



Submitted:
Nov 19, 2023

Accepted:
Nov 28, 2023

Published:
Dec 1, 2023

What Neo-FPI offers toward the Muslim Community: Exploring a New Face of Islamic Activism and Populism in Indonesia

Ahalla Tsauro¹, Firmanda Taufiq²

¹National University of Singapore

²UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Contributor e-mail: ahalla.tsauro@u.nus.edu

Abstract: *Despite the image of traditional-moderate Islam in Indonesia, a religious-conservatism group such as Islamic Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam or FPI) had colored Islamic activism and populism in Indonesia in the last two decades. This group is indeed notoriously full of controversy because of harsh approaches and having a political mission, notably during the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election. The series of violent approaches and opposing Pancasila ideology then lead to the disbandment of FPI at the end of 2020 through a joint ministerial decision that brought several consequences, particularly in public perception. On the one hand, some might assume that public security, peace, and tranquillity have been achieved by violence-based group, but on the other hand, some might argue that this dissolution has received public sympathy as the government seems to be more authoritative and FPI bravely keep opposing and channeling public disappointment. Afterward, in early January 2021 with a new name, Islamic Brotherhood Front (Front Persaudaraan Islam or Neo-FPI) was reborn. This study aimed at exploring how Neo-FPI responds and transforms after being dissolved constitutionally by the government and to what extent this rebirth is accepted by the Muslim community. Through Sidney Tarrow's social movement theory, this research will assess Neo-FPI as a discourse of Islamic activism and populism through library research and will interview the group's members. The result of the study shows that the Neo-FPI might try to attempt on humanistic approach and moderation within the religious movement. However, substantially this group will not be different from the old version like an apple that falls not far from the tree. In addition, it is interesting to see how this group cope with the pandemic situation as the group's leader has been sentenced to jail due to legal issues.*

Keywords: *Democracy, FPI, Neo-FPI, Islamism, Populism*

Abstrak: Terlepas dari citra Islam tradisional-moderat di Indonesia, kelompok konservatisme agama seperti Front Pembela Islam (FPI) telah mewarnai aktivisme dan populisme Islam di Indonesia dalam dua dekade terakhir. Kelompok ini memang terkenal penuh kontroversi karena pendekatannya yang keras dan memiliki misi politik, terutama pada saat pemilihan gubernur Jakarta tahun 2017. Rangkaian pendekatan kekerasan dan menentang ideologi Pancasila tersebut kemudian berujung pada pembubaran FPI pada akhir tahun 2020 melalui keputusan bersama tiga menteri yang membawa beberapa konsekuensi, terutama dalam persepsi publik. Di satu sisi, beberapa pihak menganggap bahwa keamanan, kedamaian, dan ketentraman masyarakat telah dicapai oleh kelompok berbasis kekerasan, namun di sisi lain, beberapa pihak berpendapat bahwa pembubaran ini telah mendapatkan simpati publik karena pemerintah terlihat lebih berwibawa dan FPI dengan berani terus melawan dan menyalurkan kekecewaan publik. Setelah itu, pada awal Januari 2021, dengan nama baru, Front Persaudaraan Islam (Front Persaudaraan Islam atau Neo-FPI) lahir kembali. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi bagaimana Neo-FPI merespons dan bertransformasi setelah dibubarkan secara konstitusional oleh pemerintah dan sejauh mana kelahiran kembali ini diterima oleh komunitas Muslim. Melalui teori gerakan sosial Sidney Tarrow, penelitian ini akan mengkaji Neo-FPI sebagai wacana aktivisme Islam dan populisme melalui penelitian kepustakaan dan wawancara dengan anggota kelompok tersebut. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Neo-FPI mungkin akan mencoba untuk mencoba pendekatan humanis dan moderasi dalam gerakan keagamaan. Namun, secara substansial kelompok ini tidak akan berbeda dengan versi lama seperti buah apel yang jatuh tidak jauh dari pohonnya. Selain itu, menarik untuk melihat bagaimana kelompok ini melakukan kudeta dengan situasi pandemi karena pemimpin kelompok ini telah dijatuhi hukuman penjara karena masalah hukum.

Kata Kunci: Demokrasi, FPI, Neo-FPI, Islamisme, Populisme

INTRODUCTION

On 25 March 2022, hundreds of people from several conservative Islamic groups took the street in Jakarta protesting the statement of Minister of Religious Affairs, Yaqut Cholil Qoumas on adzan (a call to prayer) that being manipulated and considered similar to the barking of a dog. This protest was successfully led by several groups mainly the 212 Alumni Association (PA 212), the National Movement to Guard Ulama Fatwa (GNPF), and former members of Islamic Defender Front /Front Pembela Islam (FPI). Amidst expressing this disappointment and anger about that issue and the accumulation of other disappointing cases, this momentum was utilized to launch publicly Islamic Brotherhood/Front Persaudaraan Islam (Neo-FPI) after FPI dissolution back in 2020.

The disbandment of FPI was based on a Ministerial Decree, assessing that this organization was against Pancasila as the nation's ideology. At the same time, with the imprisonment of Habib Rizieq Shihab (HRS) for breaking covid rules, FPI's space is also increasingly restricted by the freezing of the organization's

website and official social media by the government. This freezing and the Covid-19 pandemic were responded to quickly by the FPI top figures. On January 1, 2022 Neo-FPI was declared with Qurtubi Jaelani as the leader with a similar organizational structure and new logo, attributes, and article of associations. In the latest rally, the current structure of the Neo-FPI was announced with Muhammad bin Husein Alatas who is HRS's son-in-law as a new chairman. The future of this organization seems interesting to follow up on.

