually committed a begal because I know their families and they have money. So I asked the people in the crowd to prove that the youths had stolen the motorcycle by locating the victim. I used that as an opportunity to let the two youths escape while the crowd was off locating the victim.
--Village chief, 34, Mumbang Jaya,

3 pm

"An hour later, they came back, but did not find a victim. The two from Jabung had just left accompanied by about 200 villagers from Jabung who had come to accompany the youths back to Jabung. Unfortunately, when the youths from the transmigrant villages had returned, one of their motorcycles was missing. This only confirmed their first thought that the villagers from Jabung had stolen the motorcycles so they yelled 'Begal!' again.

"About a thousand of our villagers had already heard about what was going on and so it only took ten minutes for them to meet up with the 200 villagers from Jabung who were walking back. A fight broke out between the 200 from Jabung and the 1000 from the four transmigrant villages. The ones from Jabung had no chance so they just ran, but our villagers caught a few of them. One of them had his neck broken and others were injured but got away.

"One other person from Jabung had not escaped and hid inside of my house. Many of my villagers waited outside demanding to burn the person from Jabung. I said they could do so if they gave me their ID cards. No one would do it, but they didn't want to leave either."
--Village chief, Mumbang Jaya

"Meanwhile, many youths [in my youth organization] wanted to go fight Mumbang Jaya. With the help of some other leaders, I tried to prevent them from going to fight, telling them it wasn't worth it.

"Unfortunately, a security guard who was on his way to the cow farming company was stopped at a road block in Jabung and asked where he was going. When he answered, 'Mumbang Jaya', the mob attacked his car and someone slashed him with a knife, cutting off some of his fingers and leaving a long gash down his face. Luckily some villagers intervened to bring him and the others in the car to safety."

--Youth Forum leader, Jabung Village

5:30pm

"A military officer arrived and we devised a plan that would disperse the crowd. I would tell two guys in the crowd to announce that Jabung was about to attack the village so they should go home and prepare their weapons for war. The plan worked as most of the crowd dispersed immediately, leaving behind only 20-30 who still lingered to burn the young man from Jabung. Two military guys were able to escort him to the police station. In the meantime I found out that about thirty villagers from my village had been captured just for being near Jabung, although they were just coming home from the beach unaware of the conflict."

--Village chief, Mumbang Jaya

7:30pm

"I went to Jabung to pick up the thirty villagers who were being held captive. It was okay because I'm Lampungese and I know many of the leaders very well."

--Village chief, Mumbang Jaya

Days 2 & 3

"The next day about ten villagers from Gunung Makar went to Jabung to pay their respects to the family of the man who was killed and apologize. On the third day, I went with only one other villager to represent Mumbang Jaya to pay our respects to the family of the victim. Unfortunately the only person who wanted to come with me was another Lampungese villager in Mumbang Jaya, the rest were too scared or angry to come with me."

--Village chief, Mumbang Jaya

Day 4

"On the fourth day 200-300 youths from Jabung assembled because they wanted to avenge the death of their fellow villager. I told them that it was God's will that he died and that it would be useless to attack Mumbang Jaya and Gunung Makar. It would just mean that they would attack us back and nothing would be solved. The victim's son was in the military and his commander had also instructed him not to look to avenge his father's death. Luckily by the fourth day, people's emotions had cooled down enough that most of the villagers listened to rational arguments."

50

--Peningbang and youth organization leader, Jabung village

1 Week Later

"We then held a musyawarah during which the chief of police, military, village chief from Jabung, Mumbang Jaya and Gunung Makar, adat leaders, youth leaders and the camat all attended to try to find a peaceful resolution for the death of the Jabung villager.

"The musyawarah did not come to a conclusion so we decided to have a smaller one in which Gunung Makar and Jabung would discuss directly with each other. Before the second musyawarah, Gunung Makar sent out messengers to seventeen other transmigrant villages to get pledges of help in case Jabung decided to attack."
--Village chief, Mumbang Jaya

"We [Jabung village] were also consolidating support from other Lampungese villages from the three kecamatans in Lampung Timor: Labuhan Maringgai, Jepara and Pugung. In all we had the support of thirty Lampungese villages in case we went to war with Gunung Makar and the other transmigrant villages."
--Peningbang and youth organization leader, Jabung village

During this week, there was no traffic between all three villages as road blocks had been set up by each of the villages. The police had set up positions in strategic locations and had deployed informants in each of the villages to stay up to date with the situation. With numbers only in the tens, the police were badly undermanned to be able to adequately prevent conflict. The prevention of conflict was almost entirely in the hands of the three village chief and other village leaders from the three villages.

