

## **The Discourse of Indonesian Muslim Identity Politics Represented in Online News Portals**

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### **Abstract**

Media plays important role in reshaping political constellation and identity in the post Indonesian reform era. One major event that attracted national and international media coverage in 2016 was “Aksi Bela Islam”, which was held to resist against Basuki Tjahja Purnama (Ahok) nomination as a candidate of Jakarta governor. This paper will discuss this event that occurred on 14 October 2016 and on subsequent demonstration that followed in November and December 2016. This “Aksi Bela Islam” is important to understand the trend and shift of identity politics of contemporary Islam and its relation to the idea of sharia law application in Jakarta proposed by Ahok’s contenders and citizenship (pribumi vs non-pribumi). This research focuses on how the discourse of “Bela Islam” (Defending Islam) is represented in online (national and international-based) news portal. It will explore four online news portal, two are national online news portal, namely Kompas and Republika and two others represent international online news portal, namely al Jazeera and BBC. This study shows that the politics of identity of Islamic populism is on the rise in Indonesian context through many actions under the flag of “Bela Islam” the year before the election and the issue of “pribumi vs non-pribumi” is also rising that shape the political space of contemporary Indonesia.

Keywords: Aksi Bela Islam, identity politics, Islamic populism, pribumi vs non-pribumi

### **Introduction**

The “Aksi Bela Islam” is initially held in front of Jakarta City Hall commanded by FPI on 14 October 2016. This demonstration was held to resist against Basuki Tjahja Purnama (Ahok) nomination as a candidate of Jakarta governor. This mass action was triggered by the alleged blasphemy done by Basuki Tjahja Purnama. This action was then followed by similar demonstration in November and December 2016.

The FPI (Islamic Defenders Front) is understood as a radical Islamic group in Indonesia, has already filed a complaint against Ahok – the charge of blasphemy- with the police. The complaint relates to an event on 27 September at which Ahok, having speech in a

campaign for his governorship election, made reference to, al-Maidah 51, a verse of the Quran which warns Muslims against taking Jews or Christians as allies nor leader. This verse of Quran is often used by Islamists group to prevent Muslims from supporting non-Muslim, including Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok) as leader/governor. Ahok is a Christian and ethnic Chinese, a double minority in Indonesia. Although Ahok claims that the video that went viral online butchered his actual speech, he has apologised for his remarks.

In the first “Aksi Bela Islam”, the protesters led by FPI leader demanded the governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama to be investigated soon for the charge of blasphemy. The subsequent demonstration of the Aksi Bela Islam was held on 4 November 2016, or popularly called as “Aksi 4 November” or “Aksi Damai 411.” This demonstration attracted hundred thousand Muslims from many cities and places around Java. This mass protest started with Friday prayer until Isya. President responded with the promise to handle the investigation of the blasphemy in open court. The next action, the third Aksi Bela Islam was held on 2 December 2016, after Friday prayer and President Joko Widodo attended the demonstration at the field.

With the event of series of Aksi Bela Islam as presented in the online news portal (Al Jazeera.com, BBC.com, Republika.co.id, Kompas.com) as the object of analysis, this paper is intended to discuss the issue of political identity constructed from the Aksi Bela Islam. The issue of political identity also lead to other issue of identity politics constructed through the Aksi Bela Islam, mainly the issue of citizenship – pribumi vs non-pribumi- in Indonesia.

### **Some Issues Constructed from the Aksi Bela Islam**

Since the first Aksi, October 14th 2016 a number of Islam mass organization staged protest in front of the Police Office of Crime at Gambir and Jakarta city hall. It was led by Rizieq Shihab – the leader of FPI. The main issue was the demand to the government handle the blasphemy charge against Basuki Tjahaja Purnama. In BBC online (14 October 2016), it was stated that Rizieq highlighted that the protest is for defending Islam, due to Ahok’s blasphemous statement, insulting Quran verses. He also emphasized that the Aksi is not political, it is merely for defending Islam, because of Ahok’s statement blaspheming Quran. Although Rizieq said that it was not political, everybody believed that the target of

the Aksi was preventing Ahok from winning the governorship election in the following year.