A week before such protest specifically on 16-17 March 2022, Neo-FPI had organized the first national conference in Pesantren Salafiyah Al-Futuhiyan Lebak, Banten. This conference was participated by members from provinces stemming from Sumatera, Kalimantan to East Nusa Tenggara. The conference resulted in the launching of a new article of association and the inauguration of a new structure 2022-2029. Muhammad bin Husein Alatas is HRS's son-in-law was elected as a new chairman replacing Qurthubi Jaelani who becomes a high advisor. As a new chairman, Alatas is relatively young as he was born in 1991 and has been actively preaching in various places including regular online teaching of Al-Hikam by Abdullah bin Alwi Al Haddad broadcasted on Front TV, a banned FPI YouTube channel. Apart from HRS influence, Alatas was also chosen notably due to his knowledge and educational background, having studied a bachelor's in Al-Azhar University Egypt and a master's in UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. In his thesis written fully in Arabic, he wrote "Political Regulation In Islamic States In Imam Haramain's Perspective".

The revival of the new FPI as a reaction to the dissolution of the old one was swift and structured compared to certain Islamic organizations that have disbanded before. Firstly, Hizbut-Tahrir Indonesia. Since its disbandment in 2019, until now there have been no clear steps to form a new version of HTI even though illegally the activities of former HTI members can still be found in various places, especially in urban areas. Secondly, was Masyumi during the reign of President Soekarno. Although it has been a long time since there was a declaration of Masyumi reborn in 2019 the sympathizers of this group were under the radar and tended to be working silently. In a recent conversation with former members of FPI, we find out that FPI during the period of disbandment, some young members of FPI considered leaving the group and becoming members of other organizations such as the Masyumi group in Depok.

Lately, to coordinate each action and to update with the latest movement, FPI often uses telegram channels called Angin Nusantara (4182 followers) and the official Gunung Angin (11.182 followers) to disseminate current issues that trigger members' participation. The selection of a telegram account is true with considerations so that it is not easily detected and not easy to take down. Unlike social media in general which is easily controlled and monitored it is often lost and cannot be reclaimed. Of course, these methods have then made FPI survive amid the post-disbandment transition period and restrictions on activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, efforts are needed for FPI to be carried out as a form of quick and clear response.

The new FPI continues the old FPI agenda by presenting a new structure, namely, the head of the new FPI is held by the son-in-law of Rizieq Shihab, publicly known as HRS, but the command and strategy of the movement come from HRS. Therefore, the spirit of the new FPI is more reactive-responsive to issues and events

related to Islamic society that is currently sticking out in the public to obtain social and political capital as they have before. By doing so, they need to regain public sympathy so that they can continue to exist to be able to regain popularity and increase their bargaining position, especially when faced with political party elites. What they have done back in 2017 which contributed to the rise of populism shows that momentum to take action at all cost is the way they lift social-political status in public. It is important to take note and pay attention to small steps made by Neo-FPI because it can prevent the public from accumulating those actions that might show the side of physical violence. This emergence of Neo-FPI might raise a question in public on what they offer to society and do they are different from the old one.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study aimed at exploring how Neo-FPI responds and transforms after being dissolved constitutionally by the government and to what extent this rebirth is accepted by the Muslim community. Through Sidney Tarrow's social movement theory, this research will assess Neo-FPI as a discourse of Islamic activism and populism through library research and will interview the group's members.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FPI and the Indonesian Muslim Community

The Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) is one of the mass Islamic religious organizations that has an approach that leads to violence. This organization is one of the radical Islamic groups after the Reformation in Indonesia (Jahroni, 2004). This can be seen in several cases and events that provoked them to participate in these cases, including the Ketapang incident (1998) and the case in Mbah Priok (2004), and the attack on Komnas HAM on January 10, 2000 (Munajat, 2012). FPI also focuses on *amr ma'ruf* and *nahi munkar*. FPI's Islamic model has led to the escalation of radical Islamic movements in Indonesia. This situation can be seen from its impact, especially on Muslim groups in the areas of Jakarta and its surroundings such as Tangerang, Depok, Bogor, and Bekasi. This also caused the growth in the number of members and supporters of FPI to continue to increase.

After being disbanded by the government, FPI transformed its name and movement strategy. This is part of their efforts to get public support and legality from the government for their organization. The Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) changed its name to the Islamic Brotherhood Front (FPI). The new name is also not just changing the name of the organization. However, the AD/ART FPI includes and includes Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution as the basis of reference in their organizational movement (Tsauo & Taufiq, 2022). This indicates that the new FPI has changed in terms of administration. However, in terms of their approach, they still use the old approach, although its intensity is reduced.