"In the end of the second musyawarah, Gunung Makar agreed to raise money to compensate the family of the victim. Jabung had asked for Rp. 40 million, but Gunung Makar villagers were only able to collect a couple million rupiah. Jabung accepted and we were able to put that episode behind us."
--Village chief, Mumbang Jaya

B.3. Case II Analysis

Reshaping Norms

Village chief Forum as a way to anticipate, prevent and resolve conflicts. The primary way in which the Village chief Forum prevents conflict is by using a coordinated strategy to report thieves from each village chief's own village to the police. According to a couple of village chiefs, the incidence of thefts fell by 70-80 percent in the first year that the Forum came into existence. The Forum also increases the level of communication between the leaders, especially across the Lampungese-transmigrant line. In the case of an emergency, the forum will be called together.

> *"Even though pepper prices are at a very low level this year, crime has fallen dramatically because of the increased effectiveness of the police now that we are coordinating with them more closely."*

--Village chief, Negara Batin

> *"I think we've learned a great deal from this conflict. Now that we have the Forum, we can better anticipate when a conflict may become out of hand. Also the incidence of crime has gone down as well."*

--Village Secretary, Gunung Makar

Redressing economic inequality

Despite the progress in crime over the past year from the increased intervillage coordination among village leaders and the police, each of the informants noted that without equitable development and the expansion of employment opportunities, rampant crime and the potential for escalated conflict will persist.

Appendix C: Blambangan Umpu and Umpu Bakti (Case IV)

> *"In this village, the Peningbang Marga are the most respected voices. The government must ask their approval on most issues because the original people here will only follow what the Peningbang Marga mandate."*

--ex-Village chief, Blambangan Umpu

> *"The role of the Peningbang is to make sure that traditional ceremonies and customs are followed and if there are any problems or disputes within the Marga, we have to find a solution according to our customs."*

--Peningbang, Blambangan Umpu

The struggle over resources, especially land, is a significant source of conflict in Lampung. Such contestations can serve as sources and catalysts for mobilizing collectivities, especially those based on ethnic identity, for escalated violence. The conflict between Blambangan Umpu and Umpu Bakti villages traces how ethnic and village solidarities are drawn upon by elites to achieve gains in the control of resources in an environment of weakened and uncertain governance. By creating conflicting stories legitimating claims to land, elites are able to mobilize their constituents to fight for land. In this case, leaders from Blambangan Umpu and Umpu Bakti laid claim to the same patch of valuable land by referring to two different maps. The two stories offered by both sides of the conflict are inconsistent and therefore make it very difficult to discern exactly what happened. However, the conflicting accounts still offer useful data demonstrating how elites are central to the mobilization of fighters through the use of self-righteous narratives to motivate their own constituencies. It is clear from this case that elites from at least one village (if not both) have manipulated the stories so that the elites themselves would gain monetarily from the appropriation of land. In this case, I begin by presenting how the villages formed their own distinct identities and describe the social interactions between the two villages. I then show how narratives on both sides have been manipulated by elites for their own benefit.

C.1. Background

C.1.1. History: Identity Formation and the Sharing of History and Destiny

Blambangan Umpu is a Lampungese *marga*, which, in 2000 became the capital of the newly formed district of Way Kanan (formerly part of North Lampung district). In 1982 the provincial government established a migrant village called Umpu Bakti in the area using incentives to attract residents from a poor community in the Lampungese district of South Lampung. The government chose this community based on its lack of schooling and health services and overall poor economic condition. In exchange for relocating, each migrant household was granted 2 hectare plots of land, a basic wooden frame house, farming materials (e.g. seeds and fertilizer), a water well and rice for one year. After struggling for fifteen years, the migrant village of Umpu Bakti had finally stabilized into an economically viable village (albeit with occasional help from the government with programs targeting migrant communities).

"A lot of my neighbors who came in the beginning ended up selling their land and returned to South Lampung because it was too hard [to settle here] in the beginning. I was much better off here, because I didn't have anything before I moved here, but now I've got a house, land and cows."

