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**No. 231**

***The Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS) in the  
landscape of Indonesian Islamist Politics:  
Cadre-Training as Mode of Preventive Radicalisation?***

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## Abstract

The Partai Keadilan Sejahtera PKS is one of the younger parties in Indonesia today, yet it has established itself as a national party with branch offices all over the Indonesian archipelago and representation in government at all levels. When it first came onto the scene of Indonesian politics it was criticized by Indonesian liberal intellectuals as a ‘Trojan horse’ for further Islamisation of Indonesia. However some of Indonesia’s more radical and militant Islamist groups have in turn criticized the PKS for ‘selling out’ by joining the democratic political process.

This paper looks at the cadre-training system of the PKS, which may be the most disciplined and rationalized in the country today, and addresses the question of whether the PKS’s cadre-training system is the factor that has kept it on its political course, and within the bounds of constitutional-legal democratic politics.

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# **The *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (PKS) in the landscape of Indonesian Islamist Politics: Cadre-Training as Mode of Preventive Radicalisation?**

## **I. The *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (PKS) in the overcrowded landscape of Indonesia's Post-Suharto politics.**

‘The reality of Muslim societies today contributes to a climate in which the influence of Islam and Islamist activist organisations will increase... Heads of state and ruling elites possess tenuous legitimacy in the face of mounting disillusionment and opposition, in the expression of which Islamic activists are often the most vocal and effective’.

**John Esposito,  
*The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?*<sup>2</sup>**

In the wake of the fall of former President Suharto, Indonesia experienced a number of shocks on an unprecedented scale and level: But while the first decade of Post-Suharto Indonesia witnessed the rise of religious and communal violence in places like Ambon, it also experienced an expansion in the domains of popular politics, mass media, education and civil society.

The focus on this paper will be on one of the relatively new actors on the stage of Indonesian politics, the *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (Justice and Prosperity Party), which has proven to be one of the more successful new parties on the Indonesian political landscape, which now has branches and divisions across the Indonesian archipelago. Today the PKS is led by Luthfi Hasan Ishaq and its former President Hidayat Nur Wahid sits in its *Dewan Shuro'ah*. PKS can claim to have the support of more than eight million voters, and a membership (from new recruits to high-level cadres) of 2.5 million. It has one central command (*pusat*) division in the capital and 33 provincial (*propinsi*) commands in all the provinces of the country. Additionally it has 500 city/*kabupaten* offices, 6,000 *kecamatan* offices and around 66,000 rural (*desa*) offices across the

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<sup>2</sup> John Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.

country.<sup>3</sup> The PKS has 57 Members of Parliament (DPR) and 1,200 elected representatives at the various local assemblies at *kota/propinsi/kabupaten* levels. It has, in short, become a *national* party.

It has to be pointed out that the PKS is a special case by virtue of the fact that it is an Islamist party whose organic roots go back to the campus-based student activist networks that played a visible role in the toppling of Suharto and the opening up of Indonesia's newfound democratic space. PKS was not the only party to emerge in the wake of Suharto's demise, for there were also other parties such as Yusril Mahendra's *Partai Bulan Bintang* (PBB, Crescent and Star party), Sutrisno Bachir and Amein Rais's *Partai Amanat Nasional*<sup>4</sup> (PAN- National Trust Party) and Harry Wattimury and Markus

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<sup>3</sup> Interview with PKS leaders and members of Parliament Fahri Hamzah and Zulkieflimansyah, 19 October 2011.

<sup>4</sup> The *Partai Amanat Nasional* is one of the more moderate Islamist parties of Indonesia that is most closely associated with the leader of the *Muhamadiyah* movement, Amein Rais. The origins of PAN go back to the last years of Suharto when the Suharto regime was tottering on the verge of collapse following the East Asian economic crisis of 1997-98. On 14 May 1998, Amein Rais called for the creation of the *Majelis Amanat Rakyat* (MARA), a public consultative body, in response to the failure of the Suharto government to heed the calls of the public. Islamist leaders like Amein Rais, Nurcholish Madjid, Abdurrahman Wahid and Yusril Ihza Mahendra were openly talking about democratisation and the end of military-backed dictatorship. On 26 July 1998 Yusril Mahendra formed the *Partai Bulan Bintang* (PBB, Crescent and Star party), and on 27 July 1998 Amein Rais publicly announced the creation of the People's Mandate Party (*Partai Amanat Bangsa*, PAB; later turned to the *Partai Amanat Nasional*, PAN). PAN was officially registered on 23 August 1998. PAN's clarion call in 1998 was *refomasi* and the need for institutional reform, democratisation, transparency and accountability, to deal with the problem of 'cronyism, nepotism and corruption' associated with Suharto's government. With backing from the *Muhamadiyah*, and with notable *Muhamadiyah* leaders in PAN, the party was seen as the political offshoot of the *Muhamadiyah* reformist Islamist movement. PAN contested at the elections of 2004 and 2009, (in 2004 under the Presidency of Sutrisno Bachir), and proved to be most successful in those areas where Islamist activism had always been rife or forced underground, such as West and Southern Sumatra, South Sulawesi, West Java and the special province of greater Jogjakarta, where *Muhamadiyah* was created and where Amein Rais hailed from. In terms of its ideology and political goals it remains an Islamist party that has shown solidarity with other Islamist/Muslim causes including the Palestinian cause and the anti-Israeli campaign. But overall it remains a moderate party that does not foreground the cause of an Islamic state and has never supported terrorism or the calls for regional autonomy that have been articulated by splinter and marginal Islamist groups. In 1999 PAN managed to win 7.4 per cent of the popular vote and gained 34 seats in Parliament. This gave PAN and Amein Rais the strategic leverage to play the role of kingmakers, and PAN was instrumental in the formation of the '*central axis*' that prevented Megawati Sukarnoputri from coming to power, and opened up the way for the rise of Abdurrahman Wahid instead. However, not long into the Presidency of Abdurrahman Wahid, PAN withdrew its support on the grounds that the President was growing too close and compliant to the needs and demands of Washington, and PAN leaders strongly criticised Abdurrahman Wahid's attempts to normalise relations with Israel. At the elections of 2004 Amein Rais offered conciliatory moves to the Indonesian military, claiming that he was prepared to run for the office of President with a former military leader as his running mate: PAN won 6.4 per cent of the popular vote and 52 seats (out of 550) in the People's Assembly. For the Presidential elections Amein Rais and Siswono Yudo Husodo won only 15 per cent of the vote. At the elections of 2009 PAN won 6 per cent

Hurasoit's Christian-based *Partai Damai Sejahtera*<sup>5</sup> (Peace and Prosperity Party), that also made their appearance around the same time as PKS's debut onto the overcrowded stage of Indonesian politics.