FPI has just made various efforts to demonstrate its existence, even though this group has not yet received legality from the government to establish a new organization again. Still the same as the old FPI, the new FPI is also based in Jakarta and its surroundings, their movement strategy, mobilization efforts, recruitment, and activities are centered in that area. However, they have several branches in various regions in Indonesia. The movement's command was held by the head of the center, which is currently held by Habib Rizieq Shihab's son-in-law, namely

Muhammad Alattas. The change in leadership of the new FPI is also an indication that this group is trying to restructure the organization by reshuffling the position holders in the organizational structure. Furthermore, the new FPI also made some efforts in some momentums and events. This situation is used by them to take a role and participate in voicing their opinions and decisions on an issue. Such is the case with demonstrations against criticism of the decision of the Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, Yaqut Cholil Qoumas. That incident also demonstrated the new FPI's participation in criticizing and rejecting the decision and policies of the Minister of Religion.

The new FPI is inseparable from the old FPI, the National Movement to Guard the Fatwa-Indonesian Ulema Council (GNPF-MUI), and the Alumni Brotherhood (PA) 212. However, the new FPI is trying to show the public that they are not entirely the same as the FPI. long. This is evidenced by the absence of Munarman, the former Secretary-General of FPI, in their new organizational structure. Munarman himself had to be arrested and detained for his involvement in a terrorist group. This means that the new FPI is more selective in selecting functional officeholders in their structural ranks. This also means that the new FPI movement strategy is different from the old FPI. Like NU, the new FPI is also trying to promote aswajaization in their organization. Of course, this situation made FPI reorganize its organization and try to meet the constitutional criteria to gain legitimacy from the government (Tsauro & Taufiq, 2022). FPI's da'wah also shows that they involve the principle of moderation and strive to maintain the sunnah that has been brought by the Prophet Muhammad.

Previously, the old FPI was seen as an opposition to the Joko Widodo government, which carried out sweeping activities by closing down several places that were considered immoral. FPI also conducted various demonstrations against all forms of activities deemed not by the Shari'a. In the old FPI's view, Indonesia needed to enforce Islamic sharia-based on *Amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*. This can be interpreted as an effort to call for goodness and prevent evil. Meanwhile, in the FPI's interpretation, *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* is *fardhu kifayah*, that is, every Muslim must do it according to their abilities (Waty, 2021).

The new FPI and its relationship with other Muslim communities in Indonesia can be seen as a responsive-reactive relationship. This can be proven by the existence of several momentums and events, where FPI takes responsive action on a certain matter. The blasphemy case led to Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok) with the issue of allegedly insulting Surah Al-Maidah verse 51. This prompted FPI to respond and request that Ahok be arrested for the alleged blasphemy (Jakarta Post, n.d.). Meanwhile, FPI also made various efforts, including demonstrations and attempts to have Ahok imprisoned for his actions. Not only that, the organization that reported this blasphemy case is the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), which is dominated by ulama affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah. The group is considered a moderate Islamic religious group (Qurrata A'yun, 2020).

Furthermore, FPI is also responsive to issues and discourses that occur in the context of identity politics in Indonesia. This group plays an important role in various social, political, and religious-related momentum and events. FPI made reactive efforts and opposed groups that had different opinions from them. The existence of the new FPI cannot be separated from the old organization and its main figures. Recent demonstrations show that FPI cannot escape its reactive character

and responsiveness to religious issues by finding fault with religious leaders who hold opposing views. This character may be utilized as a political commodity for FPI that will be consistently carried out, take momentum and then emerge from its nest to influence legal and political processes. What is interesting to note is to what extent to which FPI's commitment to Pancasila is used as the main foundation of the organization.

If we look at the context of the disbandment of FPI by the government through a Joint Decree (SKB) signed by Minister of Home Affairs (Mendagri) Tito Karnavian, Minister of Law and Human Rights Yasonna Laoly, Minister of Communication and Information (Menkominfo) Johnny G. Plate. FPI is considered one of the mass Islamic organizations that are not by government policies. This is stated in the AD/ART FPI article which states that its vision and mission explain the implementation of Islamic law in a kaffah manner under the auspices of the Islamic caliphate (Times & Rochmanudin, 2019).

Several reasons were taken by the government to dissolve FPI, namely first, Law Number 16 of 2017 concerning Social Organizations (Ormas) which was intended to maintain the existence of the ideology and basic consensus of the state, namely Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, the integrity of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia, and Bhinneka Tunggal Ika. Second, the contents of the FPI's AD/ART were stated to be contrary to article 2 of the Law on Social Organizations (Ormas), namely not contradicting Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution (UU RI No. 17 of 2013). Third, the Decree of the Minister of Home Affairs Number 01-00-00/010/D.III.4/VI/2014 dated June 20, 2014, regarding the Registration Certificate (SKT) of FPI as a mass organization which is valid until June 20, 2019, and has not met the requirements to extend the SKT. Fourth, namely social organizations (Ormas) may not conflict with Article 5 letter g, Article 6 letter f, Article 21 letters b and d, Article 59 Paragraph (3) letters a, c, and d, Article 59 Paragraph (4) letter c, and Article 82A of the Ormas Law (Kompas, 2020). Fifth, the management and/or members of FPI as well as those who have joined FPI, based on data that as many as 35 people have been involved in criminal acts of terrorism. Of these, 29 people have been sentenced.

