

UGM Observer: Social Processes Underlying Terror Act Needs to be Examined


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How to understand the terrorism that emphasizes the nature, character, and the ideology of terrorism need to be complemented by other means. One way that can be used to complement it is through 'relational perspective'. That is, the need to pay attention to some of the social processes that underlie the use of terror as a strategy.

For example, in the case of bombing of Police mosque in Cirebon, in addition to finding the perpetrators, nature, and ideological backgrounds, questioning other things are also needed, such as how the explosives come into the hands of suicide bombers and dozens of perpetrator's friends. "Moreover, what is the previous relationship of suicide bombers with the police in radical actions that are not bombing, such as terrorism in Cirebon," said Drs. Samsu Rizal Panggabean, researcher of Institute of International Studies, Department of International Relations, M.Sc., Monday (9/1).

Rizal said the approach makes it possible to see the issue of terrorism more adequately, without making the apparatus and the government as only a target or victim, but as actors in a broader political struggle, which creates the ground for the emergence of radical behavior including the use of terror strategies by the involved parties. According to Rizal, an interesting phenomenon of terrorism in 2011 was the emergence of new tactics and a new generation of perpetrators.

Such new tactic is the use of 'book bomb' in the Radio 68H Jakarta compound, while the new generation of perpetrators is no longer graduates of the places of international conflict, like Afghanistan, Southern Philippines, or South Thailand. "They are a new generation of radical teaching graduates who studied bomb-making skills through the Internet, not in the context of war," he added.



In addition, several bomb targets in 2011, such as churches, police, and individuals, need to be considered as well. First, faith-based sorting is still sensitive in the community and is very vulnerable to attack. This implies the need for coordination and inter-religious cooperation to deny the terrorists assumption that the Islamic-Christian sorting is very vulnerable and can become easy target of terror. Second, the effect of revenge that comes from a variety of counter-terrorist actions in Indonesia. "Revenge is one of the drives of terror acts against the police," said Rizal.

In the same place other observers from IIS, Eric Hiarej, M. Phil., Ph.D., said there is an increase in number of terror acts in the year 2011 compared with previous years. In addition, changes in 2011 occurred in the pattern of terror perpetrators. In 2011, many terror acts were committed by small groups with a relatively small number of members. The terror shifted from acts of terror carried out by communal to individual-based action. "What is interesting that in the year 2011, the main target of various terror acts was directed mostly to the police as well as houses of worship," said Eric.

Both Rizal and Eric also agreed that the role of the National Agency for Combating Terrorism (BNPT) in the future can be improved. So far, the role of BNPT still not optimal as evidenced by lack of budget. The Government more focused on improving the role of Detachment 88.

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