

# 1 Jurnal From Charm To Sorrow

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## **1** **FROM CHARM TO SORROW: THE DARK PORTRAIT OF TIN MINING IN BANGKA BELITUNG, INDONESIA**

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### **1** **Abstract**

Tin is an important commodity as the world's manufacture industry needs. With its non-renewable characteristic, tin holds an important position and therefore it is contested for its high selling point. In fact, tin mining process brings serious problem since it is not directly designed with limited government controlling. Bangka Belitung island province as the biggest tin producer in Southeast Asia region notes history as the area stashing problem of tin resource management aspect. This paper highlighted the dark portrait of tin resource mining in Bangka Belitung by beholding the emerging impacts as the victims of this resource mining. The agriculture land destruction, fishery potency damage, the education breakdown, environment crisis, public distrust, and working accident are the key aspects accompanying the tin mining

*process in this area. This natural resource dispute is finally enclosed by ironic stories in the middle of the contested economic benefit.*

### **Keywords**

Tin, Mining, Bangka Belitung

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## **1. Introduction**

Tin mining process in Bangka Belitung islands has long lasted. Tin has started to dig in the era before colonialism under Palembang sultanate, in the occupation era of Holland, England, and Japan until the half middle of twentieth century (see Erman, 2010; Ibrahim, 2016). The mining was then continued in the beginning of independent Indonesian government. In this long term management, it was basically conducted under strict regulation by the government in that era. In the era of Indonesian government, particularly New Order era between 1970s and 1998, tin mining was performed under the strict government's control, either for its mining or distribution.

However, this Bangka Belitung's tin mining journey had just resulted in serious problem right after the mining shifted from its total government management into free goods and submitted its management into local authority. The state through Trade Minister has changed tin status, from state's strategic commodity reserve into non-strategic goods. It implicated that starting from the mining to trading; it was not managed and controlled by state. Furthermore, tin was under local government control. Since 1998, tin was then controlled by local government, managed by businessmen. As the consequence, it raised acute problem, such as non-stoppable environmental destruction, society culture changing, and the entrance of international tin trading network.

Why do tin and Bangka Belitung becomes an important issue? *First*, Indonesia still put Bangka Belitung as the tin producer area. Even in Southeast Asia, Bangka Belitung has almost been the only area producing tin. *Second*, tin is only the small needs; however, it existence is irreplaceable. In this condition, careless mining will threat the national industry needs of Indonesia. *Third*, although known as the world tin producer; however, Bangka Belitung and particularly Indonesia do not play an important role since the trade route is tiered, from a producer to smelter country to interstate trade. *Fourth*, tin mining process actually leaves deep sorrow for the producer area. Bangka Belitung has become a dark portrait of tin natural resources

management that shows a dark face of natural resources exploitation. *Fifth*, tin supplies world's industry needs, particularly developed countries; however, the attention towards the tin negative side resulted from its source area has almost not get attention from the user companies. In any case, tin from Bangka Belitung has become the irreplaceable raw material and it has encouraged the natural availability for the big electrical companies' operation; however, in this area, tin has been left mined in its own way.

This paper specifically highlighted the dark portrait of tin exploration in Bangka Belitung. Honestly, the author put this tin mining discussion from the processing side and its negative impact; something that has been seldom to accentuate from its various economical successfulness of a mining process. Through this study, the author found some ironic facts behind the uncontrolled tin mining activities at least during the last two decades.

## 2. Problem Formulation

This paper limited its review focus on question as “How was the dark portrait of tin mining in Bangka Belitung Islands?” To answer it, the author would explain first on the tin charm that became the beginning of the dark portrait emergence and described it as the basic implication toward the tin mining activities.

## 3. Theoretical Framework

Natural resources mining in a country basically involve several important instruments, including the regulation used, financiers' involvement, and certainly, the social politic environment issue in the area where natural resources are exploited. Natural resource is not merely *an sich* economical activities, however it involves various components. There is a problem beyond just an economic competition as noted by Sudiby (2004). That is why; this writing was approached with political economy study.