From the description above, it can be seen that FPI has been and is considered a banned mass organization by the government. However, FPI members and sympathizers are still very strong in terms of networking with the position holders in the FPI management structure. After its disbandment in 2020, FPI underwent several transformations, including changing its name to Laskar Pembela Islam on 30 December 2020 (NewsDesk, 2020), the Islamic Unity Front in 2021 until it finally changed to the Islamic Brotherhood Front until now (VOI, 2021). According to the analysis of Greg Fealy and Sally White, the dispute between the government and Islamist groups over the disbandment of the FPI certainly poses political and security risks to the Joko Widodo regime (Greg Fealy and Sally White, 2021). So far, the Joko Widodo administration has also been under various attacks and is vulnerable to criticism and mobilization from Islamist groups. On the other hand, if the Muslim community sees the disbandment of the FPI as an anti-Islamic policy. Of course, this can be a counterattack for the government. In addition, this also caused FPI members and sympathizers to be more radical and violent over the policy.

According to the Indonesian Survey Institute (LSI) in April 2011, the public's attitude towards the disbandment of FPI was also seen in the number of respondents as many as 1620 people in all provinces in Indonesia. The survey results stated that 48% did not know about the ban on FPI by the government. Meanwhile, 52% were aware of the FPI disbandment policy, while 63% agreed with the government's policy, and 28% opposed the policy. Meanwhile, the results of a survey in February 2021 from Saiful Mujani Research and Consulting (SMRC) stated that 77% of respondents were aware of the ban on FPI. Of these, 59% agreed with the ban, and 35% did not agree (SMRC, 2021). Based on the survey, shows that more people agree with the government's policy of disbanding FPI and support this action.

The disbandment of FPI is one of the government's policies which is considered to be one of the critical decisions in matters of mass organizations that are deemed not by government policies. Previously, the government had also banned and dissolved Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) which was considered to be an Islamic organization that was at odds with the government (Burhani, 2017). This group is considered by the government to conflict with Pancasila as the state ideology. This is the reason the government through Perppu No. 2/2017 which was signed by Joko Widodo on 10 July 2017 dissolved and banned HTI organizations in Indonesia. However, some scholars and academics saw several things related to the dissolution of the organization. For example, they did not agree with the government's policy on its decision to dissolve HTI. Zeyno Baran mentions that HTI is a "conveyor belt of terrorism" (Baran, 2009). Meanwhile, Mohamed Nawab Mohamed Usman considered Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) "a reverse conveyor belt for terrorism" (Osman, 2010). Meanwhile, Greg Fealy considered that "there is no evidence in the public domain that makes Hizb ut-Tahrir a violent group (Akbarzadeh & Mansouri, 2007).

FPI is still moving and has a strong structural base. This group also has thousands of masses, both loyal members and sympathizers. For this reason, FPI is only trying to raise its "bargaining position" amid the political and socio-religious constellation in Indonesia. This is marked by reactions and responses to several events that make them have to go out to express their attitudes and opinions. For example, regarding the deterrence carried out by the Singaporean authorities against Abdul Somad Batubara (Somad) on May 16, 2022 (MHA Statement in Response to Media Queries on Abdul Somad Batubara, 2022). Some are considered and known by the Singaporean authorities to have spread extremist teachings and segregation that is not accepted by the multi-racial and multi-religious society in Singapore. This made him not allowed by the Singaporean authorities to enter his country and he had to be returned to Indonesia.

Meanwhile, FPI is trying to respond reactively to the case. The FPI considers that what the Singaporean authorities have done has insulted and ridiculed Muslims in Indonesia. FPI issued a stance and statement, namely, firstly, regretting the inappropriate actions and treatment of Abdul Somad and encouraging the Singaporean authorities to provide an explanation to the public in Indonesia. Second, FPI considered that there was an error in the profiling of Abdul Somad by the Singapore immigration authorities. In addition, the Islamophobic narrative created by pro-regime buzzers creates a negative image of preachers who are critical of the authorities. Third, demand advocacy from the government through the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Abdul Somad for deterrence. Fourth, demanding the government not to create buzzers that pose a threat to the nation. Finally, asking the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) not to remain silent about the case experienced by Abdul Somad (DPP FPI Statement Regarding the Deportation of Ustadz Abdul Somad from Singapore, 2022).

Neo-FPI revival might not be easy and it faces an uphill task of convincing the public that they are different from FPI. Indonesians will still question its true intentions. The Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs, Mahfud MD, stated that if there was a new establishment or recognition of FPI, it would not violate government law (Amirullah, 2021). Meanwhile, the Minister of Religious Affairs, Yaqut Cholil Qoumas, insinuated that there will always be attempts by groups to challenge Indonesia's diversity (*kebhinekaan*). Speaking at a recent national conference held by Gerakan Pemuda Ansor—the NU youth movement—the minister did not hide his feelings and was upfront when reminding Indonesians to be mindful of unnoticed threats coming from FPI's camouflage (CNN Indonesia, 2022). The two responses show that the government, through its ministerial statements and responses, represents the difference in welcoming the emergence of a new FPI in the constellation of Islamic organizations in Indonesia.