Man, late-thirties, Umpu Bakti

Among the villagers who had stayed to help establish the migrant village of Umpu Bakti, a strong sense of community identity developed. While Umpu Bakti and Blambangan Umpu share many cultural practices as both Lampungese communities (one with local roots and the other with roots in South Lampung), they identify much more strongly internally than across each village. That is, solidarity based on village identity and the type of village (migrant or indigenous) appears to outweigh solidarity based on cultural similarities. The process of struggle specific to each village and the close relationships that each village developed over these periods appear to be the strongest source of cohesion among villagers in this context.

"Our destinies are tied together having struggled together to build this village from the beginning. It is our duty to fight together to protect our village."

Man, mid-twenties, Umpu Bakti

Familial bonds run deep within both villages and while intermarriage has happened it is secondary to the intra-village bonds. Even bonds of friendship are not enough to override the 'duty' associated with being a member of one's village. In a conversation with a man in his mid-twenties the priorities of duty were revealed:

"Do you have friends in Blambangan Umpu?"

"Yes, we have many there. We often play sports with them."

"But what do you do if your village is fighting with them?"

"Then it is our duty to fight them."

"Even kill them?"

"Yes, if it's necessary to protect our land. We have many friends there but the land is our right so we don't care about friendships there. It is the only thing we have."

In contrast with the two previous cases (Appendices A and B), these two villages do not have a significant difference in living standards.

C.1.2. The Importance of Elites

Particularly in the disorganized and new administrative region of Way Kanan where the two villages lie, local elites have more influence over village life than the administrators of the area. Way Kanan was separated from North Lampung and formed as a new district in 2000 following President Habibie's decentralization legislation. The administration had to be recreated from scratch and lacked an influential power base locally. According to the head of the BPN land administration in Way Kanan, the government must consult with the Peningbang about land transactions. For the indigenous Lampungese in this area, "Peningbang are their government," according to a villager in Umpu Bakti.

> *"If the government wants to build a road here, he should consult with the Peningbang who can order his villagers to help build it."*
>
> --Ex-Village Chief, Blambangan Umpu

Although elites in both Blambangan Umpu and Umpu Bakti are highly influential in their villages, they draw their legitimacy from different sources. The Peningbang draw their legitimacy from local Lampungese custom, which is based on ancestral lines. In contrast, the village chief of the transmigrant village Umpu Bakti, draws his influence from his official position as recognized by the government.

Elites and the Manipulation of Narratives

There was significant evidence that the non-elites of both Lampungese and transmigrant villages heavily defer to the elites. In one visit, in the presence of the son of the chief, a middle-aged man was clearly nervous about saying "the right thing". At the end of the interview, after having evaded some of my questions, he asked the chief's son (a much younger man), "Did I do okay?" This deference appears to influence the story that villagers tell outsiders (such as myself). It was apparent from the villager's nervousness that diverging from "the party line" could result in negative consequences. Dissent from the party line appears to be stifled by the village chief in Umpu Bakti. Furthermore, younger villagers in Umpu Bakti informed me that the chief himself implored them to attack Blambangan Umpu as a duty. As a result, they were even willing to kill their friends in the neighboring village to defend their 'right' to the land.

The chief of Umpu Bakti cultivated a story in which the land in question had been granted by the government to the village of Umpu Bakti at its inception in 1982. He reinforced this narrative by

hiring a surveyor to remap the area so that the land was contained within the boundaries of Umpu Bakti. The original map was misplaced or destroyed when the new district of Way Kanan was created. The map commissioned by the chief of Umpu Bakti is biased in favor of his village and lacks legitimacy in the eyes of villagers in Blambangan Umpu. The chief, however, has presented the map to his villagers as cartographic evidence of their right to the land. For villager of Umpu Bakti, the map and the chief's narrative represents compelling testimony of their right to the land in question. This narrative has been used and manipulated to motivate the younger villagers of Umpu Bakti to use force to claim their land.

Similarly, the Peningbang of Blambangan Umpu have used the language of rights to defend their claim to the same patch of land. They claim that all of the land is inherently their own as they are the original inhabitants of all of the land in the area, predating the transmigration programs.

> *"We are the rightful owners of all of these lands. The land is adat land belonging to us—the original inhabitants of the land. The government negotiated with us to allow them to have the land for transmigration in 1982. We gave them the land so we know the borders. The land [in question] is ours."*
>
> --Peningbang, Blambangan Umpu

In the absence of mechanisms of mediation, these two conflicting stories claiming rights to the land provide a fertile context for future violence. Below, I describe the lack of existing mechanisms for conflict mediation between the two groups.