The PKS has also been beset by another problem that is not of its own making: By virtue of being an Islamist party it has come under the scrutiny of the media as well as secular-liberal NGOs that are wary of attempts to subvert the secular principles of the Indonesian Republican constitution. Compounding matters for the PKS has been the emergence of several new Islamist movements, organisations, NGOs and networks that oppose the Indonesian state and the democratic process. Some of these groups, like the *Laskar Jihad* (LJ), have been engaged in violent confrontations against non-Muslims in various parts of Indonesia. Others such as the *Fron Pembela Islam* (FPI), the *Forum Betawi Rembug* (FBR), the *Fron Pembela Islam Solo* (FPIS), the *Fron Jihad Indonesia* (FJI), etc. have taken it upon themselves to act as violent vigilantes, selectively enforcing strict moral rules and norms in areas under their control – though not through means that are always legal.<sup>6</sup> Then there are the more conservative movements like the *Hizb'ut Tahrir*

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of the popular votes, earning it 43 seats in Parliament. Under the leadership of its present leader Hatta Rajasa and Secretary-General Taufik Kurniawan, PAN's main bases of support remain West Sumatra, Jambi, Jogjakarta and South, West and Central Sulawesi.

<sup>5</sup> The roots of the *Partai Damai Sejahtera* (PDS, Peace and Prosperity Party), goes back to the predominantly Christian *Parkindo* (*Partai Kristen Indonesia*) that was established earlier in the 1950s and which has contested at the elections from 1955 to 1971. The PDS was formed during the last stages of the Suharto era and by the time of Suharto's fall in 1998 had re-emerged as a party in the country. It was officially registered on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2001 by Christian Indonesian leaders and though it claimed to be a Christian party it did not present itself in exclusive communitarian terms. In places like Surakarta and Jogjakarta (Central Java) the PDS fielded Muslim Parliamentary candidates in Muslim-majority areas. For the elections of 2004 the PDS won 2.1 per cent of the popular vote and managed to gain twelve Parliamentary seats (out of 550). At the elections of 2009, 21 of the PDS's candidates across the country were non-Christians. But in 2009 the PDS gained only 1.5 per cent of the popular vote, thereby failing to pass the 2.5 per cent threshold that had been set in order to gain seats in the People's Assembly (DPR). As a result, the PDS failed to gain a single seat in Parliament at the 2009 elections. Though the PDS does not present itself as an exclusive communitarian party, it has repeatedly expressed its concern about the state of Muslim-Christian relations in Indonesia and its worries about the signs of overt Islamisation across the country. Under the present leadership of Harry Wattimury and Markus Hurasoit, the PDS gains its support from the Christian-majority regions of the country, notably in West Papua, North Maluku and North Sulawesi (among the largely-Christian *Minahasa* peoples). Interestingly, in some areas such as *Tanah Toraja* (South-Central Sulawesi), the PDS has been relatively unsuccessful in winning the support of some of the Christians, such as the Torajas. It has also been relatively unsuccessful among the Christian Bataks of North Sumatra.

<sup>6</sup> For more on the *Fron Pembela Islam*, see Appendix A, below. Re: Al-Zastrow Ng, *Gerakan Islam Simbolik: Politik Kepentingan FPI*, Lembaga Kajian Islam dan Sosial, LKIS, Jogjakarta, 2006; Noorhaidi

*Indonesia*<sup>7</sup> (HTI) and the *Jama'ah Anshorut Tauhid* (JAT) who hold on to their dream of an Islamist Caliphate (*Khilafah*) that exceeds the political frontiers of presently-constituted Indonesia, and who regard the PKS as a party that has 'sold out' to the charms of worldly politics and the democratic process which they regard as un-Islamic.

The PKS is therefore in a dilemma of sorts: As an Islamist political party, it has set itself on a course of constitutional democratic politics and has committed itself to participation in the democratic arena. Yet in the course of doing so, aspersions have been cast against it, as to what its final objectives might be. On the other hand the PKS has also been under criticism from other Islamist groups who hold the view that democracy is not compatible with Islam, and that any Islamist party that seeks to contest in a democratic sphere has sold out its principles, and is in league with the forces of secular liberalism and democracy.

How the PKS deals with this dilemma, and how it positions itself in the wider constellation of Islamist politics and religious movements in Indonesia today will be the focus of this paper. We wish to ask the following question: Does the PKS have an in-built institutional mechanism or system that prevents it from being sucked into the quagmire of acrimonious 'holier-than-thou' *takfir* polemics with other Islamist groups; and does it have a means of ensuring that the party and its members are not drawn into the tangled web of radical Islamist politics?

Before attempting to answer that question, let us begin by taking a quick look at the history and origins of the PKS itself: The PKS was formally registered as the *Partai*

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Hasan, *Laskar Jihad: Islam, Militancy and the Quest for Identity in Post New-Order Indonesia*, Cornell Southeast Asia Program, Ithica, New York, 2006; John T. Sidel, *Riots, Pogroms, Jihad: Religious Violence in Indonesia*. Cornell University Press, London, 2006; Sidney Jones, *Terrorism and Radical Islam in Indonesia*, in Marika Vicziany and David Wright-Neville (eds.), *Islamic Terrorism in Indonesia: Myths and Realities*, Monash University Press, 2005; Ian Douglas Wilson, *Continuity and Change: The Changing Contours of Organised Violence in Post-New Order Indonesia*, *Critical Asian Studies* 38: 2, pp. 265-297; Jakarta Globe, *Police Deny Using FPI as 'Attack Dog'*, 5 September 2011.