In its historical journey, FPI is one of the Islamic organizations that are very responsive to various issues and discourses that are currently becoming problems in the public context. Therefore, FPI is also easy to carry out controversial actions by closing nightclubs, brothels, and places that are considered places of immorality. Thus, they often carry out sweeping and conflict with other religious-based organizations (Huda, 2020). The event of the Action to Defend Islam also became the momentum of the largest post-reform demonstration movement in 1998, which was initiated by the FPI. This momentum made FPI try and encourage Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok) to be imprisoned for blasphemy of the religion he had committed. There are several reasons why FPI strongly rejects Ahok's leadership, including because Ahok's policies are considered detrimental to their group. Rules related to the sale of sacrificial animals, the prohibition of FPI activities to enforce the commandments of good and evil, and they do not like Ahok's attitude which is considered cruel to the people of Jakarta. They also considered that Ahok's attitude and character were not by the people of Jakarta because the majority were Muslims (Abiyoso & Thohari, 2019).

Furthermore, FPI's relations with several other Islamic organizations, especially moderate Islamic organizations, such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah are often at odds and in conflict. However, sometimes they are also able to blend. This can be seen in the relationship between FPI and NU in Bangkalan, Madura. This is because the FPI leaders in the city are held by *kiai* and local NU figures (Hamdi, 2013). Meanwhile, NU and Muhammadiyah also struggled after the overthrow of the Suharto regime. On the other hand, FPI is one of the mass organizations that uses a violence-based approach and repressive actions, but they also claim that they also carry out religious practices like what is done by NU and believe in *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah*. There is a group calling themselves NU Garis Lurus and calling Habib Rizieq Shihab a representative of the *ulama* who believes in *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* (Syechbubakr, 2018).

Exploring a New Islamic Activism and Populism

The activism of Islamist groups reached its peak after the end of the Suharto regime in 1998. This momentum marked the start of the Reformation which gave rise to various conservative and radical Islamic mass organizations and religious groups, such as Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), Laskar Jihad, and several other religious groups (Bruinessen, 2013). This situation has also made these Islamic religious organizations and groups launch their actions and movements. In this case, the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) is also one of the Islamic organizations that often get public attention, especially because they often participate and are involved in demonstrations, controlling (sweeping) places that are considered immoral, and several responses related to issues and discourses that currently went viral in the community.

FPI has considerable bargaining power, especially in the last two editions of the national election. The attitude and position of the FPI are quite harsh and become moral police with a violent approach in dealing with making it a public enemy. Among FPI's positions regarding democracy, for example, HRS is a central figure who does not like democracy because it can make people infidels (Wilson, 2014). On one occasion, HRS even stated that democracy is more dangerous than pork, thus considering pro-democracy groups as polluted groups. He added that democracy opens the door to change that can carry anything past for it needs to be then closed. However, HRS believes that society can be cleaned up. In the next general election period, FPI acted as a broker for the political elite to then gain public votes, especially conservative Muslim groups, and accept parties according to their interests to form unwritten alliances. The 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election became an important starting point for FPI because it was able to accommodate public opinion, convince its views, manipulate, and get the voices of conservative Muslim groups.

The relationship between the FPI and law enforcement officers often ends sadly. This cannot be separated from FPI members and high-ranking organizations who stumbled on various problems and ended up going to prison. The accumulation of these defeats then strengthened their position against the government and the interest groups affiliated with them. So, often attacks against the government are a form of expression of disappointment or unforgivable hurt. Even when HRS stumbled upon a case, he was willing to fly to Saudi Arabia to escape a legal case. Finally, in the police case of that shot dead, 5 FPI members were declared acquitted on the pretext of defensive efforts. As a result of this, FPI's level of trust in law enforcement is very low.

Dissatisfaction and disappointment with law enforcement have an impact on skepticism and dissatisfaction with the government. On one occasion, FPI even released its stance criticizing the government's new halal logo, which is considered Java-centric. They are willing to attack those who are ideologically opposed to Islamic orientation. But on the other hand, FPI is reclaiming public attention through efforts to seize social and political capital with a humanitarian approach. This is shown by the ways they assist others when natural disasters occur such as floods or Mount Meletus. The volunteers even continued to work amid the disbandment of FPI. This of course led to a debate about FPI which was previously seen as negative and showed the good side.

Interestingly, FPI and law enforcement have also had a hidden relationship and protected each other. Saragih (2011) notes that the FPI was once supported by the head of the Jakarta police, Nugroho Djayusman, and also Sutanto, the former head of the Republic of Indonesia police (2005-2006) and also the head of the National Intelligence Agency (2009-2011) by saying that they likened the FPI to a house guard dog, meaning to use FPI in several circumstances and for a specific purpose. If it is withdrawn from its formation, FPI cannot be separated from government intervention at the end of the New Order era, the intervention of several high-ranking police and soldiers. In stopping or disbanding an organization that is considered a threat, the state's commitment is not full, not one hundred percent.

The emergence of Neo-FPI can be interpreted by Sydney Tarrow (1998) as a puzzle of political opportunity. The social movement increased when it gained the support of resources and successfully mobilized the resource. The main resources of Neo-FPI cannot be far from the old version which is relying on Islamic institutions affiliated with them and some economic resources and trading. Apart from that, it cannot be denied that there were rewards from political elites that benefitted from their movement. They must keep the relationship with those given resources made by the old FPI to keep moving and obtain social and political capital that can open another political opportunity to get another elite support in the system. Rizieq Shihab is the leader of FPI that play a huge role in organizing collective action and also connecting networks between one social group with others to voice the purpose of action. While he is in prison, the structure of Neo-FPI might take part in seizing and making opportunities by themselves. Tarrow added that the development of social movements is largely determined by how large and powerful the resources are and whether the resources are mobilized appropriately. Those who have the legitimacy of power or charismatic leader or high-level leaders is an actors in mobilization structures.