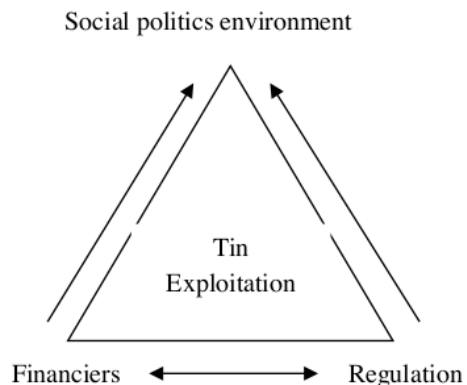
Political economy study according to Budiman (1995) was wider than traditional economy activity that was generally understood. Political economy studies social and institutional processes in which certain groups are involved in making decisions. Political economy, according to Budiman, therefore discusses politics and economy relations by giving emphasize on authority role (see also Caporaso & Levine, 2008). Simply speaking, Yustika

(2009) stated that political economy more sees more that it is the power structure that determines the economical achievement (see also Lane & Ersson, 1994).

The study on tin mining in Bangka Belitung would be discussed using political economy perspective. The author understands that tin mining can be released from decision making aspect. It is impossible to assume a modern country managing strategic commodity without being provided with regulation system that binds the interested parties. In addition, tin exploitation certainly involves capitalist and worker community. In the context of tin mining in Bangka Belitung, tin cannot be managed in the meaning that it is dig and the produced to be finished goods, rather than it is dig and then sent abroad to supply the big industries' needs.

Meanwhile, in mining locus, tin digging then deals with serious problem, namely social and political environment. In this case, social environment involves digging process implication in the local community, either physical or non-physical, included natural environment aspect inside it. While political environment concerns about regulation issue and strategies occurred within tin management activity in this area.

The involvement of the three aspects above is described as follows:



The author built argumentation that the political economy context playing in mining in Bangka Belitung set forth a pyramid. Financiers and regulation aspects were first placed as the basic construction that built a pyramid; however, both of them could exchange function to precede each other. The financiers, in this context, needed the existence of conducive regulation on tin exploitation process; however at the same time, the created regulation either intentionally or undersign needed the financiers to perform mining. It is therefore, in this study, the author conceived that the financiers and regulation all together constructed a sturdy building. As an

implication for both of them, then it occurred exploitation that was then in turn formed a non-conducive social politics environment.

The author indeed needed to explain that this study would focus on local politics social discussion as the implication of mining activities constructed by both financiers element and regulation (read: state). Tin mining rights ownership during occupation was alternately held by Holland, England, and Japan through colonial power exchange. Subsequently, during Old and New Order until at least in 1998, tin exploitation was conducted under the strong control of government. People and financier had limited authority in accordance with the tin status as the state's strategic commodity in that era.

Since 1998, Indonesian government had decided to revoke the status of tin as the state commodity without a clear consideration. It was then occurred a power vacuum on tin that subsequently provided a gap for local government to absolve tin as a commodity that could be mined by everybody. In this level, it was difficult to understand on how financier intervention in the regulation changing. Deregulation on tin commodity, however, showed the existence of unseen privatization effort on tin. That's why; both deregulation and privatization on tin were actually performed through government hands toward the regulation they constructed. It was indeed some regulations changing occurred after the tin had become free commodity to mine and sell; however, its significance was very limited so that at least until now the tin mining is till free to perform by everybody who has capital, of course, under unclear law between normative-regulative level and its practice on the site. The work of shadow hands would not be certainly avoidable in the context of condition formulation and creation for the ongoing tin exploitation spaces for at least in the last two decades.

#### **4. Method**

This study was designed with qualitative approach. It was chosen by considering that the researcher would be more unimpeded to explore data without having to be limited with certain questions. Nevertheless, to make some limitation, the researchers focused on formulation regarding the dark portrait description of exploitation and identified everyone who became the victim of tin mining activities.