<sup>7</sup> For more on the Hizb'ut Tahrir of Indonesia, see Appendix A, below. Re: S. Taji-Farouki, *A Fundamental Quest: Hizb al-Tahrir and the Search for an Islamic Caliphate*. Grey Seal, London. 1996. and Rusydi Zakaria, *Studi Awal Tentang Kelompok-Kelompok Keagamaan di Kampus Universitas Padjadjaran*, in *Penamas*, no. 20. vol. VII. Jakarta. 1995.

*Keadilan* on 20<sup>th</sup> July 1998, though its origins date back much earlier, to the nascent campus-based students movements that were active in Indonesia since the 1970s.

During the New Order era of President Suharto Indonesia effectively came under the rule of the dominant Golkar party and the Indonesian armed forces. Suharto's generals were wary of all forms of Islamist mobilisation, and the militarised state clamped down on a number of dissident Islamist groups and opposition movements. Many among the younger generation then were forced to go underground, and to organise themselves in the campuses of the country in closed study circles. Many of these student activists came from the *Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam* (HMI-Association of Muslim Students of Indonesia). The HMI's figurehead was none other than the widely known and highly regarded Islamist intellectual, Muhammad Natsir who was one of the founder-leaders of the Masjumi movement.

Unlike the Islamists of Malaysia, however, the Muslim student activists of Indonesia were more modernist in their outlook. Hefner (2000) notes that *'they adopted relaxed forms of dress and interaction while encouraging strict adherence to Muslim morality and devotion.'*<sup>8</sup> The Islamist student movement in Indonesia was given the nickname *'Salman'* because the model Islamic society that the Islamists proposed was developed among students who congregated at the Salman Mosque at the Bandung Institute of Technology. One of the leaders of the Salman movement was Imaddudin Abdulrahim. Another was Nurcholish Madjid, who was the head of the *Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam* (HMI). The Salman movement soon spread its network all over the country and by the early 1980s it had established branches and wings in practically every major university and college in Indonesia. Its leaders would later become the leaders of the Muslim pro-democracy movement in the 1980s and 1990s, and would play a critical role in bringing about the fall of Suharto's regime in 1998.

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<sup>8</sup> Robert Hefner, *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000, pg. 123.



It was from this context that the groups that would later set up the *Partai Keadilan* (Justice Party) emerged<sup>9</sup>: Among them were also many Indonesian Muslim students who had not only studied in the universities of Indonesia, but also abroad at the universities of Malaysia, Australia, America and Europe. Forming small study circles among themselves, they were sometimes referred to as the study brotherhoods (*Jamaah Tarbiyyah*), and came from a variety of educational backgrounds including economics, sociology, politics and governance, media studies as well as the hard sciences. Those who had studied in Britain, Germany and America were also exposed to the ideas and books of Islamist thinkers from the Muslim Brotherhood (*Ikhwan 'ul Muslimin*) of Egypt and the *Jama'at-e Islami* of Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. In Britain they also came into contact with *Jama'at-e* thinkers and activists like Kalim Siddiqui who was based in London. This combination of independent underground organisation and exposure to external currents of Islamist thought led to the creation of many campus-based Islamist student activist circles by the 1990s, that were keen to analyse the problems of Indonesian society and to work towards the democratisation of their own country, through an Islamic perspective and methodology.

By the 1990s it grew clearer that political Islam was slowly gaining ground across Indonesia, despite the repressive measures taken by the Suharto regime. Suharto's approach in dealing with these new Islamist groups was to co-opt some of them by opening up opportunity structures for Islamists within the state, that came in the form of state-funded Islamic colleges, universities and think-tanks such as the *Ikatan Cendiakiawan Muslim Indonesia* (ICMI). While some of the former Islamist student

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<sup>9</sup> During my interview with PKS leader Zulkieflimansyah he described his own experience as a student activist in Indonesia during the New Order era thus: "Remember the organic roots of the PKS as a movement. Long before it became a party, it came from the likes of me and my generation who were university students in Indonesia, studying at secular universities like Universitas Indonesia (UI), Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB), etc. We were all trained in the hard sciences or the social sciences, and not religion. So our original cadre base does not come from the *madrasahs* or *pesantrens* of Indonesia, but rather from the secular universities. Then from the 1970s and 1980s, our generation was seeking answers to the social problems we were facing while living under the New Order regime of Suharto and the army. We turned to religion because many of us felt there was a spiritual vacuum in our lives, but also because we wanted to seek other discourses to express our political vision for the future. With the fall of Suharto in 1998 PKS was formed, but at that time we were mainly professionals and students of secular universities with secular educational backgrounds." (Interview with Zulkieflimansyah, Member of Parliament of the PKS, Jakarta, Citos, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2011.)

activists like Nurcholish Madjid chose to accept such offers and work within the state apparatus, many of the younger students in the *Jamaah Tarbiyyah* chose to remain underground.

Things came to a crisis point by 1997-98 with the East Asian financial crisis that crippled the economies of Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia. The fall of Suharto in May 1998 was the result of massive student protests, many of which were led by Islamist student activists on the campuses of the country.<sup>10</sup> With Suharto toppled and the country under the weak leadership of B. J. Habibie, the Islamist activists formed their own party, the *Partai Keadilan* (Justice Party) on 20<sup>th</sup> July 1998. The first President of the PK was Nurmahmudi Ismail, though the young party was not prepared for the first post-Suharto elections that took place in 1999: At the elections of 1999 PK won less than two percent of the popular votes needed for the electoral threshold, and as a result had no representation in the Peoples Assembly (DPR).