In addition, FPI has a special place and has many supporters and sympathizers. In fact, from the ranks of FPI's organizational structure to its members, as well as its several branches spread across various regions, it is very solid. However, sometimes their movement strategy is not controlled, meaning that even though they have a clear organizational structure. However, they are very responsive and reactive to issues, discourses, and cases that do not match their views and opinions. Furthermore, FPI is also associated with terrorist activities in Indonesia (Woodward et al., 2014). They use intimidation, fear, and violence to pursue their political goals. However, the Indonesian and international governments did not include FPI as a terrorist group. FPI operates and operates in the discursive and socio-political space in Indonesia. They try to show the public that they are an organization that represents Muslims in Indonesia and partners with the security forces. FPI also tries to position itself as not a terrorist organization, but it can position itself within the accepted discourse frame. This situation is used by them to get public attention and respond actively to certain occasions and events.

The activism of the Islamic movement carried out by the FPI seeks to enforce the commandments of *ma'ruf nahi munkar*. This can be seen from the vision and mission contained in the AD/ART FPI which describes this matter. In addition, the new FPI also has three flagship programs, namely efforts to deliberalize,

deradicalize, and self-employment. These three programs are the difference between the new FPI and the old FPI. The new FPI also uses social media, including Youtube, Telegram, and websites to carry out their da'wah and movements. Their official account is called Islamic Brotherhood Television or abbreviated as IB-TV (Islamic Brotherhood Television - IBTV - YouTube, n.d.). They are very massive and use social media and the media they have by responding to and criticizing several issues and discourses that are developing, including political, religious, and social issues in Indonesia. This has made FPI stronger, although the legality of the organization is still being questioned after it was dissolved by the government.

In addition, FPI also uses a populist approach in their movement. The momentum for the Defending Islam Action became an important event on Indonesia's map of religious movements. FPI's populism is part of its strategy for attracting public support and sympathy in meeting certain targets. The issue of blasphemy against Ahok, the election of the governor of DKI Jakarta, and several issues and discourses that are currently surfacing in the public. So the FPI took the opportunity and responded to the problem (Daniel, 2009).

However, FPI also cannot be separated from various challenges and blows from various parties, especially the government. This is because FPI often clashes with the government. This also makes FPI vulnerable to their disbandment and their often controversial activities, as well as being violent for their actions. The case of Habib Rizieq Shihab for violating health protocols at the Maulid Nabi event in Petamburan was also an issue that forced him to be imprisoned (The Jakarta Globe, 2021). For FPI, this is considered part of the government's political efforts to stop their movement. Moreover, Habib Rizieq Shihab became one of the leaders of the FPI who was arrested on charges of this matter.

The FPI's attitude and actions which were considered to be contrary to Pancasila and anti-NKRI became the reason for the government to dissolve and prohibit the mass organization. However, FPI is still trying to re-emerge and create a new mass organization by changing its name. In the AD/ART, the new FPI is even more accommodating to government policies and legislation. This is nothing but to gain public sympathy and legitimacy from the government because the new FPI is more cooperative and by the laws and regulations, as well as government policies related to mass organizations in Indonesia.

FPI can develop its activities in political, social, economic, and religious spheres using collaboration to strengthen the autonomy of its organization (Facal, 2020). At the local political level, this group can offer a position as a pressure maker that more or less has an impact on the decision-making process and can even provide advantages for individuals and other interested groups. In terms of the economy, the collaboration will of course lead to business networks that lead to economic independence. One of the significant outputs after the 212 demonstrations was the emergence of 212Mart stores in several places by considering the strategic position and targeted areas. On a social level, this organization allows underprivileged groups to express their dissatisfaction with the local government to gain material benefits, even though it is very small and sporadic. FPI has long paid attention to thugs and street children so that they can be nurtured and given jobs. Meanwhile, the educated class will be directed at full awareness of the ideas of introducing the shariatization project and more Islamic norms (Ngatawi, 2006: 106).

In the religious sphere, organizational autonomy is certainly supported and encouraged by educational institutions, Islamic boarding schools, and scientific assemblies spread across several strategic places such as the Al-Umm Islamic Boarding School in Ciputat and the Markaz Syariah Mega Mendung Islamic Boarding School in Bogor. But of course, it needs to be strengthened by improving the quality of insight of educators, including from other Islamic organizations that are directly affiliated. So that insight into the religion of this organization is maintained, as it combines the goals of social morality and justifies violence in the name of Islam on the one hand, but on the other hand, provides direct opposition to the ruling government that is not in line with their vision and even the state constitution.

CONCLUSION

The recent movements of the Islamic Brotherhood Front (Front Persaudaraan Islam) or the so-called Neo-FPI or the new FPI, the reincarnation of the Islamic Defender Front (Front Pembela Islam) should be considered and need more attention since the inauguration in March 2022. These movements aimed at none other than three goals; express anger, reclaim social and political capital and also perform short-term maneuvers. These are reflected in a brief observation during March-May 2022. First, the polemic of the statement from the Minister of Religion, Yaquut Cholil Qoumas regarding the setting of the call to prayer (azan) which was then manipulated as if to align it with the barking of a dog is a form of effort to use momentum as a political commodity to attract the masses to the street protesting him in front of the ministry office.