The other issue emerging from the Aksi is that the big number of Muslim is effectively used as a tool to force their interest, or in other word it uses the Islamic populism ideas to support their interest. To give bigger impact, the Aksi leaders (Rizieq and his companions) embraced more and more muslim figures, religion leaders, politicians and Islamic groups, to be involved in the movement. Republika online stated in detail that the protest was supported by 55 mass organisations, among other are FPI -Islamic Defenders Front- and FBR - Forum Betawi Rempug. Although Republika (14 October 2016) stated 55 organisations, there are only 2 of them often mentioned in the news. They demand that the governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama be arrested and jailed. On the other side, Ahok, interviewed by the journalist said that he did not care and stated, “protest is everybody’s right” (14 October 2016). He even realized that he himself and his position is the target of the protest. Republika highlighted the power of quantity of the group by stating 55 groups involved in the protest, and the number of the participants of the protest. One of the news from this Aksi showed that on the car stage, there are two people wearing white jubah and surban, giving speech, kyai Jafar Shodiq and Rizieq Shihab both of them are FPI leaders. Kyai Jafar Shodiq is the head of “dewan syuro” FPI.

This first Aksi also functions to test Rizieq’s power nationally. In the years after reformation, 1998, FPI has popularly taken the roles as the ‘police’ to enforce syariah. This role often sparked debates and in many cases FPI’s action got criticism and no sympathy. FPI is always in the front line to show their physical power to enforce ‘Islamic syariah’ under the term “hisbah” (physical action to enforce syariah) in society. For example, in 2016 there were many cases of FPI’s sweeping the warung, restaurant which opened in Ramadhan time, and other case in that year in which FPI’s group of people (about 16 people) protested to Kompas (one of the most popular Indonesian newspaper) office showing their complaint on Kompas’ framing that they said disfavor of their interest. FPI has many branches in each of town or cities and this group is popular among its followers, but this group was often associated with the violence in enforcing the ‘syariah’. With such condition, FPI leaders need to widen its influence to reach its goal. The effort to increase its leverage nationally was successfully obtained through the issue of blasphemy charge

against Ahok, by embracing many political figures, political parties that against Ahok's political stance, and religious figures that agree with the FPI's cause.

The important impact for FPI was that it increased its political leverage nationally through the series of Aksi Bela Islam. That's why Rizieq took great effort to invite all the members of FPI at local levels and of other cities to join the Aksi, he also did journeys to other pesantren and Muslim leaders, as far as Madura and other towns and regencies in East Java, to invite them to the Aksi and at the same time made the issue of blasphemy sounds bigger and more serious. The first Aksi was successfully involving hundreds participants, and the leaders (Rizieq and others) were optimistic that he was able to attract greater mass for the next Aksi, by embracing other Islam groups. This optimistic statement at the same time functioned as the "threat" that he would show the force in greater numbers.

At the beginning of the Aksi Bela Islam, on October 2016, the police responded in such a way that it seemed Police waiting for the development of the case. Police responded by saying that there are many different opinions about this case. Therefore police wanted an open court to decide whether or not Ahok had been blaspheming Islam/Quran. On the other side, Purnama had accused his opponents to trick people for not voting him, a Christian ethnic Chinese, by using a Quranic verse, Al Maidah 51. This verse stated Muslims should not choose non-Muslims as allies. Ahok said that actually he criticized his political rivals because of using the verse, not criticizing the Quran itself (Al Jazeera, 16 November 2016).

In the second Aksi Bela Islam, held on 4 November 2016, the management of the movement was established, called GNPF-MUI (Gerakan Nasional Pendukung Fatwa MUI) – "National Movement Supporting MUI's Fatwa." The demonstration was launched after Jumat prayer leading to President palace and parliament building. In this Aksi, there were bigger number of participants, about one hundred thousands people coming from other places across Java island. There were some political elites, Amien Rais, Fadli Zon and Fahri Hamzah, attending the demonstration led by Rizieq Shihab.

In this second Aksi, the name "Gerakan Nasional Pendukung Fatwa MUI" (GNPF-MUI) took strategic role. This group covers some Islam groups, FPI, FBR, and other Muslim groups. This GNPF-MUI organizes and accomodates the diversified groups with the agenda of enforcing the MUI fatwa, that is "punishment for the perpetrator of blasphemy". This

group leads the protest to be better organized and more powerful, managing the protest from the field coordinator and local / city coordinators. This group functions as the management of the Aksi Bela Islam at Jakarta and other places, including managing the fund for the action.