PK's main problem was that of the public's perception of it, and speculation about what its long-term objectives would be. Secular liberals accused it of being a 'Trojan horse' for an Islamist takeover of Indonesia, and argued that if it came to power it would impose *Shariah* Law and *Hudud* punishments across the country. Other, more radical, Islamist groups on the other hand accused the PK of selling out by getting itself into the democratic process, which they regarded as un-Islamic. In 2000 the PK leadership issued its Medina Charter which stated that the PKS, while being an Islamist party, would remain committed to constitutional democracy and would not alter the fundamental character of the Indonesian Republican constitution.

The PK then reconstituted itself as the Justice and Prosperity Party (PKS) in April 2002, and came under the leadership of Hidayat Nur Wahid. At the elections of 2004 PKS won 7.3 percent of the popular vote, earning it 45 (out of 550) seats in Parliament, making PKS the 7<sup>th</sup> biggest party in the country in terms of Parliamentary representation.

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<sup>10</sup> See: Robert Hefner, *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia*. Princeton University Press, Princeton. 2000.

Boosting the party's image further was the election of Hidayat Nur Wahid as the Speaker of the House of Representatives as well. In 2009 Hidayat Nur Wahid was replaced by Luthfi Hasan Ishaq, who has been the President of the party ever since.

Since then the PKS has involved itself in a wide range of issues, the main focus of the party being transparency and the fight against institutional corruption. Among the urban electorate its appeal has always been in the domain of transparent governance and accountability; and the Jakarta region remains its strongest base of support. However it has also taken a stand on issues and concerns such as pornography and narcotics in the country. In the international arena PKS was and remains committed to issues that affect the global Muslim community as a whole, and was vocal in its reaction against the US-led invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan.

## **II. The Cadre-Training System of the PKS at a glance: Unity of dispersion and the focus on the individual.**

‘For a movement like PKS to succeed, we must build the cadre core first, because that is what will take us to the next level. Look at Erdogan in Turkey. How could he come to power in Turkey without the support of his cadres? It is the cadre base that lays the groundwork for the party to succeed.’

**Interview with Fahri Hamzah,  
PKS Member of Parliament/Commission  
III, Jakarta, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2011**

Though academic research on and into the PKS has grown over the years and there is now a respectable body of literature on the party and its history, there have been relatively fewer studies of the internal workings of the PKS and its cadre-training system for which it has been famous. We have already alluded to the PKS's roots in the campus-based student activist movements all across Indonesia and beyond, as well as its links to other international Islamist movements and political parties. What we wish to turn to next is the cadre-training system of the PKS and present a cursory overview of how it works on a daily basis.

The difficulty faced by scholars when talking about the PKS's cadre-training system lies in part in its exclusivity and the fact that few scholars have been given the opportunity to study it from close up. Among the few studies on the PKS's recruitment system and cadre-training programme that have been done in Indonesia is that of Ainun Najih's (2007), that uses descriptive and qualitative methods to study the recruitment and training system of the PKS in one specific locality, the Kabupaten Lamongan.<sup>11</sup> Najih notes that the PKS maintains a standardised and uniform approach to its recruitment process, whereby prospective candidates and members are first vetted by an internal party vetting committee, who will check into the background of the potential recruit. She also notes that entry and membership into the party is seldom an immediate or easy process, as the vetting system is accompanied by a strenuous cadre-training process where members are trained in order to progress from the level of new beginner to full member, senior member, expert, and finally leader.

Another source of information comes from members of the party themselves who have been somewhat critical of the PKS's methods of organisation and recruitment, and who have at times complained that the party has been a tad too exclusive in its recruitment process, for focusing too much on young members of an educated, middle-class, urban-based background. In recent times these critical voices have manifested themselves in both internal and external critiques that take the form of public commentaries and even websites like '*PKS Watch*', which was set up by members of the party – who are sometimes referred to as the *Basah* group (*Barisan Sakit Hati – the angry ones*).<sup>12</sup> Even stronger criticisms have emanated from former cadres and members of the party (such as Arbania Fitriani (2009)), who have since left the PKS, and who have been vocal enough

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<sup>11</sup> See: Ainun Najih, *Model Rekrutmen dan Kaderisasi Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS): Study di Kantor DPD PKS Kabupaten Lamongan. (The Recruitment and Cadre-Training Model of the Justice and Prosperity Party PKS: A Study of the PKS office of Kabupaten Lamongan)*, Doctoral thesis for the Muhamadiyah University of Malang (UMM), East Java, 2007.

<sup>12</sup> Re: <http://pkswatch.blogspot.com>.

to reveal the internal workings of the party to the outside world via other media such as the internet.<sup>13</sup>

On the campuses of Indonesia the PKS's members' networks have been more or less the same since the days when the party was still referred to as the Justice Party (*Partai Keadilan*, PK). Active members of the PK/PKS would remain on the look-out for potential recruits to be invited to join in their study circles and cadre programmes, and the selection of candidates would be based on their backgrounds and character. Like many other cadre-based organisations that instil collective discipline and character-building, the PKS seeks new members who are of good family backgrounds, intelligent and who are high-performers: Academic results and sterling qualifications therefore count as much as personal moral conduct and good family background. Furthermore as an activist-based party the PKS seeks new members who have already risen in the ranks of student organisations and student politics.

At the most basic level new recruits (who are invited to join or who apply to join) are ranked at the lowest level first, the *'am sirriyah* – which progressively rises up to the level of *'am jahriyah*. Fitriani (2009) notes that during his own recruitment phase while studying at Universitas Indonesia (UI) the *Partai Keadilan's* (as it was then called) organisational structure was divided into three sections: the *Majelis Shuro'ah* (*Shura*, or Consultative Council), the *Majelis Besar* (the larger assembly) and the *dakwah* wing of the *Lembaga Kerohanian Islam* (LKI, Spiritual development body). The organisational structure of the PKS on campus mirrors that of the PKS on the national level, with the *Shura* council being dominated by the highest-ranking members who have passed the