Data collection technique employed was deep interview by using purposive sampling technique, direct observation to the mining sites, and documentation technique to collect the

important data. This study's primary source was miners, the affected communities, stakeholders, and environmental activities. Whereas the secondary source was obtained through data issued by some institutions, supporting, pictures, and the support of local mass media news. For the consideration of informant amenities, the informant name would use initial.

## 5. Discussion

Bangka Belitung tin in fact has moved the Bangka Belitung economy society and business in this area in which it has significantly occurred since the tin regulation change starting on 1998; a condition when a government regime has been decentralize and open. Tin has become an interesting charm and pushed the incipence of various practices that is complex and cross-border issue: economy, politics, law, social, culture, and environment. Therefore, tin mining cannot be released from problematic aspect behind its production quantity.

This study identified at least seven key issues related to the dark side of tin mining that was seldom seen by national and international world. The key issue in question did not only describe on how the dark side was meant, but also found out the people who directly became victims of the tin mining exploitation.

### 5.1 Tin charm

Tin in Bangka Belitung Islands has been produced in the form of raw material, smelted in bars, and released to international market to be the major material for industry especially electronic industries. Except in the form of tin handycraft in the home industry scale, there hasn't been any industry used tin in this area. Therefore, all products have been thrown to international markets. In addition to the already go public PT. Timah, Tbk, tin bars are produced through smelter factories owned by private companies. Tin in both kinds of companies is obtained through mining and partner that are spread between legal and illegal mining.

Data published by Commodity Research Unit (CRU) showed that tin production reached more or less 90,000 ton, while around another less 90,000 ton was produced by other private companies (Rahman, 2006). Supriadi, et al. (2016) said that 40 % of tin production was produced by PT. Timah owned by government, while 60 % was produced by private companies, with the main purpose of export was Singapore, a small part of Taiwan, Holland, India, Japan, and others (see also Stocklin-Weinberg, 2017). They also supplied the tin needs of big companies, such as Apple and Samsung (see the report of *Friends of Earth*, 2012). It was not surprising, according

to Batubara (2010) if the tin factories from other countries in Southeast Asia region started to operate since they got the raw material from Indonesia. Data showed that in 2006, there were 37 smelters performing tin smelting and between 2004 and 2006, it was noted that around 264,000 tin produced by smelters was exported abroad (Yunianto, 2009) despite the illegal tin export. The number of smelter operating in 2016 was 26 smelters (Supriadi, et al., 2016). The number of illegal mining in 2001, a condition in which the tin has reached its peak of glory was about 18,000 units (Susilo & Maemunah, 2009).

Indonesia was in the second order of the biggest tin deposit holder in the world after China and its 99% is Bangka Belitung Islands Province. According to USGS Minerals Yearbook 2016 data in Supriadi, et al. (2016), there was at least more or less 800,000 tin deposit in Indonesia.

Tin mining in this area has made tin as if a charm. This condition was occurred in two decades as one of impact from policy shifting that could actually be referred to as a part of deregulation and privatization. Indonesia was in the third order as the tin producer in the world, thus in 2003 Indonesia became the biggest producer (Carlin, 2003). This leap was certainly influenced much by tin mining liberalization. Massive mining was performed by the capital owners, either in small scale or big businessmen. The labor from many other areas came in and made a new culture. The debate between legal and illegal until now cannot eventually be defined clearly because of its problem complexity (see the study of Irawan, et al., 2014), for example, started from the central and local government role that was squashed in local people's political assumption, financiers' pressure, miners' apathy, and the environmental aspect ignored. This condition was like status quo during almost at least the last two decades.

How was the welfare level gained by local people then? Income per capita in 2004 was 4.6 million rupiahs, far below national income according to Susilo & Maemunah (2009). Poverty rate was still also high enough, while this province expense budget mostly came from central government. Tin contribution on local financial was only 3% that must be divided into several areas in stages, moreover there's some ubiquitously leakage.