The demonstration of 4 November run well until 18.00. President appreciated that the demonstration was under control, although it involved hundred thousands people. President Joko Widodo thanked to all of the leader and people participating in the Aksi. This good situation changed when the mass started to dismiss themselves. It was getting chaotic at about 19.00 especially in front of presidential palace. However, the police was able to control the chaos and dismiss the mass at 21.00. The President was not happy with this chaos and he said that there were some political actors behind the mass chaos which happened not only in front of Presidential palace but also in Penjaringan, North Jakarta, in which a minimarket at Kampung Luar Batang was looted. President, after a meeting with some ministers, gave his promise that Ahok's case of blasphemy will be taken care quickly and transparently. "In the meeting, it has been discussed, the legal process towards Basuki Tjahaja Purnama that will be conducted firmly, quickly, and transparently. For that reason, I am asking the protesters to go home to your home-town safe and sound," said Jokowi (Republika, 4 November 2016).

The third Aksi Bela Islam, 2 December 2016, was launched in the morning up to afternoon after Jumat prayer, having the same agenda, the demand of Ahok's arrest. In the BBC observation, however, there are some of the protesters only wanted to join the Jumat prayer, and not interested in the main agenda (BBC, 2 December 2016). In other word, some of the participant of the protest is interested in the Aksi because of enjoying the situation of performing prayer together with a lot of people and friends at public space (at squares and streets), a happy moment that Muslim usually enjoyed only twice a year, during Idul Fitri and Idul Adha prayers which is not as big event as this moment. The happy feeling was constructed because of the togetherness like in a big festival that is a rare occasion for common people living in the busy big city like Jakarta, in which its heavy traffic reaches at the level of frustrating for all of the inhabitants.

In this third Aksi Bela Islam, the important issue is the government, represented by President Jokowi enforced its roles, controlling the Aksi. The politically important moment in this Aksi happened as the top of the Aksi, when President Jokowi coming to the Monas

square where the Jumat prayer would be held. Bringing blue umbrella because of rain, Jokowi walked from Presidential palace to the square and joined the Jumat prayer. Jokowi's decision to come to the arena of protest has been calculated politically. His coming to the arena of demonstration on foot from the Presidential palace, accompanied by Jusuf Kalla (vice president) and other fellows (a few police and military men), attracted the mass in the square and journalists. All of sudden, the whole attention went to his coming to that arena. After doing Jumat prayer together, Jokowi looked relaxed and smiling stepping to the stage and gave his brief speech addressing the people there. He successfully embraced the audience. For this event, BBC wrote that "Aksi 212 dipuncaki Jokowi salat bersama massa." The word "dipuncaki" means that Jokowi placed himself at the top of the "show," implying that it is Jokowi who win the game.

In that stage, Presiden Joko Widodo greeted the ummah (Islamic term referring to the Muslim people anywhere), conveying thanks to the protesters of 2 December 2016 (212) who have done the protest smoothly, in a good order. The audience welcomed him happily and the president also thanked for the prayers for the nations peace. This is a smart response of the president, because the protesters in fact staged protest and demonstration to pressure the president to arrest Ahok (when Jokowi was the governor of Jakarta, Ahok was his vice governor) and punish him because of his blasphemy. The President, on the other side, did not respond in confrontative manner, instead he acted like a star among the crowd so that people welcomed and were happy with his attendance, and he controlled the situation.

President Jokowi's coming to the demonstration arena strategically built a political communication between Jokowi and Muslim people. First it showed that he paid attention to the people's demand. He also wanted to show his empathy through his brief speech asking the people to go home sound and safe, and this was also to show the audience that "I am on your side" instead of "I am the target of your protest." His coming and his gesture also showed that he had the power to control the situation and the people as well as the Muslim groups. President Jokowi's decision to approach the protesters also swept away the assumption constructed in the previous Aksi in which it was stated that he did not want to respond the Aksi seriously, including not accepting the protesters petition by himself.

The interesting issue following the Aksi Belas Islam III, was that the police arrested seven people with the alleged treason charge (makar). The division of public relation of Indonesian Police, Inspektur Jenderal Boy Rafli Amar said that, Police had arrested seven people charged of treason (Kompas.com,3 December 2016). He explained further that the treason is not the same as criticism. Those charged with alleged treason planned to conduct special session (sidang istimewa) to topple down the government. In this case, the Police found out that the seven people tried to make the use of the mass action “Aksi of 2 December” to topple the government. Those seven people are, Rachmawati Soekarnoputri, Kivlan Zein, Ratna Sarumpaet, Adityawarman, Eko, Alvin, dan Firza Huzein. They were charged with the “Pasal 107 jo Pasal 110 jo Pasal 87 KUHP.”