Lampungese-Transmigrant Interactions

There is a particular risk of violence in this case because a common authority that enjoys paramount legitimacy in the eyes of both communities does not exist. While the transmigrants depend on and believe in state institutions to govern their communities, the Lampungese view the Peningbang as the legitimate and ultimate authority in Blambangan Umpu marga. This is apparent in the deference of the village chief (an official position of the state) to the Peningbang (the traditional leaders) of the area. In the absence of legitimate and capable government institutions of justice and a shared medium of communication and mediation, distrust and the rhetoric advocating violence remains high.

Blambangan Umpu is a Lampungese village, whose elites (the Peningbang) are almost all located in Bandar Lampung, rather than currently residing in the village. There are many interactions between members of the two communities with frequent sports competitions involving youths from both villages. There are, however, very few interactions between elites of the two villages. This has fostered much distrust to develop between the elites of the two villages. The lack of interaction between the elites of the villages prevents a shared understanding of the conflict to evolve. Thus, the two conflicting narratives are allowed to continue to go on without having to be confronted by perspectives from the other side. Moreover, direct negotiations are unlikely to occur as both sides mistrust each other's intentions.

C.2. Chronology

In 1999, in anticipation redistricting and the subsequent establishment of a district capital in the Blambangan Umpu area, land prices began to rise. The government needed to purchase a substantial tract of land on which to build its new administrative offices. The rise in prices focused attention on piece of land that, previously, had been ignored as insignificant. The transmigrant village of Umpu Bakti began to cultivate the land in question as a way to demarcate the land as their own. In response, residents of the indigenous Blambangan Umpu used a tractor to define what they believed were the proper boundaries. What follows is a chronology of the events beginning with the incident with the tractor and spanning five hours:

> *"Some of our villagers reported that Lampungese from Blambangan Umpu had changed the boundary between their land and ours with a tractor."*
>
> --Village Chief, Umpu Bakti

> *"We had tried to talk to them to settle the problem before, but it was of no use. We lost patience and decided to attack. We had a lot of solidarity on this."*
>
> --Man, mid-20s, Umpu Bakti

> *"The villagers assembled here because they were angry. The village chief told us, 'This is your land, you must struggle for it!' There were [many] men who decided to attack the other village."*
>
> --Leader of mob, Umpu Bakti

"I had already informed the police that [my villagers] would attack Blambangan Umpu. So I said to [my villagers], 'if you want to attack, go ahead', knowing the police would be there."

--Village Chief, Umpu Bakti

"We were completely surprised when [the villagers from Umpu Bakti] came to attack us. We only had 200 fighters to protect our village. I told them to hold steady and not run, otherwise we would all get killed. Suddenly, police and military members came. We were all very surprised."

--Former Village Chief, Blambangan Umpu

"The Sub-district administrator and the police helped to calm both sides down before and to negotiate the problem."

--Leader of mob, Umpu Bakti

"We agreed to negotiate with Umpu Bakti. But I think their village chief organized the attack since he called the police."

--Former Village Chief, Blambangan Umpu

"We agreed to think about bringing the land dispute to the government to resolve. We wanted the government to resolve it, but [Blambangan Umpu] did not want the government to solve it. They said they would think about it for a month, but they never agreed. We began to farm the land again because they never agreed to have the government solve it. Anyway, the government doesn't have the budget to investigate this case. So our villagers still get harassed by Blambangan Umpu when we farm it."

--Leader of mob, Umpu Bakti

C.3. Analysis

C.3.1. Elite Incentives

Elites are the primary means of influencing and mobilizing large groups of individuals in the villages. They have the ability to motivate their villagers for violent or peaceful purposes. They have the power to organize and the legitimacy to negotiate on behalf of their constituents. Unfortunately when elites have incentives to incite conflict (as in this case), insecurity is likely to persist. Elites who benefit from conflict or the threat of violence are less likely to look for ways to prevent violent outbreaks and mob-mentality. They may even propagate dangerous narratives that may motivate villagers to the use of violence. Elites do not bear the same risks as their

constituents when engaged in fighting because they are less likely to be on the frontlines of conflict than in the position of commander.