After more or less two decades the tin mining has been freed, there's certainly some volume shifting, either from the side of smelter number, miner, or tin export abroad; however, this condition didn't take place because of significantly policy changing. This reduction was more resulted from efficiency, although indeed until recently, it is interesting because mining



reached its glory in the beginning of 2000 on land, and then increased on the sea with suction boat, pontoon boat, and *apung* mining. The recent condition is indeed reduced; however, the destruction rate has not been stopped as the mining keeps continuing in many places, either on- or offshore.

## **Dark portrait**

### **5.2.1 Plantation land evictions**

It cannot be denied that tin mining has evicted Bangka Belitung people livelihood from plantation sector into mining sector. Since long time ago, the mining and plantation live in this area has been actually able to operate side by side. The strict rule for tin mining before the beginning of decentralization era forced the tin businessmen whose permission was very strict to mine in special areas. In the period before the last two decades, people plantation was one of leading sectors delivering people in this area to be more prosperous. Pepper and rubber were two leading commodities that were not significantly disturbed by mining activities. Only businessmen with strict regulation would be able to mine. The government strictly rule, manage, and trade tin abroad and in domestic.

However, since the people mining was opened and all people could mine, thus tin businessmen exploit the available plantation areas. Farmers were tempted to sell their land that potentially contained tin. Empty lands without settlers and in the form of forest were taken over by businessmen and massively mined. Meanwhile, plantation land planted with pepper and rubber were not missed from struggle with inadequate consesion between land owner and miner. The data published by Susilo & Maemunah (2009) as the depiction in 2004, those who worked as farmer was 172,030 reduced from 140.911 in 2005.

Much, one of informans asserted that in addition to environmental damage, mining also gave impact on the reduction of agriculture land and therefore the common people would be the victim. Dim, one of pepper farmers stated that tin mining even went far into hills in Central Bangka Regency. Meanwhile, Gunung Mangkol that recently becomes one of conservation centers facing the tin aggression in several points on its slope. Furthermore, pepper farmers are difficult to get wood for pepper plant's scaffold since the forest has already cleared out to be mining area. This was said by Har, one of farmers in Central Bangka Regency.

The plantation land has been getting decreased since the tin mining destroys plantation land topography structure and changed it into giant pools. Farmers who were previously

determined and patience to cultivate have been then changed into miner or tempted to sell their land to businessmen.

This problem came out when tin miners were not productive anymore in certain areas. The farmers, whose land was already defective, were difficult to return to plantation. As a result, economical income was decreased and people's economic situation was unstable. Re-functioning plantation land from tin mining was difficult to perform.

This condition caused the farmers who were previously plantation tiller patiently turned to be the victims. The author understood that farmers would in turn be in trapped by the temptation of high income; however, in short term vision. People's economy experienced shock when mining activities were not active anymore and at the same time, the plantation land had been ruined and difficult to rehabilitate.



**Figure 1:** Mining expansion in the area around plantation

### 5.2.2 Fishery potency damage

Tin mining that was previously focused merely on land has then moved to coastal area and beach along with the finding of the easy ways to explore tin in offshore areas. An area rich with tin deposits, this group of islands has potential to mine in the coastal areas. If in that area, they mine using small machines, they will mine offshore using big ships then. On and offshore tin mining have caused very serious damaged to marine biota (for example, see Febrianto, et al., 2015; Muslih, et al., 2014; Milieudéfensie, 2016). In addition, the place for marine biota to lay their eggs reduced, turbidity also caused massive damage to coral reef and rocks. Coastal area becomes muddy. Sam, one of fishermen in Belitung Regency said that he was difficult to catch

shrimp since the water was turbid and his catch became reduced. Mangrove as the favourite place for marine biota, according to Sam, was also decreasing. Even according Han and Amrul, fishermen must go fishing further to the middle of ocean to be able to get a catch.

The fishermen who rely on their life from fishing and catching activities must step aside to the middle or even tempted to become tin miner in the ocean. Tin mining was really facing some new problem that could not be solved in a short term. Environmental damage in the oceans was difficult to recover. Dal and Jum, a fisherman in East Belitung Timur stated that ocean mining in his region should not be given permission as it disturbed the fisherman's job to catch fish. In some places, there had been occurred conflict between fisherman and miner. This had for example ever happened in Mentok West Bangka Regency and Batu Belubang district in Central Bangka Regency.

