

POST-INDUSTRIAL NETWORK SYNCHRONIZATION

Parts of the world today, especially Santa Clara in Silicon Valley where I reside, has reached the post-industrialism or “knowledge economy” era. In Indonesia, hints of post-industrialism can already be sensed. Indonesia is aware of the power of post-industrialism, and it helps to have persons such as Mari Elka Pangestu as the minister of tourism and creative economy.

A post-industrial society is created when the service sector produces more wealth than the manufacturing sector. In a newer definition, a post-industrial society is one in which innovative products and services are primarily created by individuals working with strong scientific and artistic knowledge.

Silicon Valley and Hollywood are good examples of a knowledge or post-industrial economy. The main characteristic of this economy is creativity, with continuous invention and re-invention. A post-industrial person is future-oriented and is highly innovative regardless of the field. Instead of manufacturing products and being a rank-and-file employee or executive, or even a factory worker by following orders and having a rigid job description, they are individuals who are set to replace the Industrial Revolution’s workers.

Consequently, the environment has become highly competitive. When Adam Smith wrote *The Wealth of Nations*, massive consumption and making as much profit as possible required massive amounts of capital.



A multimedia company based in Batam and Singapore, Infinite Studios, founded by Mike Wiluan, for example, is an internationally known post-industrial player. Sehat Sutardja of Marvell Technology in Silicon Valley, another example, is a highly respected inventor and entrepreneur with 150 international patents. Kaskus, a Web-based community with 4,000,000 registered users, was created by Andrew Darwis, Ronald Stephanus and Budi Dharmawan as

FOR INDONESIA TO TRANSITION FROM A MANUFACTURING ECONOMY TO A KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY REQUIRES MORE THAN A SHIFT OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND UPGRADING SKILLS.

In a knowledge economy, those who have access to funding might no longer be the strongest players.

In a knowledge economy, the most important player is the one with the most “innovative capital.” In Silicon Valley, they are IT geeks. In the movie industry, they are the independent producers. In other fields, they are the innovative scientists. For the first time in history, the strongest capital isn’t money, as money doesn’t translate into creativity and innovation.

The time for winning through intellect and knowledge has come. Indonesia needs to develop such people, as most have limited skills and training. The Indonesian education system is notorious for its rote learning and restricting creativity. Yet some Indonesians are genius knowledge information players.

students in Seattle. Indonesian Internet companies have started to gain the interest of global venture capitalists.

For Indonesia to transition from a manufacturing economy to a knowledge economy requires more than a shift of consciousness and upgrading skills. It requires, above all, a shift from compartmentalized societal aspects to a synchronized network of catalytic changemakers. In other words, it requires a boost led by individuals who are more than experts in their fields, they must be inspirational.

Without Steve Jobs, the world would not have seen Apple products. After all, a knowledge economy is no longer a mass economy; it is a unique economy in which added values cannot be simply made by machinery, they will come from an individual’s unique talents, skills and knowledge. 