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<sup>13</sup> Perhaps one of the best known instances of an ex-PKS member leaving the party and 'spilling the beans' to the wider Indonesian public has been Arbania Fitriani (2009), who was recruited into the party while studying at the Jakarta-based Universitas Indonesia. Using free online web services like Facebook and Twitter, he began writing in considerable detail about the recruitment methods and training modules used by the PKS on his own personal Facebook site. His notes, critical though they may be, were nonetheless full of details about the cadre-training system of the PKS, its classes and the texts that are used in the party's training sessions. Fitriani's critique, however, was less against the PKS as a whole but aimed at what he felt was the increasingly exclusive outlook of the party's members. Another criticism that recurs in his writings is his suspicion that the PKS is too heavily influenced by Arab culture and norms, and that the party has not given due emphasis and respect to the indigenous cultures of the peoples of Indonesia. (re: <http://shofiyullah.wordpress.com/2009/02/25/a-testimony-from-ex-pks-cadre/>.)

internal tests and examinations set by the party and who have reached the level of leaders (*Naqib*)<sup>14</sup>. Many of these veterans, Fitriani notes, would rise to become permanently dedicated activists – the *Aktivis Dakwah Kampus* (ADK, Campus missionary activists) – who would remain in the academic field and seek jobs as lecturers of university/college administration staff later, thereby ensuring continuity in the PKS's presence in these institutions. During our interviews with Malaysian students and activists who had also undergone the same cadre-training system in Malaysia and Indonesia, we were told that this standardised hierarchy applies in Malaysia as well.

At this early formative stage the new members are exposed to the cadre-training process which comes in the form of classes and study groups (*usrah*) which are part of the overall training programme (*tarbiyyah*). It has to be noted here that as an active minority groups<sup>15</sup> operating in a closed campus setting, the PKS's rites and rituals of mutuality and association necessarily involve the members gathering together regularly on a weekly basis, and creating the first boundary between themselves and the rest of the student community in the familiar 'in-group' and 'out-group' dichotomy that is also seen in many other missionary movements such as the *Tablighi Jama'at*.<sup>16</sup>

As in the case of almost all active minority groups that seek to draw a distinction between themselves and others outside the group, peer pressure and a system of internal checks are necessary tools that come into play as the group asserts pressure on the members to conform: Those new members who hold on to habits such as smoking, partying, dating etc. which are deemed incorrect are told that they have to mend their ways and change for the better, etc. Again, we emphasise that there is nothing particularly unique about the

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<sup>14</sup> Fitriani (2009) points out that during his stint with the PKS at UI Jakarta, most of the members of the *Majelis Shuro'ah* were veteran members of the PS/PKS who had been in the movement since their high school days (SMU).

<sup>15</sup> The term *active minority group* is here being used as it was defined in the works of Moscovici. See: Moscovici, S., Lage, E. and Naffrenchoux, M. (1969) '*Influences of a consistent minority on the responses of a majority in a colour perception task*', *Sociometry*, Vol.32, pp.365-80. cited in Cardwell, M. and Flanagan, C. (2003) *Psychology AS The Complete Companion*, Nelson Thornes; and Serge Moscovici, *Psychologie des minorités actives*, University Presses of France, 1979.

<sup>16</sup> See, for instance: Farish A. Noor, *The Spread of the Tablighi Jama'at Across Western, Central and Eastern Java and the Role of the Indian Muslim Diaspora*. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Working papers series no. 175, Nanyang Technical University, Singapore, March 2009.

PKS's mode of group-cohesion and identity-building, for similar tactics are used by other groups as well. It was pointed out by those we interviewed, however, that a 'point-score' system is also used at times to rate or grade the level of commitment of the new members, so that they may proceed upwards within the hierarchy of the movement.<sup>17</sup>

In both the *Majelis Shuro'ah* and the *Majelis Besar* there would be group leaders (*mas'ul*) who would be tasked with the internal management, organisation, discipline and training of the members. These come under the *dakwah* wings of the organisation, that are divided into the *tarbiyyah* wing, the *syiar* wing and the politics and education wing, respectively. Overall command and direction comes from the higher *Majelis Shuro'ah* where the senior members direct the lower *Majelis Besar* to carry out the respective training and educational programmes – as well as the political campaigns, including demonstrations, rallies, petitions, etc. – that are handed down to them.

However unlike some other active minority Muslim groups like the conservative Salafi-inspired *Tablighi Jama'at*, the PKS's scope of study is much wider and the emphasis is on a comprehensive and broad-based educational and training programme. Najih (2007) notes, for instance, that *Tarbiyyah* in the context of the PKS is never limited exclusively to the study and discussion of traditional religious texts or legal treatise, but encompasses a wide range of learning activities that are divided into several sub-headings, such as *Tarbiyyah Nadzariyyah* (the study of Islamic norms and theory), *Tarbiyyah Ruhiiyyah* (moral lessons and discussions on proper ethical conduct), *Tarbiyyah Maidaniyyah* (the study of modes of practical mobilisation and organisation), *Tarbiyyah Fikriyyah* (discussions and classes on critical thinking, which includes the study of logic and critical theory), and *Tarbiyyah Harakiyyah* (the development of organisational awareness and training in relation to party-political mobilisation). PKS leaders we spoke to confirmed

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<sup>17</sup> In the course of my interviews in Jogjakarta and Jakarta I met and discussed with some Malaysian activists who had undergone the same cadre-training in both Malaysia and Indonesia, in the latter case hosted by the PKS. It was pointed out that new members are often encouraged to keep a point or score book, to note the instances when they performed tasks and religious rituals that were deemed an 'extra' or 'bonus', such as the non-obligatory *Sunnah* communal prayers in the mosque, non-obligatory fasting, etc. Each time these tasks or rituals were performed, the member would 'score' additional points that would latter be tallied and counted. Promotion to the higher level of *Naqib* (leader) normally depended upon scoring such extra points, and it was noted as well that *no points were given for the performance of obligatory religious duties* such as the five obligatory daily prayers that all Muslims are expected to perform anyway.

that the *Tarbiyyah* programmes of the party remain focused on practical skills that have more to do with management and governance than issue of theology or scripture.<sup>18</sup>