In contrast to the previous cases (appendices A & B) in which the elites had little to gain from the conflict, the elites of Umpu Bakti and Blambangan Umpu both stood to benefit financially from winning the conflict. As a result there was little effort by either side to engage the other earnestly and to attempt coordination and communication as a way to prevent future outbursts of violence. Instead, ongoing low-level violence and a lack of joint efforts at arbitrating the land dispute persisted.

Appendix D. Ethnically-Aligned Militias, Gangsterism and Paramilitarization

In this section of the report, I examine an example of a militia that has become prominent in Lampung Province following the Reformation. Although I focus mainly on one of these groups, there are several prominent groups with similar objectives and *modus operandi*. The group on which I focus is, perhaps, the most prominent in the province and therefore has great relevance in assessing the dynamics of conflict in Lampung.

In order to gain access to the organization without arousing their suspicions about my intentions, I have been very careful to avoid appearing as though I am side-stepping the authority of the leaders. Therefore much of the data collected has been through focus group discussions and interviews of outsider perspectives and those of the leaders. As the interviews with the leaders are colored by my positionality as a World Bank representative, I have presented much of the data from my own perspective which I have supplemented with other perspectives. I recognize that my positionality may bias the data collected, but by acknowledging this possibility I hope to be able cull some useful results from these data. I have also opted to omit the name of the organizations examined in this report.

D.1. Introduction

It was a clear Saturday afternoon in Bandar Lampung, people were in their normal routines, shopping at nearby stores, some playing baseball and softball at the local grounds and others relaxing in the stands at the park. The chaos of people going about their own business had been going on since the sounding of the Muslim call for prayer. But there was one place in which there was a break in the chaos, an unusual

area of quiet and order. This quiet was in the central public space of the city called Saburai where only the previous day there was a vibrant festival of games, food and exhibitions. There were still many who filled the grounds, but instead of a colorful and relaxed atmosphere of celebration, there was an air of tension and disciplined control. Perhaps as many as a hundred cars and trucks were arrayed on the grounds and the adjacent streets filled with boys and young men, mostly between the ages of 11 and 25. They were fighters of a militia in Lampung Province clothed completely in black, militaristic uniforms. The street which they occupied usually would be a busy thoroughfare, but on this day few, if any, dared to walk or drive past the entourage, altering their routine paths to work. As I walked down the columns of trucks loaded with fighters, there were many voices that could be heard who were appalled by my lack of fear for walking down the column of fighters, which I partially defused by emphasizing the characteristics that indicated that I was a foreigner.

While waiting to parade through the streets of Bandar Lampung with floats of various symbolic animals such as eagles and tigers on their trucks, the leaders of the organization inspected their troops. I used the pause in action to identify the leaders and approach them so that I could learn more about their organization. I made my way to the ostensible head of the parade to try to talk to the leaders of the assembly. After introducing myself, I was sent up the chain of command until, at last, I met the general who was eager to meet and talk with me after learning that I represented the World Bank. This served to demonstrate the highly hierarchical structure of the organization.

It was the five year anniversary celebration of the fighting organization. Having been established formally in 1998 with backing from ex-governor Oemarsono, it had steadily expanded its membership until the present time into a formidable paramilitary operation. The assembly of forces on that day comprised more than a thousand uniformed fighters who, according to a TNI official, were doing a show-of-force by parading through the streets with loud chants and music. According to one official in the headquarters, the organization has members in almost every village in Lampung and has added as many as 400,000 members over the period from 1998 until 2003. Although this number is probably inflated and difficult to verify, it is clear that they do command a significant presence in Lampung. A reflection of their influence can be seen everyday as many public transportation vehicles (*angkutan kota*) have stickers with the organization's emblem and many restaurants display large photographs of the organization's leaders to ward off potential robbers and extortionists.

D.2. Stated Goals

According to some accounts, the militia has been supported by the TNI as a way to encourage nationalism (national unity) in the face of a feared emergence of communism, especially after the fall of Suharto's regime. Indeed, the general himself said, "We want to make Indonesia one" when I asked him the goal of the organization. Each member must swear to an oath that requires members to defend the unity of the Indonesian republic as stated in the principles of *pancasila* and respect the diversity of the country. On July 1, President Megawati hinted a tacit support for this type of paramilitary organization saying,

> *"We need to seriously consider and adopt sufficient measures so that the requests of citizens to defend themselves, especially in certain parts of the country which have security problems, can be given a just place in our system."[23]*

This signals that the national government acknowledges their inability to maintain security and the demand for such 'security services' by the government.