### **Trend and Shift of Identity Politics of Contemporary Islam; New Islamic Populism**

The identity politics of contemporary Islam is a continuation and change from previous era. In the post-Suharto era, Indonesia witnesses many religious organisations and movements remained linked to state institutions and had a remarkable degree of influence over state actors (Ricklefs, 2012:465). In many cases as Ricklefs observed, in enforcing the MUI’s fatwa the President and the police acted as if they had the force of legislation. Populism refers to the ideas that Hadiz (2016) stated, that it involves the mobilisation and homogenisation of a range of disparate grievances of the ‘masses’ against identified ‘elites’ (Hadiz, 2016; 2)

In the series of Aksi Bela Islam, it mobilized a range of Islam groups, from members of the FPI, HTI, Muhammadiyah, NU, and other Islamic groups. Although institutionally Muhammadiyah and NU did not support the Aksi, the members from the Islamic organization are involved in the series of Aksi and in the GNPf-MUI (organization that emerged in the Second Aksi of 4 November). The various Islamic groups with disparate ideological background were involved in one place with similar look (white dress and clothes) sharing one agenda. As a populist movement, this GNPf-MUI construct “one face of Islam” and any identities constructed in the movement gave an effect of homogenizing the disparate Islamic groups.

The Islamic populism in its historical trajectories covers and merges the interests, and aspirations, as well as grievances different social classes. The social bases is important aspect to examine the form of islamic populism. The different social base in the

contemporary case and the older one will build different form of the older and newer Islamic populism. The older form of Islamic populism had been more fully rooted in the traditional urban and rural petty bourgeoisie and significantly shapes Islamic politics in the contemporary era (Hadiz, 2016; 2).

The rising of the conservative group or Islamist group is mainly attributed to the leader of the Aksi. In one of its article in Al Jazeera (16 November 2016) , it is said that these series of demonstration show the rising of conservative group or what it called Islamist group, "...an extremely big show of force by Islamist groups who have been gaining importance in Indonesia over the years." The rising of the so called islamist group is considered a threat to secular state of Indonesia, in which the conservative here refers to the Muslim group such as FPI and other groups supporting the action.

The terms of conservative or Islamist group is due to the fact that the demonstration was initiated and led by FPI leader, Rizieq Shihab, since the first Aksi. In addition, it is well known that FPI is an Islamic organization with a particular characteristic as strongly represent itself as the group that struggle for the application of syariah. FPI's headquarter is in Jakarta, established on 17 Agustus 1998 at Pondok Pesantren Al Umm, Ciputat Tangerang, Jakarta, with its formal address at Jalan Petamburan III No. 17 Tanah Abang, Jakarta, close to the home of "Imam Besar" FPI, Habib Rizieq Shihab (<http://www.fpi.or.id/p/organisasi-fpi-untuk-pertama-kalinya.html>).

In its web-site, it is stated the vision and mission of the FPI mainly, applying Islamic syariah in a whole ("kaaffah"), under the Khilafah Islamiyyah according to Manhaj Nubuwwah, through Da'wah, enforcing the "Hisbah" and do the Jihad (<http://www.fpi.or.id/p/visi-misi.html>). "Hisbah" means direct action or phisical action against anything against Islamic law.

FPI also has internal groups, called as the independent groups under the umbrella of FPI (with its own AD/ART). They are Laskar Pembela Islam (LPI); Mujahidah Pembela Islam (MPI); Front Mahasiswa Islam (FMI); dan Serikat Pekerja Front (SPF). The organization under FPI popularly known in the public as paramilitary group, Laskar Pembela Islam (LPI), which often do the action "to make order" (by sweeping) against the activities that it considers as against Islamic syariah, such as the sweeping of warung, restaurant or cafe at Ramadhan months.