Second, FPI released an official letter determining the beginning of Eid al-Fitr which legally included its falakiah team. This is very important to show the independence of FPI amid the ministry of religion and other mainstream religious organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah. Third, responding to LGBT issues was initiated by a leading public figure and podcaster, Deddy Corbuzer who invited two gay couples. Not long after that, the British embassy in Jakarta raised the LGBT flag in its office which sparked the anger of some groups. Fourth, the Palestinian issue is still a foreign issue that FPI has special attention to. The killing of Al-Jazeera reporter, Shireen Abu Akleh was also responded to by FPI by issuing a statement and attitude. Fifth, anger over the case of Ustadz Abdul Somad being stopped for holiday in Singapore. The issues responded to by FPI threatening Singapore Embassy in Indonesia by conducting a demonstration, have not been able to attract a bigger mass, unlike the 2016-2017 period. This needs to be considered because the accumulation of what FPI is currently doing can be likened to a warm-up so that it can then be able to gather a larger mass in the future. What FPI is doing lately is indirectly trying to attract more sympathizers, if one or two people are applauding in a crowd, so that the crowd or the audience will all applaud unconsciously and instinctively.

The significant change can be seen from the stance and principle that was previously pro-caliphate and NKRI under sharia law to pro-Pancasila and NKRI, although internally its activities were still disseminating negative propaganda towards the government and groups they dislike the most. The neo-FPI approach tends to be reactive-responsive to current social and political issues related to Islamic society in the community, including a manipulating split tongue case by

Minister Yaqut, LGBT issues, Palestine, Ustadz Abdul Somad, and many more. These approaches and methods are meant to reclaim social and political capital that had dropped after group disbandment and nationwide restriction during the pandemic. In addition, the relationship between FPI and other Muslim groups outside their inner circle tends to be reactive and harsh towards minority groups such as Ahmadiyya Syiah, and also towards Nahdlatul Ulama due to historical social-political factors and its current position closer to the government. To FPI, NU is considered as an organization that disregards and dishonoured ulama, supporting the disbandment of FPI and against the emergence of Neo-FPI. Although both practice similar Sunni traditions, this hostility still dominated the current bad propaganda content of Neo-FPI towards NU.

REFERENCES

- Abiyoso, W., & Thohari, S. (2019). Gerakan Front Pembela Islam (FPI) dalam Aksi Bela Islam tahun 2016 di Jakarta. *Jurnal Kajian Ruang Sosial-Budaya*, 3(2), 78–100.
- Akbarzadeh, S., & Mansouri, F. (2007). *Islam and Political Violence: Muslim Diaspora and Radicalism in the West (Library of International Relations)*. Tauris Academic Studies.
- Amirullah. (2021, January 1). *Eks FPI Bentuk Ormas Baru, Mahfud Md: Boleh, Asal Tak Melanggar Hukum*. Tempo. <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1419302/eks-fpi-bentuk-ormas-baru-mahfud-md-boleh-asal-tak-melanggar-hukum>
- Baran, Z. (2009, January 28). *Fighting the War of Ideas*. Foreign Affairs. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/europe/2005-10-01/fighting-war-ideas>. (Accessed 20 April 2022).
- Bruinessen, M. V. (2013). *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the Conservative Turn* (New ed.). Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- Burhani, A. N. (2017). *The Banning of Hizbut Tahrir and the Consolidation of Democracy in Indonesia*. 2017, 10.
- Daniel, N. (2009). *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image*. Oneworld.
- Even Though It Has Changed Its Name, FPI's Activities Will Still Be Prohibited*. (n.d.). VOI - Waktunya Merevolusi Pemberitaan. Retrieved May 23, 2022, from <https://voi.id/en/news/25404/meski-berganti-nama-kegiatan-fpi-bakal-tetap-dilarang>
- Hamdi, A. Z. (2013). Radicalizing Indonesian Moderate Islam from Within: The NU-FPI Relationship in Bangkalan, Madura. *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 7(1), 71–95.
- Huda, S. (2020). Fpi: Potret Gerakan Islam Radikal Di Indonesia. *Al-Hikmah*, 5(2), Article 2. <http://journal.um-surabaya.ac.id/index.php/Ah/article/view/4282> (Accessed 10 May 2022).
- Indonesia, C. N. N. (n.d.). *Yaqut Ungkap Eks FPI dan HTI Masih Bergerak di Bawah Tanah*. nasional. Retrieved August 31, 2022, from <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20220330191715-20-778125/yaqut-ungkap-eks-fpi-dan-hti-masih-bergerak-di-bawah-tanah>