Here a comparison can be made between a modernist Islamist activist-based movement like the PKS and other, more conservative, groupings like the *Tablighi Jama'at* who are sometimes classified as orthodox Salafi puritans: While the latter see the world as a domain that is corrupt, sinful and full of temptations to be cleansed at best and avoided at worst, the PKS retains from the outset a *duniawi* (worldly) perspective to the world that is realist and pragmatic. For instance, as part of the *Tarbiyyah Harakiyyah* training the members are taught how to use social media networks, organise political demonstrations and rallies, file petitions and organise public awareness campaigns. All of this is reflected in the manner in which the PKS's political rallies remain among the best organised, disciplined and clean in Indonesia today – thanks in part to the role played by the PKS's uniform-clad volunteer corps, KORSAD.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> PKS leader Zulkieflimansyah noted, for instance that the 'PKS cadre training has a lot to do with giving our members the background they need in issues of governance, management etc. but in a very modern sense. Today critics of PKS say that if we come to power the first thing we will do is impose Sharia law and Hudud punishments. There is nothing like that in our training! *Hudud* is never an issue for us, and it has never been an issue for us. Why? Because we want to show that an Islamist movement can come to power in a plural society through a democratic process that engages with a plural society in a civil manner. That's why so much of our training programmes have always been focused on pragmatic skills and knowledge such as business, management, etc.' (Interview with Zulkieflimansyah, Member of Parliament of the PKS, Jakarta, Citos, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2011.) A similar view was expressed by another PKS leader, Parliamentarian Fahri Hamzah, who noted that 'Some political movements almost come to see the state as something magical, like Hobbes' *Leviathan*. It is as if they think that once you win the state then you have everything in your hands to control. But today the state is just the overarching superstructure. There is the media, the market, civil society movements, the education system, etc. which have to be won over as well. So while we do want political power and we have never hidden that fact, we also tell our cadres that they can change society by operating at all levels, such as controlling the media or setting the agenda in the domain of public intellectual discourse.' (Interview with Fahri Hamzah, PKS Member of Parliament/Commission III of the PKS Jakarta, Mulya Hotel, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2011.)

<sup>19</sup> The political rallies of the PKS have received considerable attention from the Indonesian press, thanks to the fact that they remain huge and at the same time orderly. In 2004 the PKS held one of its first major large-scale demonstrations in Jakarta in protest against the American-led invasion of Iraq, and it was noted by the major newspapers that the rally was a well-organised one where no litter was left behind. This is due to the fact that the PKS's rallies are organized weeks in advance, and before the event a roster of all members expected to participate will be prepared. On the day itself, a quadrant is established with the use of ropes and markers, and all who come are expected to register with the PKS minders first. According to activists we interviewed, the PKS members are divided into different groups and sections: Some will make up the main marching body, others will be tasked with holding banners or chanting slogans. Minders and stewards will be there to maintain security, cohesion during the march, the cleaning-up of litter, parking of cars and buses, etc. This internal discipline and organization accounts for why the PKS rallies have been the cleanest in Indonesia, no mean feat when compared with the less disciplined rallies organized by other



The fact that its training programme includes among its core components elements such as *Tarbiyyah Maidaniyyah*, *Tarbiyyah Fikriyyah* and *Tarbiyyah Harakiyyah* underscores the claims of its members (as we shall see below) that the PKS is a realist movement that seeks to understand the real social issues and problems of the world before trying to correct them in a pragmatic and realistic manner. PKS leaders we spoke to noted that as part of the *Tarbiyyah Fikriyyah* programme the members are also encouraged to read, study and discuss serious and openly even secular ideologies such as Marxism, Capitalism and Liberalism, and to be familiar with the works and ideas of contemporary critical philosophers. In the course of this cadre-training programme, the new members are taught to read and discuss the works of Islamist intellectuals and ideologues like Hassan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb and Syed Abul Al'aa Maudoodi. Also included in the list of Islamist luminaries are thinkers like UK-based Kalim Sidiqqi (d. 1996; founder of the Muslim Institute of Research and Planning in London in 1972, 'The Muslim Parliament' of the United Kingdom in 1989, and author of *Stages of the Islamic Revolution* and *The Pursuit of Power in Islam* (London, MI, 1972)) and Tareq Ramadan (whose doctorate thesis was on *Nietzsche as a Philosopher of History* and the author of *To Be A European Muslim* (1999) and *The Quest for Meaning: Developing a Philosophy of Pluralism* (2010)).

This, however, does not mean that the PKS is entirely outward-looking in its search for inspiration and ideas, and it is important to note that over the years the party has also developed its own local knowledge-base that is produced by senior members of the PKS themselves, and whose works are now also part of the *Tarbiyyah* programme of the party. Among the local Indonesian PKS leaders who have shaped the training programme of the movement – and by extension its moral and political outlook as well – is Professor Dr Iryan Priyanto. Prof Priyanto's two books, *Kepribadian Da'i*<sup>20</sup> (2002) and *Kepribadian*

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political parties. There have also been no reported incidents of looting, arson, fighting or destruction of public property at any of the major PKS rallies so far. (Re: Interview with PKS members and Malaysian activist Mohammad Hamzi Tarmizi, 4 October, Jogjakarta and 6 October 2011, Jakarta.)

<sup>20</sup> Irwan Priyanto, *Kepribadian Da'i: Bahan Panduan Bagi Dai dan Murabbi*, Pustaka Tarbiatuna, Jakarta, 2002.

*Muslim*<sup>21</sup> (2003) are among the books in the cadre-training process of the PKS, and are also used in the cadre-training programmes of the members of the *Jama'ah Islah Malaysia* (JIM) and the Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement (ABIM) of Malaysia.