I followed up my first encounter with the general with a visit to the headquarters. The headquarters has three complexes in close proximity with different functions: central secretariat, regional office and training center in addition to many offices in the field. As I waited for the head master at the central headquarters, I noticed the relatively expensive facilities that the organization enjoyed—a clean, well-kept building, good furniture and a large sound system. On the walls were photos of various ceremonies and photos of the leaders as well as a photo of Megawati and Hamzah Haz near the Indonesian flag and a plaque with the principles of *pancasila*. After some time the head master returned to the office and welcomed me into his office. He was a man in his forties who wore an all silk black ensemble. Describing himself as a reluctant leader of this organization, he was, at least verbally, very polite and eager to receive me as a guest. He was accompanied by an advisor who helped to tell stories about the head master so that the master would not have to promote himself.   His assistant also helped steer the head master away from any questions that could be perceived of as a political position.

The head master stated that the goal of his organization is to make the people who live in Lampung one people and more broadly to maintain national unity of the Indonesia in general. This nationalistic sentiment is in contrast to the regionalist goals of its rival organization, which is intended to promote the sense of being Lampungese[24] defined by native Lampungese. Ironically, following the regional autonomy legislation and other aspects of *Reformasi*, both of these nationalist and regionalist organizations have

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[23] Reuters, July 1, "Indonesia Hints at Civilian Militias in Some Areas"

[24] I interviewed a member of the guiding committee for the regionalist organization, a lecturer from Lampung University. He stated that the organization is intended as a social organization to promote Lampungese unity and is not intended as a fighting organization, although he did concede that the organization may be used by different parties for non-social purposes.

gained influence in the Province due to the ineffectiveness of the security and law enforcement apparatuses.

D.3. Government and Security

The stated goals of maintaining national unity is more rhetorical than an objective which drives the daily activities of this organization. A more pragmatic and day-to-day goal of providing private and public security appears to govern most of the organization's activities. The ineffectiveness of the security apparatuses has given rise, as documented earlier in this report and in Madden and Barron (2003), to non-state sources of violence for justice and security. The traditional state authorities in security have found themselves lacking the capacity to ensure security from crime and for public demonstrations. This has created a demand for paramilitary security organizations such as the two described above. Indeed the head master of the nationalist organization himself said, "If the police and TNI were able to provide security in Lampung, we wouldn't have a purpose or role."

The security vacuum has created a large demand for private security providers, thus allowing fighting organizations to expand their operations. The key historical date which is mentioned is the year 1998 when the *Reformasi* was taking root and the security institutions were thus weakened. What is often seen as the turning point of the nationalist organization is when the Oemarsono provincial government called upon the organization for reinforcements to help police disperse an anti-Oemarsono demonstration.

> *"After the request came from the government, I dispatched about 3000 of our fighters to scare away the 7000 protestors who were there. It was a great success. Now that it's in the Reformasi era, everyone thinks they have the freedom to do whatever they want. We are here to make them understand their place."*
> --Head Master, Nationalist Militia

After this demonstration of their effectiveness in physical intimidation, a market for similar 'security services' was spawned in both the private and public sectors. Many elites pay for their security services to guard their homes while many businesses pay for security guarantees from extortionists. The government, police and TNI sometimes coordinate with this organization when they lack the capacity to deal with crime and demonstrations.

> *"The police and TNI love to use us because we are able to do things that they are not able to do themselves. They have to worry about human rights and such things. So criminals and demonstrators are not scared since the worst that can happen to them is that they are sent to jail. If we catch them,*

though, we can kill them. Then we report it to the police and they verify that it was their fault. It is an effective deterrent of crime."

--Head Master, Nationalist Militia

The tacit approval of the police allows the organization to operate above the law as people are punished extralegally without any kind of due process. The legitimacy they have comes from the support of the police and TNI, which itself comes from their lack of capacity and deference to this fighting organization.

D.4. Modus Operandi

The organization's main *modus operandi* is based on fear and the use of force, starting with the head master. The head master was selected as the top leader because of his magical powers, according to his assistants at the headquarters, who fear him because of his mystique. With the help of his assistants who talk about his mystical powers and his ability to perform magic tricks, he has cultivated a myth of his supernatural powers. He uses magic tricks to instill fear in his lieutenants as well as others over whom he would exert his power. He demonstrated some of this magic on me during my first visit to his office.