Since the first Aksi Bela Islam, it is designed as a kind of show of force from the particular Islam group, FPI. This can be seen from the number of the people stage demonstration. The leader of the protest is Habib Rizieq, the FPI leader (Islamic Defender Front) and accompanied by other Kyais such as Jafar Shodiq). The leaders of the movement successfully mobilized the people across Java to come and attend the demonstration. Many pictures from all of the online newspapers show hundred thousands people gathered at Monas, Bundaran HI, “whitening” Jakarta, describing the biggest number of demonstration in the October, November and December 2016. This pictures are iconic and circulated among many online and printed medias, newspaper, magazine, television, and social medias, giving the illustration of the quantity “force” of Muslim group dominating the landscape of Jakarta.

The photos in medias represent the ideas of that quantitatively, Muslim is group with big number and this is a strength to pursue their interest. From many photographs taken by journalists who shot the demonstration in that unique ways, the Jakarta in white, all places filled by hundred thousands people wearing white clothes blocking the main streets such as surrounding Bundaran HI, Monas, and all other streets in Jakarta. The streets were closed and occupied by thousands of people. The pictures of Jakarta in white -because of the hundred thousands protesters - implies that Muslim want to control the space, by occupying the main public places and streets. In addition to the number, the power is shown through the control of the public spaces such as main roads and streets.



It is estimated 150,000 people gather for demonstration (4 November 2016).

In addition to the number of people involved in the Aksi Bela Islam and the occupation of the public spaces such as Jakarta's main streets, the show of force is also demonstrated through the discourse that is launched by the protesters. The discourse is the punishment for the blasphemy. The protesters believed that Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok) did the blasphemy through his speech at Kepulauan Seribu. The orators and leaders of the Aksi, mainly Habib Rizieq, strongly articulated to the audience that what Ahok has said is a blasphemy, so that Ahok must be arrested and punished. This can be seen from the speeches and the pamphlet or banner that the protesters brought during the Aksi. One of the photographs of the Aksi can be seen in the following picture.



In the picture above, we can see the protesters were enthusiastic, with serious expression, in joining the protest, by yelling aloud, raising their fists and equipping themselves with banners or pamphlets with the words to punish Ahok, "Tangkap Ahok" (Arrest Ahok), "Aksi Bela Islam III: Tangkap dan Hukum Ahok - Penista Al Quran", with the picture of Ahok of which is crossed, "Jangan Ada Penista Islam di Indonesia" (No Islamic blasphemy in Indonesia). All of the pamphlet or banner says the same thing, persecuting Ahok for the blasphemy. They wore white clothes, white "kopyah" (hat) and some of them brought 'black-white' flags, the identity of the FPI and hard-line Islamic group. These hundred thousands protesters shows the majority common Muslim in Indonesia who are able to do and share the same things, chanting, praying, and carrying banners with one purpose to topple down Ahok on blasphemy charges (Al Jazeera, 2 December 2016).

The protesters did not think other ways, instead they believed that Ahok did the blasphemy so he deserved for the heavy punishment. By calling Ahok as "Penista Al

Quran,” it seemed that the vonis has been final, no other argument. Therefore, the series of Aksi Bela Islam function as the trial by the mass, in which the protesters (in big numbers) forced their opinion that Ahok is guilty of blasphemy.

The people joining the demonstration were very proud of what they have done. This can be seen from the articles of all the newspaper that wrote their interview of the participants of the demonstration. They came to Jakarta from towns and villages around Jakarta and West Java, as well as from far away, even with a big effort. Many people interviewed in the online medias said that they got a feeling of importance by attending and joining a historical moment, feeling involved in that big event. They felt the importance of involving in this arena, due to the facts that most of them are common people whom in their daily life they are never involved in such important “political events.” They are common people who are busy with making a living in their daily life by being farmers, small traders - selling and buying in traditional market and other informal jobs that they can leave relatively easily. Nevertheless, a few of them are rich enough and supported the demonstration by buying the train tickets for others who can not afford it, or renting cars or buses to transport them to Jakarta.

Under the banner of “Aksi Bela Islam” the leader of FPI went to the cities across Java, meeting ulamas in many pesantrens and other Muslim groups to get their support for the Aksi. The pesantren and many Islam groups are encouraged to join the demonstration, to show the solidarity as Muslim and the Muslim’s force. In the effort of gaining the support widely, they built the issue of Muslim’s being marginalized economically and politically. These issues were effective enough to build solidarity among the Muslim. The feeling that as majority of Muslim are not empowered, even marginalized in many aspects of life especially economy and political life, were spread and developed so that the Aksi was perceived as a tool to empower the majority Muslim and bring the Muslim to center politically and economically. To show their support, many Muslim groups in almost all other cities and areas sent their “jamaah” to Jakarta in big numbers. In addition, in some cities, the similar demonstrations were conducted. For example, in Malang the Islam groups staged demonstration after Jumat prayer by gathering at Masjid Jami’ wearing white clothes as dress code, articulating the similar issues.