Irwan Priyanto today happens to be one of the best-known leaders of the PKS in Indonesia and whose career in student activism and politics has been a meteoric one, but not one without its own share of controversies.<sup>22</sup> He read psychology at the Universitas Indonesia (UI) between 1982 to 1988, before taking up a Masters' degree and a doctorate at the Universiti Putra of Malaysia (UMP), between 1995-96 and 1996-2000, in management and human resource development. Like many Indonesian students in Malaysia then, he also came into contact with young Malaysian Islamist activists from JIM and ABIM while in Malaysia, where the Malaysian Islamic party PAS was also active. As part of the resurgent Islamist awakening on campus then Priyanto had taken an active part in the teaching and cadre-training sessions organised by Islamist student groups, through their *usrah* sessions and *tarbiyyah* activities. He contributed to the cadre-training materiel of the PKS by writing two of the most important books that are used in the PKS training programme, namely the *Kepribadian Da'i* and *Kepribadian Muslim*.

While the *Kepribadian Da'i* and *Kepribadian Muslim* draw from the stock repertoire of Islamist discourse worldwide, and are replete with references to the various international 'plots and stratagems' that are used to hinder the rise of Muslim power and the success of the Islamists' project, both books are really focused on the topic of the cultivation of the ideal Muslim subject, and emphasis is given to the development of a strong and committed Muslim personality. In this respect, the works of Priyanto are not unique or novel, for the concept of the idealised Muslim preacher (*Da'i*) has been embedded as part

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<sup>21</sup> Irwan Priyanto, *Kepribadian Muslim*, Pustaka Tarbiatuna, Jakarta, 2003.

<sup>22</sup> Born in 1963 in Jogjakarta, Priyanto's family was of Sumatran origin. His parents – Dr. Djamrul Djamil and Dr. Sudarni Sayuti – were from Sumatra, hailing from Simabur, Tanah Datar and Kuranji, Padang, respectively. His early education was, however, entirely in Java and he was first sent to school in Cirebon. Priyanto was nominated to the post of Governor of West Sumatra in 2005, but his nomination was opposed by groups who claimed that as someone brought up in Java he had no right to the post. The controversy was only settled when he could prove that both of his parents were of Minangkabau origin and that both his parents were born in West Sumatra.

of Muslim normativity and religious discourse for centuries.<sup>23</sup> The idealised *Da'i* figure that Priyanto foregrounds conforms to Muslim standards of correct religious praxis and is basically the idealised figure of the committed Muslim missionary-activist who goes out into the world to bring the message of Islam to others.<sup>24</sup> Both extensive compilations are written in a style that is accessible, easy to read and above all convenient to instrumentalise, as noted by the publishers.<sup>25</sup> Read in their entirety, the contents of the *Kepribadian Da'i* and *Kepribadian Muslim* reinforce the ideals and standards that are set in the cadre-training process of the PKS and which are continually repeated and

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<sup>23</sup> The term *Da'i/Da'iyah* has its etymological roots in non-religious discourse, referring to the neigh of a horse that responds to the calling of its master. Later the term grew more complex in its meaning, thanks to its polysemy and the diachronic nature of how words evolve in different situational contexts. It can also be used to refer to the *Muadzin*, but today is largely interpreted as a pious and committed Muslim who takes it upon himself or herself to go out into the world to bring the message of Islam to others. The term *Da'i/Da'iyah* is therefore closely linked to the concept of *Dakwah*, or Muslim missionary work – and is based on strong faith and true knowledge (*hadzihi sabili*). The concept of *Da'i/Da'iyah* was already in circulation in Indonesia long before the creation of Islamist parties like the PKS. The Indonesian Islamist leader M Natsir in his book *Fihud Da'wah* had already referred to the Muslim community as the community of *Dakwah*, whose moral obligation was to spread Islam to others, while abiding by the ethical code of the *Shariah*.

<sup>24</sup> The two books by Priyanto are compilations of earlier writings/books; and are divided into the following sections/chapters:

*Kepribadian Da'i* (2002):

- *Al-Ghazw Al-Fikr*
- *Hizb Asy-Syaithaan*
- *Qadhaayaa Ad-Da'wah / Al-Ummah*
- *Al Haq wa Al-Baathil*
- *Takwiin Al-Ummah*
- *At-Tarbiyah Al-Islaamiyah Al-Harakiyah*
- *Fiqh Ad-Da'wah, dan*
- *Membentuk Kepribadian Muslim*

*Kepribadian Muslim* (2003):

- *Makna Asy-Syahaadain*
- *Ma'rifatullah*
- *Ma'rifah Ar-Rasuul*
- *Ma'rifah Al-Islam*
- *Ma'rifah Al-Insaan*
- *Ma'rifah Al-Qur'an*

<sup>25</sup> The publisher's note (also found on the books' sales webpage) points out that: "*Buku Kepribadian Muslim ini terdiri dari sinopsis bahan tarbiyah yaitu Ma'na Asy-Syahadatain, Ma'rifatullah, Ma'rifah Ar-Rasul, Ma'rifah Al-Islam, Ma'rifah Al-Insan, Ma'rifah Al-Qur'an. Bahan tersebut merupakan karya para ulama dakwah. Bahan ini telah disosialisasikan kepada kalangan pemuda islam dan juga telah terbukti dapat membantu pembentukan kepribadian muslim.*" (The book *Kepribadian Muslim* consists of lengthy synopsis of the materiel for missionary work, namely the *Ma'na Asy-Syahadatain*, *Ma'rifatullah*, *Ma'rifah Ar-Rasul*, *Ma'rifah Al-Islam*, *Ma'rifah Al-Insan*, *Ma'rifah Al-Qur'an*. This materiel has been socialised for use by young Muslims and also for the development of the character of the Muslim reader.) [Re: Pustaka Tarbiatuna.]

emphasised in their group training sessions, as well as in their on-line cadre training modules.<sup>26</sup>

As far as the wider aims of the PKS's cadre programme are concerned, the ten most important attributes that have to be developed among the members of the party are: (1) *Salimul Aqidah* (correctness in religion), (2) *Shahihul Ibadah* (true religious devotion), (3) *Matinul Khuluq* (strong integrity), (4) *Qowiyyul Jismi* (physical health and bodily strength), (5) *Mutsaqqoful Fikri* (active intellectualism and critical thinking), (6) *Mujahadatul Linafsihi* (to struggle against one's ego and desires), (7) *Harishun Ala Waqtihi* (punctuality), (8) *Munazhzhmun fi Syuunihi* (organisation and discipline in work and carrying out one's duties and responsibilities), (9) *Qodirun Alal Kasbi* (self-reliance, including economic independence), and (10) *Nafi'un Lighoirihi* (to live selflessly for others and the community.)