While interviewing him about the organization, I began to ask him questions about the rival regionalist organization. At that point there was a marked change in his demeanor and he asked if I was a journalist. After insisting that I was a World Bank employee, he explained that the two organizations do not like each other. At this point he offered to demonstrate his magic on me. Grabbing my face, he blew into my eyes, precipitating an acute burning pain that persisted for almost ten minutes. The intention was clearly to demonstrate his willingness to inflict pain for transgressions of certain boundaries, to perpetuate the myth of his magic and to make me afraid of his power. His lieutenant said that he had experienced the same magic in the past. For those who believe in magic (as many in Lampung do), such an experience is certainly frightening. This fear is a useful way of ensuring control over his immediate subordinates as well as those further down the hierarchy.

Although the organization claims to be non-hierarchical, in fact, there is very hierarchical behavior. Junior members shower senior members with deference, accepting orders in a militaristic fashion. Senior leaders are able to command the respect of junior members, many of the so-called ex-*preman*, or ex-

gangsters through the use of fear. During our meeting, the head master explained to me how they are able to coerce young men, especially *preman*, to join.

> *"Preman are afraid of us. When our organization moves into an area, the preman leave because they are afraid of what may happen if they clash with us. They know that we can just kill them if one of our members is injured by them. Instead of clashing with us, they just decide to join us. We're happy to help them respect law and order. Once they join us, we give them security jobs, guarding various locations instead of being involved in crime."*

--Head Master of Militia

The leaders of this organization are thus successfully consolidating *preman* for their own purposes throughout the province by using fear to increase their membership. By a process of acquiring other *preman*, the organization is able to eliminate competition for security services. Another sign of the coordination of *preman* is that when I informed the head master of the fact that I had myself been the victim of a theft in a local traditional market, he said that he could retrieve my lost items from the person who stole them. He explained that there is a boss of the *preman* in that market and that he knows the boss well enough to be able to recover the stolen items. In the markets, each stall must pay a daily 'security fee' to *preman* for their security services. While it is unclear whether this organization collects security fees at local markets, the head master explicitly and proudly noted that his fighters are deployed to protect elites in Lampung, which most likely would fetch a much higher security fee.

The headmaster's preferred method of ensuring security is to punish so-called criminals and demonstrators so severely that they will be afraid to take part in criminal or political activities in the future. Within the organization failure to obey the command of leaders is met by force.

> *"After we give them an initial warning, if ex-preman do not change [the way we think they should, we use other preman to teach them with force."*
>
> --Head Master of Militia

D.5. Ethnicity

While ethnicity is rarely the root cause of conflict, it can interact with other factors, complicating already difficult conflicts. Although these militias claim to support the ethnic diversity of Lampung by accepting different types of members, in fact, their ethnic make-up breaks down along the Lampungese-

transmigrant divide. The more nationalist organization consists of approximately 90 percent transmigrants and only 10 percent Lampungese according to the head master. This may suggest that the actual percentage of Lampungese may actually be even lower. In contrast, the regionalist organization consists mainly of native Lampungese according to the steering committee member.

Although rhetorically claiming to respect the diversity of ethnic backgrounds in Lampung, the head master revealed some very polarizing stereotypes of native Lampungese, which are also reflected strongly in the perspectives of many transmigrants.

> *"The Lampungese in East Lampung are stupid, hopeless and incorrigible primitives. They just commit crimes and can't be controlled. Ideally, the crime situation there can be solved if we can find a way to isolate them into one area and keep them there so they can't bother anyone else."*
>
> --Head master, Militia

While this statement was uttered very casually, the seriousness of such a thought should not be underestimated. As seen in the case studies above, there is a great deal of resentment along the transmigrant-Lampungese divide. Ethnic solidarity has been the main pathway for escalation, causing small conflicts to quickly escalate into inter-ethnic warfare involving many villages. The fact that this paramilitary fighting organization mainly consists of transmigrants often with negative stereotypes of Lampungese, viewing the regionalist fighting organization with contempt and a practice of using fear and violence provides a context in which there is potential for a rapid escalation of conflicts into large scale warfare between Lampungese and transmigrants. Indeed ideologically the regionalist organization is at odds with the nationalist organization in that the regionalist organization believes in the primacy of Lampungese customs and rights while the nationalist organization believes in the primacy of national unity.