Many online medias, nationally and internationally, are also interested in presenting pictures of people in close-up showing who the people joining demonstration

are. This shows the force of Muslim, quantitatively and qualitatively. They are common Muslim people, coming from cities and villages across Java. They came from East Java cities and villages, thousands people leaving from Banyuwangi, Malang, Pasuruan, Mojokerto, Surabaya, Madiun, Ngawi and others. And from Central Java, Solo, Sukoharjo, Sragen, Klaten, Semarang, Tegal, Jogjakarta (DIY), and others. From West Java thousands of people are from Ciamis, Sukabumi, Tasikmalaya, and others. Most of them are traveling in groups by bus or cars or train. A Few of them heroically took a walk from nearby town. Some of them came to Jakarta for the first time. The young people from villages and towns far from Jakarta felt excited to be in the place. This big number of people shows the force in quantity of Muslim in Java. The people also shows that they are common majority people who go for the aksi because of the feeling that they have to do that as part of their religious “duty” or because their ustad asked them to go for Aksi. This face of protesters is different from the people who are commonly hired for demonstration in the city of Jakarta, who got money by joining a demonstration. These differences contributed to the success of show of force for the series of Aksi.

### **The Politics of “Pribumi VS Non-Pribumi”**

The series of Aksi Bela Islam from October up to December 2016 (three months) and the sporadic action following the Aksi brought about bad impact for Basuki Tjahaja Purnama politically, who had previously got a high level of electability. Due to the pressure of the Aksi and the conservative group, he suffered from an adversed blow, he was charged of blasphemy, persecuted, and defeted in the governorship election, ended in the two years in jail.

Not only the political defeat of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama in the governorship election, this new Islamic populism also raised the issue “pribumi – non pribumi.” Literally, “pribumi” means “indigenous”, and in the Islamic identity politics, it does not refer to the indigeneous people, instead it is used as a tool to define the favourable repositioning of “ummah.” The term “ummah” refers to Muslim people across the world, borderless. In this political context the term refers to the Indonesian Muslim, which is in the position of marginalised group *vis a vis* the elites (Indonesian government).

The repositioning of ummah within the confines of the nation state need to be struggled for through any possible strategies of contestation. The contestation does not necessarily

involve the overt call to establish a state based on Islamic law, the Sharia (Hadiz, 2016;3). This moment of the governorship election is used as the chance to build contestation against the government elites, which is considered as 'not Islamic' and at the same time as the chance to unify the marginalised 'ummah'. Therefore, the issue of 'pribumi-non pribumi' is projected to gain the Muslim's trust and develop Muslim's economic and political access.

The series of Aksi Bela Islam, in addition to the charge of blasphemy, highlighted the issue of "Pribumi vs Non-pribumi," with the description of Muslims attending the demonstration were predominantly common people, mostly the "jamaah" of Mosque, or Pengajian (religious teaching groups), and common people in their daily life. A few people that belongs to the elite in this group is the leader of mass organisation involved in the Aksi Bela Islam, the Kyais and the leader of religious teaching or mosque jamaah. The majority "jamaah" are common people who has no big capital nor access politically nor economically. This implies that the majority have no control economically, instead, most of the people are those who need to be empowered.

This issue of economically and politically marginalized majority Muslim was developed into the issue of "pribumi – non-pribumi," in which Indonesia is a country with Muslim dominant group, but it is a secular country, and Ahok is a Chinese Christian belongs to minority group. Many times did Al Jazeera state that Indonesia is predominantly Muslim but it acknowledged six religions and dozens of ethnic traditional religious groups. However, the politics of majority-minority works in many areas. This political term of majority is associated with 'pribumi', or Muslim majority while the minority group is associated with the non-pribumi (non-native) such as Chinese. The politics of "pribumi and non-pribumi" is associated with the majority and minority Muslim groups. This political claim said that Muslim is pribumi – majority (quantitatively), while non-Muslim is non-pribumi, minority.