Fisherman has become the actual victim of tin mining in coastal area. Various conflict emerged between fishermen and businessmen or between fishermen and tin miners. Fishermen do not only deal with miners' aggression, but also businessmen. Unfortunately, local government supports the permission by issuing various big scale ocean mining permissions. The problem becomes complicated as the government officers also play in securing the ocean mining. Finally, fishermen become the most disadvantaged element.

The fishermen's disappointment record often ended with demonstration, reserve, hijacking, or burning. However, tin exploration ambition has defeated rationality. The prove is that the businessmen never lose their mind to make approach, either by giving concessionary concession in money for the the surrounding fishermen or by giving lure to get facilities.



**Figure 2:** Fishermen's ships mingling with 'apung' unconventional mining

### 5.2.3 Tourism potency defect

As a group of islands, Bangka Belitung is a portrait of a beautiful island with the charming coastal line and beautiful small islands. However, since the tin minings have been rife, Bangka Belitung land topography becomes totally ruined. Whereas, coastal area has also been used as mining activities. In many beaches with the available tin mining, sea water turbidity, coastal area narrowing, and coral reef destruction are the unavoidable implications.

Such environmental damage gives a big impact on tourism potency in this area. When tin era has gone by, local government keeps tabs on itself to enter tourism era. The condition was felt as anomaly whenever seeing the mining that has destroyed lots of potential. This is clearly, for example, seen in Pantai Pasir Padi Pangkal Pinang, Pantai Tongaci dan Pantai Matras in Sungaliat, and several other tourism objects that has been devastated by miners' ambition in the pursuit of tin. Tri, one of journalists said that there have been many examples regarding the mining rejection by the tourism actors, and the condition tends to bring out conflict.

Fortunately, Belitung region is still relatively protected against mining aggression, thus it still leaving potential areas for tourism industry. However, this doesn't occurred in East Belitung region in which the distance is only several hundred kilometers, it has even been even trapped in the tin mining that is disadvantageous for tourism potential. Bam and Her, the fishermen in Belitung Regency said that tin mining had destroyed the forest and sea with a high risk, particularly in relation to tourism development. According to them, if the tourism wanted to make progress, then the mining must be disciplined. Mar, one of tourism activist in Belitung regency stated that mining activities cause destruction for tourism destination and makng the bad scenery.

Finally, the author found out the fact that tourism actors have actually faced some new problem, including tourism potency destruction threat that is not balanced with recovery design by local government. It is difficult to imagine that tourism activities relying on nature will live peacefully side by side with tin mining activities.



**Figure 3:** *Apung Mining in the coastal area that destroy the beach beauty*

#### **5.2.4 The high number of drop out students**

Massive tin mining also resulted in some casualties in the education segment. The parents who mined were usually asked their under aged children to join them mining. The miners can be in mining site for days and parents can neglect the children's necessity factor on education. The promising income can be one of factors as why many children were trapped in the mining activities. This condition will cause the school children for not giving enough attention to their study. Whereas in the era in which the technology development grows massively, it can result in the increased of children's needs. The revenue itself will support a child's independency, at least in short term.

It was not surprising if the number of drop out students was relatively high in this area. Data in 2004 showed that the number of drop out for elementary students was 3.28 %, junior high school was 7.03 %, and senior high school was 5.96 %; the number of drop out students for junior high school in 2007 even reached the highest by 9.95 % (EKPD, 2010). This condition was an anomaly with the human resources development considering that the children who should remain in school were trapped in the mining industry that only produced temporary benefit, although this number showed a decrease tendency in the years after. In 2011, the number of drop out students in Bangka Belitung was in the second highest in Indonesia (Erman, 2013).

Among parents, generally in the areas rich of tin, the number of drop out students has become its own problem. The obligation for children to study was not balanced with the sanction from local government; therefore, parents apparently do not have burden when their children must quit from their school.



