

Examining Radicalism Movement in Indonesia

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Founder of NII Crisis Center, Ken Setiawan, saw that radicalism in Indonesia was eroding. This emerged in a discussion done at Multimedia Room UGM, Saturday (2/11).

“It’s a problem of nationalism that has eroded,” he commented in *Deradicalisation* themed discussion organised by Board of Professors of UGM. Ken is a former commander of NII (Islamic state movement) that has pledged loyalty to the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia and has often campaigned on the danger of radical ideology. He founded the NII Crisis Center as a rehabilitation centre for victims of the NII.

Ken said there were three phases in radicalism doctrines, namely *Iman* (faith), *Hijrah* (migration), and *Jihad* where believers are asked to fight infidels. Ken said the doctrine started when initially the NII being brought by Kartosuwiryo had failed in its movement. The organisation had since splintered into two, the other was led by Abu Bakar Ba’asyir. Their intention was to carry on Kartosuwiryo’s values but they clashed with the authorities, hence being expelled.

“Finally, they moved to Malaysia and met dr. Azhari and Noordin M. Top. From there they were asked to go to Afghanistan, meeting Osama bin Laden. Through bin Laden the doctrine to fight infidels emerged, at that time the context was to fight the US and Allies,” he said.



Ken mentioned the doctrine lives on in Indonesia. “Many young people became their supporters, particularly among students, so we often hear jihad calls in campus prayer gatherings,” he added.

According to Ken, there are several things to identify a supporter, such as significant change in their mentality where they live in two different worlds. Usually they would abandon their family, school, or campus due to the intense activities of the movement. Due to this intensity, they became a person that is not open, mentally pressured, manipulative, and lack of empathy.

Problems arise, Ken said, when they leave the NII for whatever reason. “Those who leave the NII will be stressed out, depressed, even crazy because they found it difficult to adapt to the normal lives,” he said.

Thus, Ken took the initiative to establish the NII Crisis Center as a rehabilitation centre for the people that became the victims of the NII so as to start their life again as an Indonesian citizen. To prevent from falling prey, he also suggested people to learn religion from the expert, know the recruitment methods of radicalism, firmly reject invitations to hidden studies, share with other people and be critical towards opinion from others.

“Besides, we can strengthen ourselves by building nationalism within us. That’s why I hope the government will provide many facilities for the young generation to occupy themselves, such as for community empowerment, approach through local wisdom, and talent competition,” he said.

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