The politics of pribumi and non-pribumi was obviously employed particularly in the Aksi Bela Islam, prior Jakarta governorship election, with the position of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama as the non-pribumi, Chinese Christian minority. The allegation of insulting the Quran while campaigning for elections of the Jakarta governorship was the trigger to defeat him in the following year governorship election. The issue of blasphemy is the most effective blow for defeating the candidate of governorship. Muslim across Java are

prompted in anger – (Al Jazeera claims both moderate and conservative Muslim) so that this demonstration was able to invite more than 100,000 protesters to the Jakarta streets on November 4, demanding that Basuki Purnama be prosecuted. “Muslim groups want Purnama, a member of Indonesia's Christian minority, prosecuted for allegedly insulting the Quran” (Al Jazeera, 16 November 2016).

The issue of pribumi and non-pribumi here is closely related to the control of economy and politics in which the non-pribumi (minority group, Chinese) is assumed to be the dominant power economically. On the other hand, the majority is the pribumi who has no economic power. In such context of intersection between the numbers of Muslim - Christians, and economic access, BBC produced the news article discussing about the impact of the demonstration a day before the demonstration of 2 December (Aksi 212). The title of the news is “Aksi demo 411, 212, dan 'efek trauma' yang membayangi pengusaha,” the demonstration of 411, 212 and ‘traumatic effect’ haunting the business (1 Dec 2016).

The discourse of “pribumi and non-pribumi” has almost always related with the dynamic of economy and politics in the history. Political assumption was that the pribumi (native Indonesian) is the group that is marginalized economically and in many cases, also politically. On the other hand, the “non-pribumi” which is politically associated with Chinese, is the group that commonly assumed as controlling the economy of the country especially in Java. In almost all big markets across Java, the Chinese are dominant group. They control the production (factories), distribution and marketing of basic need goods and services. The Chinese business has dominated over Indonesian economy since the beginning of New Order (Honna in Ricklefs, 2012:245).

The political term “pribumi” refers to indigeneous people or Javanese or local people, is always associated with the people who are defeated economically and politically. Majority are poor and depend on the production chain that they can not control. Most of the poor people are farmers, labors in factories, and migrant labors, or the consumers. Powerless position leads them to be “nothing to lose” position. They, for instance, can go to Jakarta for a few days not worrying about the money for their family, in which most of the men are breadwinners. This is not because they had enough money, but mostly they are not tied with permanent or formal job.

Traumatic effect as the headline of BBC (1 December 2016) highlighted the effect of the protest of Aksi Bela Islam for the economic and business sectors. It is said that the business in Jakarta did not feel any relaxed, instead, they were worried much facing the demonstration on 2 December. BBC wrote that the demonstration in previous month had made them traumatic. Many business person, especially Chinese business men went out of Jakarta temporarily. The trauma for the Chinese was especially rooted from the similar event in 1998 Jakarta, a chaotic situation that used the issue of pribumi and non-pribumi. The demonstration that toppled down the New Order regime brought about the chaotic situation in Jakarta and almost all cities across Java, in which they had to migrated to other states such as Singapore, Malaysia and Australia, leaving their business and some were destroyed by the mob.

The mass action of demonstration in a big number is always traumatic for the “non-pribumi” or Chinese, moreover, when the Aksi started to highlight the issue of pribumi and non-pribumi, as automatically related to economic marginalization and domination. In such traumatic chaotic situation, the minority Chinese felt that they were fragile, easily become target of the mass amock. So that most of the Chinese, in such situation, thought to save their life, their family members, and leaving the business closed prior to the Aksi. One day before the Aksi of 2 December (Aksi 212) some of the Chinese business person in Jakarta planned to close their business to go for several days to other cities or places such as Bali and other places where they have family of friends, while watching the situation at home from far away.

In sum, as written by BBC in its article on 1 December 2016, the Aksi Bela Islam in October, November and December brought about bad impact on the business persons and economy at large, because the impact is not only for the Chinese business but also for the economic stakeholders (the business owners, staffs, other related business/stores, consumers). The trauma of previous mass action in 1998 that gave impact on business destruction, looting the stores, and sexual abuse as well as rapes, made the Jakartan Chinese worried, anxious, and this forced them to prepare to flee to other neighbouring countries. BBC’s reporting on the impact of the Aksi to the business, was also strengthened by the interview with the Head of Indonesian Textile Association, Ade Sudradjat that supported the idea criticizing the demonstration with large numbers of mass protest to give pressure to the government always brought about traumatic effect. He said, about 50% of the Chinese business were

prepared to flee, leaving their business activities and their properties to other cities or other relatively safe places. The close of business will affect the run of economy, the halt of distribution of good and services. Not only was this harmful for the businessmen and distributors, but also for hundred or thousands workers involved in the economic and business activities (BBC, 1 December 2016).