- Islamic Brotherhood Television—IPTV - YouTube. (n.d.). Retrieved May 23, 2022, from <https://www.youtube.com/c/IslamicBrotherhoodTelevisionIBTV>
- Jahroni, J. (2004). Defending the Majesty of Islam: Indonesia's Front Pembela Islam (FPI) 1998-2003. *Studia Islamika*, 11(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v11i2.601>
- Media, K. C. (2020, December 30). 6 Alasan Pemerintah Bubarkan dan Larang Kegiatan FPI, <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2020/12/30/14545951/6-alasan-pemerintah-bubarkan-dan-larang-kegiatan-fpi> (Accessed 10 May 2022).
- MHA Statement in Response to Media Queries on Abdul Somad Batubara. (n.d.). Ministry of Home Affairs. Retrieved May 20, 2022, from <http://www.mha.gov.sg/mediaroom/press-releases/mha-statement-in-response-to-media-queries-on-abdul-somad-batubara/>.
- Munajat. (2012). *FPI (Islamic Defenders' Front): The Making of a Violent Islamist Movement in the New Democracy of Indonesia* [Thesis]. <https://oaktrust.library.tamu.edu/handle/1969.1/ETD-TAMU-2012-05-10865>
- Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah struggle with internal divisions in the post-Soeharto era. (n.d.). Indonesia at Melbourne. Retrieved May 20, 2022, from <https://indonesiaatmelbourne.unimelb.edu.au/nahdlatul-ulama-and-muhammadiyah-struggle-with-internal-divisions-in-the-post-soeharto-era/>
- NewsDesk, N. (2020, December 30). FPI Changed its Name to Islamic United Front. *Netral News*. <https://netral.news/en/fpi-changed-its-name-to-islamic-united-front.html>
- Osman, M. N. M. (2010). Reviving the Caliphate in the Nusantara: Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia's Mobilization Strategy and Its Impact in Indonesia. *Terrorism and Political Violence*. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09546553.2010.496317>
- Pernyataan DPP FPI Terkait Pendeportasian Ustadz Abdul Somad dari Singapura. (n.d.). *Fakta Kini*. Retrieved May 20, 2022, from <https://www.faktakini.info/2022/05/ Pernyataan-dpp-fpi-terkait.html>
- Post, T. J. (n.d.). Report links presiding justice of Ahok's case review to FPI. *The Jakarta Post*. Retrieved May 20, 2022, from <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2018/03/29/report-links-presiding-justice-of-ahoks-case-review-to-fpi.html>
- Qurrata A'yun, R. (2020). Politicizing blasphemy in Indonesia: How Islamic Alliances are Established. *Melbourne Asia Review*, 4. <https://doi.org/10.37839/MAR2652-550X4.19>
- Redaksi. (2021, April 6). Sikap Publik Nasional terhadap HTI dan FPI. *SaifulMujani*. <https://saifulmujani.com/sikap-publik-nasional-terhadap-hti-dan-fpi/>
- Rizieq Sentenced to Eight Months in Jail for Health Protocol Violations. (2021, May 27). *Jakarta Globe*. <https://jakartaglobe.id/news/rizieq-sentenced-to-eight-months-in-jail-for-health-protocol-violations>
- Tsauro, Ahalla & Taufiq, Firmanda. 2022. *The New FPI: Don't Buy the Same Horse Twice*. (2022, May 4). ISEAS Fulcrum Commentary. Available online at <https://fulcrum.sg/the-new-fpi-dont-buy-the-same-horse-twice/>

- The politics of banning FPI. (2021, June 18). *New Mandala*. <https://www.newmandala.org/the-politics-of-banning-fpi/> (Accessed 10 May 2022).
- Times, I. D. N., & Rochmanudin. (n.d.). *Isi Lengkap Pasal 6 AD/ART FPI yang Dipermasalahan Mendagri*. IDN Times. Retrieved May 23, 2022, from <https://www.idntimes.com/news/indonesia/rochmanudin-wijaya/isi-lengkap-pasal-6-adart-fpi-yang-dipermasalahan-mendagri>
- Undang-undang Republik Indonesia No. 17 Tahun 2013 tentang Organisasi Kemasyarakatan, https://www.dpr.go.id/dokjdih/document/uu/UU_2013_17.pdf (Accessed 20 May 2022).
- Waty, R. R. (2021). The Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) As an Opposition Force in The Joko Widodo's Era in 2014-2020. *International Journal of Islamic Khazanah*, 11(2), 118-133.
- Woodward, M., Yahya, M., Rohmaniyah, I., Coleman, D. M., Lundry, C., & Amin, A. (2014). The Islamic Defenders Front: Demonization, Violence and the State in Indonesia. *Contemporary Islam*, 8(2), 153-171.
- Tarrow, Sidney. 1998. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Facal, Gabriel. 2020. Islamic Defender Front Militia (Front Pembela Islam) and its Impact on Ongoing Religious Intolerance in Indonesia. *TRaNS: Trans - Regional and -National Studies of Southeast Asia* (2020), 8, 7-20 doi:10.1017/trn.2018.15.
- Wilson, Ian. 2014. *Resisting Democracy: Front Pembela Islam and Indonesia's 2014*. ISEAS Perspective. Available online: [iseas.edu.sg/images/pdf/ISEAS_Perspective_2014_10.pdf](https://www.iseas.edu.sg/images/pdf/ISEAS_Perspective_2014_10.pdf) (accessed 27 May 2022)
- Ngatawi, Al-Zastrouw. 2006. *Gerakan Islam simbolik: Politik kepentingan FPI (Symbolic movements of Islam: the essential politics of the FPI)*. Yogyakarta: LKiS.
- Saragih, Bagus. 2011. Wikileaks: National police funded FPI hard-liners. *The Jakarta Post*, 5 September.
- Widiyanto, Asfa. 2017. *Violence in Contemporary Indonesian Islamist Scholarship: Habib Rizieq Syihad and 'enjoining good and forbidding evil'*.