**Figure 4:** *Children's exploitation in tin mining*

### 5.2.5 Social conflict

Social conflict is the unavoidable impact of the tin mining activities in this area. It occurred in two facets, both vertically and horizontally. Vertical social conflict took place between society and government. In 2007, the governor office was burnt by mass on behalf of miners, because they considered the governor didn't pro to people's mining. Meanwhile, the conflict between society and government, primarily regency and village authority often ended with demonstration. Several conflicts involving miner community for example, had also ever happened in Dusun Tirus Kabupaten Bangka, Koba Kabupaten Bangka Tengah, Teluk Kelabat Kabupaten Bangka, Belit-Dendang Kabupaten Bangka Barat, Kampung Pait Mentok, and Toboali Kabupaten Bangka Selatan. Such conflicts ended with people's rejection against miner community that in turn destroyed social order and interpersonal social relation.

Meanwhile, horizontal social conflict also often took place between a community and another in a group. Tin camp burning, citizen expulsion, or murder case between miner and the people surrounding became unavoidable. Anto, one of farmers from South Bangka said that such mining condition had caused the settlers brought the inappropriate culture, such as drinking alcohol, free sex, and they even seemed arbitrarily with the local culture condition. This condition made the local people as the victim of tin mining which occurred massively in this area. Social conflict was also strengthened by the increasing number of miners coming from other areas to a new area.

It was basically come up because there was an interest gap. According Hutapea, et al. (2017), non-seriously managed natural resources exploitation would result in violence. In this case, all parties having conflict tended not to be able to overcome that gap, for example, as it was

based on social jealousy, land seizure, the decreased income of local people, or because of the changing value and culture between new comers and local people.



**Figure 5:** *Unconventional mining equipment was burnt by people*  
(Picture source: Bangka Pos Online, June 29, 2015 edition)

### 5.2.6 Environmental crisis

The tin mining taking place in Bangka Belitung islands has provided great contribution in the rate of environmental damage. Clearly seen, there has been occurred natural span changing on land, including the decreased of forest and plantation areas, the emergence of huge ponds as a result of mining that has created giant water inundation in many places. Meanwhile, the other environmental damage occurred in the form of watershed destruction and river siltation in many estuaries. The vegetation along the watershed also damaged. The researcher's interview with Rat from Wahana Lingkungan Hidup (Walhi) Bangka Belitung found information that environmental crisis occurred has caused the damaged of more or less 340,000 hectare. The forest damaged in this area in 2007 reached around 65 % (see Bangka Pos 25/1/2011). That is why, Ris, one of legislative members in this area stated that tin truly brought prosperity; however, the destruction of environment was very serious. Dok, on of educators in South Bangka said that environmental damaged had been very serious. Dok even drew an analogy that Bangka potency would drawing since there had been many holes as a result of mining that he referred to as like scurvy disease.

Meanwhile, environmental damaged also occurred on and offshore. Coral reef suffered from serious destruction in many points, while the beach siltation becomes unavoidable (see for example, Siringoringo & Hadi, 2014; Miliueudensie, 2016; Laporan Friends of Earth. 2012). Rus, one of citizens said that besides mining waste, mangrove destruction in coastal area also pushed the worsening of environmental damage. The watershed region in Perimping, Bangka

Regency has even been mined for times (see also Bangka Pos, 15/12/2015). Beach abrasion and sea water turbidity, according to Pak Su, have also become unavoidable as a result of mining taking place onshore and offshore. The damage natural resources are not worth with the income earned. The environmental damage that occurred cannot be recovered in a short term. In addition to a long period of time, the environmental damage also needs huge money in its rehabilitation process.

In this case, local people, either directly affected by environmental damage or non-victim of tin mining that doesn't pay attention to the carrying capacity of the the natural environment. Since the tin mining has been rampantly occurred, flood disaster as a result of the soil absorption capacity reduction often takes place. On January 2016, there was huge flood soaking almost all area in Bangka Island. This severe flooding has never been happened during the last 30 years in this island. On July 2017, there was a huge flooding soaking almost all of East Belitung Regency region signing that tin mining will in turn torment the people who live in that area (see also Bangka Pos, 25/7/2017).