Those economic impact of the Aksi Bela Islam was closely related to the issue of pribumi and non-pribumi that was spread and highlighted in the campaign. The control of public spaces with the big numbers of participant in the Aksi also triggered the other groups to launch similar Aksi. For example, the following days, on Sunday there was another group launched similar Aksi, such as KSPI (Konfederasi Serikat Pekerja Indonesia) did the Aksi of protest in Jakarta with at least 50.000 workers from Jabodetabek, Karawang and Purwakarta. There was also another group did demonstration to counter the Aksi Bela Islam. The group named Aksi Nusantara Bersatu held its aksi on 30 November in all areas across Indonesia. In Jakarta it was centralized at Monas square. The main ideas of this aksi is to revive the spirit of Bhineka Tunggal Ika. In some ways this aksi showed the rising competition for the social and political space.

The issue of pribumi and non-pribumi not only used as the tools in political campaign for the election of the governorship in Jakarta. This issue also effectively impacted on the economic and business as well as the social cultural impact. The trauma due to the violence suffered by the ethnic Chinese in 1998 in which the ethnic Chinese as the victim of violence all the sudden haunted the people, so that they did not only close their business, but also flee to other cities and places safe for them. Until now, the issue of “pribumi and non-pribumi” is still politically articulated by the elected governor, Anies Baswedan for political reason, mainly strengthen his political position and his ties with its conservative Islamic supporters.

In sum, it can be said that the relationship between the new Islamic populism political agenda and democratic procedures and rights in Indonesian contemporary economic and political sphere is highly contingent as it is with acceptance of the precepts of the neoliberal world order. The contingency here means that the result depends on the outcomes of social conflict within specific constellations of power and interests (Hadiz, 2016: page 3). However, from the Aksi Bela Islam, it is obvious that social conservatism serves as a major marker of Islamic political identity.



## Conclusion

The covering of the event Aksi Bela Islam 2016 obviously constructed the identity politics of the conservative Muslim group. Al Jazeera which does a sharp analysis, highlighted the aksi as the means for Muslim group (FPI) to leverage its position nationally and this needs to get attention as it is a threat to the Indonesian secular state in the long run. FPI is considered as a conservative and radical Islamist group because of its vision and mission, in which it supports and struggles for the khilafah system and its policy of "hisbah", a physical response against anything breaking the Islamic law (syariah).

The concern of the rising conservative groups with its identity politics brought about the issue of "pribumi vs non-pribumi" and the adverse economic impact of the Aksi Bela Islam, with the unproductive effect of economy and business in Jakarta, because of the ethnic Chinese business people's trauma on the social and political chaotic demonstration involving large number of participants. Most of economy and business run by ethnic Chinese were all closed and this brought effect on the temporary halt of production and distribution of goods and service since the ethnic Chinese dominated the economy and business in Jakarta.

The discourse of pribumi and non-pribumi is proven to be effectively applied in the campaign for the governorship of Jakarta. This discourse of pribumi-non pribumi and the charge of blasphemy completely defeat Basuki Tjahaja Purnama - the incumbent governor of Jakarta, in the second round of governor election. This issue of "pribumi and non-pribumi" is not used as the term referring to indigeneosity, instead it is used as a political term. This issue is still used in the recent discourse when the elected governor of Jakarta, Anies Baswedan was inaugurated for the position as the governor of Jakarta. This means that the discourse of "pribumi and non-pribumi" is used to politically othering their enemy.

Nevertheless, the impact of the Aksi Bela Islam shows that the projected political and economic reforms did not much taken place, instead it signs the rising social conservatism as Islamic political identity. the new Islamic populism political agenda and democratic procedures and rights in Indonesian is highly related to and depends on the acceptance of the neoliberal world order. It means that the result of the "movement" depends on the outcomes of social conflict within specific constellations of power and interests (Hadiz,

2016:3). However, from the Aksi Bela Islam, it is obvious that social conservatism continuously serves as a major marker of Indonesian Islamic political identity.

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