The implications of the contestations over these alternative exercises in nation-building have yet to be explored, but they clearly have the rhetoric that may fuel future conflicts that are at the provincial level. Clearly the ideological objectives of the regionalist and nationalist organizations benefit more the Lampungese and transmigrants respectively. In the case of a land dispute between Lampungese and transmigrants, for example, under the regionalist ideology, indigenous rights would be invoked, while under the nationalist one state-issued land titles are given primacy. However, land titles are most often held by transmigrant communities. Only since the reformation began could Lampungese communities begin to make claims over land which according to indigenous rights should belong to them anyway. Indeed the nationalist organization is already involved in 'resolving' land disputes throughout the province with their threat of force.

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The nationalist organization's security services are predicated (and valued) on the basis of being able to apply violence above (or as an alternative to) the law. In fact, the organization was clearly a more formidable force than the police in the eyes of many individuals with whom I spoke informally. As the

One of the five elements of the oath that was repeated by the head master of the organization was the assertion that the organization is apolitical and does not force its members to follow any one political.

A real danger exists in the potential of elites to use such groups and the associated rhetoric as a way to contest control over governmental or other resources. Because of the weak institutions of governance and the fall of the authoritarian regime, a power vacuum has fostered a competitive environment in which various actors and institutions are vying for power and influence over resources and the social life of Lampung. The police force is rife with corruption and ineffectiveness and lacks authority in communities.[25]

D.6. Market for Security

The weak and ineffective police force has created space for other groups to consolidate power as well as a demand for security services. This demand is being met in part by the presence of this organization among other militias that are suppliers of 'security services'. They market their services by demonstrating their power through various means including large parades and even violence itself.

The products they provide are symbols of their support that local businesses often purchase as a means of demonstrating their affiliation to these sources of security. Many of the local minibuses (*Angkutan Kota*) have stickers with the organization's seal. Restaurants and stores often display large photographs of the organization's leaders in Lampung Province. In addition, other revenue-making activities include providing security for private parties and businesses (often in opposition to local villagers with legitimate grievances) as well as security for much of Lampung's elite.[26] They increase their influence by demonstrating their effectiveness in providing security services for their constituencies and customers. Judging from the organization's extensive facilities and the head master's silk suit, the organization appears to be financially very successful. They have even established their own Muslim school in West Bandar Lampung—a project requiring significant financial resources.

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[25] According to the research by a women's NGO called Damar, 19 police stations were burned between 1997 and 2002—a testament of the weak state of the police.

[26] This has been cited as a means by which vertical conflict gets conflated with horizontal conflicts as many of the individuals providing 'security services' for private investors are drawn from the local population (sometimes within the same village) which transforms the conflict into a horizontal one.

During the five-year anniversary celebration, according to the head master, the organization was able to raise Rp130 million in 'donations' while parading through the streets of Bandar Lampung. In exchange for these donations, patrons could expect to receive protection and other security favors from the organization.

D.7. Why Members Join

Talking with younger members, I found that many of them are jobless and have low expectations for employment in the future.

> *"Even after graduating from a vocational school three years ago, I still haven't managed to find a job. I'll take anything…[This organization] has given me something to do and has helped me stay disciplined."*
>
> --Militia member, early-twenties

> *"I joined the organization because I wanted to learn to fight like Jet Li."*
>
> --Militia member, late-teens

> *"I feel a sense of brotherhood with the other fighters. If they need help I will help and if I need help, I know they will help me."*
>
> --Militia member, late-teens

Among native Lampungese youths whom I met in Jepara, some spoke of the regionalist organization as the only authority that they could rely on, as some of its members came to aid them during an intervillage (interethnic) conflict in Jepara.

> *"The police never did anything to stop them [transmigrant fighters] from attacking us. They [Lampungese regionalist organization] came to help our struggle and really helped us to defend ourselves."*
>
> --Teenage Boy, Jepara

Some young Lampungese in Jepara with whom I spoke identify strongly with and are grateful to the regionalist organization because of help they received in fighting their transmigrant enemies. After a Lampungese village was attacked by a transmigrant village because of a motorcycle theft, some of the

Lampungese villagers called upon Lampungese solidarity to help avenge the attack. The call was answered by this regionalist organization and fighters from outside entered the fight without knowing the context of the original conflict. In this way, fighting organizations can be instrumental in escalating violence

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