**Figure 6:** *Mining in forest area*

### **5.2.7 Public distrust**

The attract interest signed by regulation attraction regarding mining between central and local government showed that this country tended to be in the wrong management. State (read: central government) was imprudent in creating a long term vision and regulative system, while at



the same time, it emerged the local government phenomenon that tended to wedged between practical politics interest and business consideration.

As the implication, law enforcement runs as if moving around the inconsistency. Law enforcement in mining sector seemed to look unfair and ineffective (see Haryadi, 2015). In many places, it can be clearly seen that mining is just left operating as they like. Meanwhile, in certain areas, the law enforcement was assertively performed. Not only is regional loci inconsistent, the serial time was also inconsistent. At a point of time, it was often conducted miners arrest in restricted area, while at another time it was left running illegally. This phenomenon revealed a condition in which the government apparently failed to create a political order. The result would certainly easy to predict that the country in this case was represented by security officers and local government experienced distrust in front of public. The state was like stuck in *going nowhere* condition to uphold the law in mining field. The signal that apparatus have played in tin management as apparently no secret anymore. This for example stated by a miner named Kardi in South Bangka who said that apparatus basically also played in the field, asking for fee in the term of a miner named Red. This was strengthened by Pang and San who worked as small miners by asserting that apparatus was only brave to take action to those who mined in small scale. Alv, one of informants from tourism actor element in Pangkal Pinang convinced that apparatus did not only back up, but also played.

Kus, one of informants in Bangka Regency said “Many government apparatus that have been directly involved in this mining business or become backing”. Meanwhile, in Kelabat Bay region, Rus said that the unconventional miners tended to be protected by certain actors. Things that are not different were said by Rahmadi that tin mining was backed up by government officials. Simply spoken, as stated by one of informants, Ali, that it is impossible for unconventional tin mining to be able to operate without backing from government apparatur.

Public distrust against law enforcement and mining management implicated on the decreased of state authority in front of its citizen. Without intending to conclude, there was a great allegation from the researchers that many illegal judgment cases, such as miner camp burning, certain group expulsion, or demonstration movement ended with violence was the climax point of the authority decreasing in front of its people. I called this condition as unstructured conflict between the state and its people.

Finally, the victim of this situation was the government officials themselves. As stated by Tam, “How can we trust, the officials themselves ‘play around’ with the tin businessmen”? “Community becomes antipathy”, that was the simple line said by Zul, a fisherman in South Bangka Regency. In one side, there’s a trap to preserve the ongoing situation on behalf of political and business interest; however, in the other side, the law enforcement was often disobeyed. In many public discourses, the country seemed to lose its charm to be the guardian of states’ authority. The interest attraction between law enforcer and government officials themselves split the wider interest.



**Figure 7:** *In conventional Mining Control in Bangka Tengah Regency*

(Picture source: Radar Bangka Online, August 22, 2017 edition)

### 5.2.8 Working Accident

Working accident is the very scary problem for the miners. Most of them were in the form of buried in sand, drowning, or other form of death would come to the miners in an illegal area. The illegal miners were generally not provided with the regulation regarding working safety since they worked for their own. There was unfair condition for the unconventional mining workers as they kept selling the tin they produced to private tin smelter companies through collectors; however, they son’t get any protection from the smelter company since their working relationship was non-permanent. This was difefferent with the official tin workers who operated under the management of PT. Timah, Tbk who were equipped with safety facilities. The general private companies didn’t directly hire miners, they just acted as tin collector and perform the smelting for export. Here it is the problem, because the miners must struggle for themselves in the tin mining chain.

Working accident has never been published in detail since this could be happened anytime without any official report and supervision. The information about the drowning miners or the miners who were buried in the ground in mining site have become the common information in local mass media. The Guardian in Stocklin-Weinberg (2017) detected the miners' number of working accident in 2010 by 21 people, in 2011 by 44 people, and in 2012 by 78 people (legal and illegal miners). Meanwhile, according to Erman (2013), death estimation data due to working accident in 2011 was about 1 people/week.



**Figure 8:** *The mining in South Bangka, A Risky Job*

### 5.3 Mining Sorrow

The recent important question in this mining context is who gets the most benefit from the tin mining that involves common people? The answer would certainly be the tin financiers, starting from local players to international players. The mining structure actually produced deep sorrow to people where the tin was produced. All international tin players and users, big companies, gave very small attention if we would not say they gave no attention at all. There was omission that tended to enjoy by businessmen, even international world and particularly the tin users were all closed their eyes. There hasn't been seen any attention from the international world on the dark side of one of the most important raw material in electrical industries in this world. The aforementioned local political economy condition showed some important things.

*First*, there is no natural resource that cannot be separated from their sin on local context where they are produced. The dark portrait on mining activities occurred is that there is no environmentally friendly mining (for example, also compare to the study of Wapwera, et al.,

2015; Adegboye, 2012). This condition is compounded by government people pragmatism and the people who are trapped in the proceed's each other-activities to get benefit from tin.

*Second*, the current condition raised a big question that there's a wrong political economy design. The current tin mining exploitation activities would only cause a deep sorrow toward the producing societies. The benefit gained was not appropriate with the dark rate it produced. It was needed much more capital than the benefit obtained. If we paid close attention to what already happened, the aspect of development equity would also be a problem. Some miners would indeed receive temporary benefit; however, for some other, tin mining would cause the longer problem, such as the working opportunity disruption, environmental damage, and an unmeasurable social destruction. Onward, environmental sovereignty is urgent to be the basic principle, borrowing from the term used by Akib (2012), environment sovereignty (ecocracy) must be the foothold for environmental protection, primarily in the natural resources exploitation activities.

*Third*, it needs tin management planning redesign in Indonesia. In the middle of non-renewable condition, tin commodity must be placed as an important one for this country, particularly when someday there will be industrialization process in Indonesia in which tin will be an important goods. The fact is that many countries are rich with natural resources; however, as its political law was not optimally managed, it even kept leaving poverty and in turn it would make the natural resources as a curse (Akib, 2012; see also Winanti, et al., 2017). Local and national government hence need to create a wisely tin utilization map considering that Bangka Belitung Islands is recently the **only tin producer area in Indonesia and Southeast Asia region** (Sujitno, 2007; Erman, 2010).

*Fourth*, foreign countries recently enjoying Indonesian tin should give more attention to the non-balance and problematic exploitation structure, rather than coming to enjoy the omission condition in Indonesia nowadays. The developed countries that become the tin users should control its exporation process. The currently ongoing tendency is that the developed countries still put the tin supplay needs interest as a part of common interstate sell and buy activities. Until at least recently, the user countries enjoy the tin benefit without paying attention to how it is produced: a condition in which the world economy activities act arbitrary; international world pragmatism.

## 6. Conclusion

As a non-renewable commodity, it could be concluded that the tin was explored without considering social-cultural aspects and natural environment sustainability. Tin mining produced the dark side that became unreplacable part from its mining efforts. The dark portrait of tin mining in Bangka Belitung was the displaceable farming land, fishery potency destruction, tourism potency damaged, and the high rate of drop out students, social conflict, environment damaged, public distrust, and working accident.

The mining dark portrait spanned the fact that environmental exploitation only placed the short term economic benefit aspect. Those who got the benefit were: tin financiers, politician-bureaucrats, and the government persons put the farmers, fishermen, tourism players, education community, and general people as the victim of the careless exploitation. Short term interests neglected the fact that the temporary profit became the trap for the wider long term interests.

The mining sorrow has been basically occurring. There is no friendly mining towards its exploration location. This condition signed that there was a wrong political economic design and it needed to conceptualize. At the same time, there was a necessity to rearrange tin utilization map in Indonesia. As the only tin producer area in Indonesia and Southeast Asia region, wise tin utilization apparently became unavoidable. International institutions from various countries should give special attention to the lame political economic structure, but not just stealthily enjoy it.

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