It should be noted that only the first two qualities are directly related to religion and one's religious obligations to God. The other qualities that the PKS seeks to develop in its members have more to do with the development of strong, independent minded individuals who are self-reliant (*Qodirun a'lal kasbi*), financially able to contribute, able to think critically for themselves (*Mutsaqqoful fikri*) and able to contribute to the greater good of the community as a whole (*Nafi'un lighoirihi*). The emphasis on physical health and wellbeing (*Qowiyyul jismi*) and the need to struggle against one's desires (*Mujahadatul linafsihi*) also accounts for the PKS's somewhat puritan character, and the reason why all cadres and members of the party are expected to give up any habits such as smoking which they regard as a weakening influence upon the individual, and the community by extension. This emphasis on physical strength and discipline is perhaps most explicitly embodied in the PKS's own uniformed volunteer corps or KORSAD, who play a visible role in maintaining order and discipline at its marches, demonstrations and assemblies, and who seem overtly aggressive thanks to their use of para-military fatigues (army pants, boots, berets and bandana, etc) and the public display of their martial arts skills.

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<sup>26</sup> See: [www.kaderisasi.PKS.or.id](http://www.kaderisasi.PKS.or.id), for example. Also: [www.dakwatuna.com](http://www.dakwatuna.com).

At a glance, it would appear that the PKS has developed a cadre-training system that ensures the unity of dispersion of its ideas and a focus on individual development. Through its vetting process that begins from the first instance of recruitment and through its learning and training process that proceeds in stages, members are familiarised with the basic ideas that form the basis of the party's ideology and are encouraged to develop their own personal skills to become fully committed activists.

There remain, however, dissenting voices even within the ranks of the party itself who claim that such a closed system of training creates a cadre class that is exclusive in its outlook, and that the hierarchical nature of its leadership means that there is always a danger that the PKS develops internal divisions between those who are seen as 'elite' and those who are seen as 'ordinary'.<sup>27</sup> So serious has this concern become that recently several senior PKS leaders have called upon their own cadres to shed their exclusive form of thinking and to open themselves up to the rest of society: Ika Fitriady, secretary of the Social Development Unit of the PKS Riau division warned his fellow party members not to be too exclusive in their behaviour, and reminded the cadres of the PKS that theirs is a society-based party that cannot afford to be seen as elitist.<sup>28</sup>

Notwithstanding these internal concerns and criticisms, the main concern of this paper lies elsewhere: Which is to ask how the PKS cadre-training system renders the party and its members immune to the rhetoric and charms of other, more radical and perhaps violent Islamist movements that are now emerging in Indonesia today. Granted that the PKS has a strong internal recruitment, training and reproduction system put into place; can it also ensure that its members will not slide beyond the parameters of the party's

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<sup>27</sup> Among those who have highlighted this concern is the ex-PKS cadre Fitriani (2009) who argues that in the PKS today there are cleavages between those who regard themselves as '*khos*' (special) and those who are regarded as common (*awam*, '*amah*'). He argues that in the eyes of the PKS elites the latter are simply seen as *mad'u* (those to be converted) and not accorded equal status. But perhaps the more damaging critique from the likes of Fitriani is that the PKS is covertly undermining the basis of Indonesian culture as well, and in the process of its cadre-training system teaching young Indonesian activists to be more Arabo-centric in their worldview and to look down upon their own culture and heritage as Asian Muslims.

<sup>28</sup> Ika Fitriady's comments were made during the PKS Socialisation programme organized by the Riau Division of the PKS on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2011.

concerns, and be enticed to join in some of the more violent campaigns that animate some of the other Islamist movements in Indonesia?

### **III. Weathering the turbulence of Indonesia's Post-Suharto politics: The PKS in the wider constellation of Indonesia's political landscape.**

'The radical Islamist groups are no challenge to us, for our cadre system keeps us solid.'

**Interview with Fahri Hamzah,  
PKS Member of Parliament/Commission  
III, Jakarta, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2011**

Having moved into the mainstream of Indonesian politics, the PKS has been pulled and swayed by the more strident voices emanating from the chorus of Indonesian politics, be it from the more radical nationalist groups or the more radical Islamist groups. Though the party's leaders have stated that the PKS has not veered from its original course, close observers of Indonesian politics will note that on more than one occasion that party has been compelled to take a stand on issues that are not directly related to its own Islamist-ideological concerns.

In the course of my fieldwork in Indonesia over the years, there have been several instances when I witnessed the presence of the PKS at venues and events that ought to be outside the parameters of the party's concern: Following the release of the controversial cleric Abu Bakar Ba'asyir after his incarceration in 2004/5, for instance, a victory parade was held by his staunch followers from the *Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia* (MMI) in the Central Javanese town of Surakarta (in 2006).<sup>29</sup> Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, defiant as always, vowed never to concede to state pressure or police intimidation, and during his 'victory speech' reiterated that democracy was *haram*, that Israel should be destroyed, and that the Indonesian government was collaborating with the 'satanic forces' of Washington and Tel Aviv. Present at the rally were the usual array of radical anti-government and anti-state Islamist groups like the *Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia* (MMI), the *Fron Pembela*

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<sup>29</sup> See: Farish A. Noor, *Fire and Brimstone*, in *Qur'an and Cricket: Travels Through the Madrasahs of Asia*, Silverfish Books, Kuala Lumpur, 2009. (pp. 116-130.)

*Islam Solo* (FPIS), the *Hizb'ut Tahrir Indonesia* (HTI) and an assortment of other, less known but equally boisterous and vocal Islamist pressure groups. I noted however that apart from the flags of the MMI, HTI, FPIS, etc there was also the visible presence of the PKS, in the form of some PKS supporters and the PKS flag – despite the fact that the PKS has never really been identified with groups like the MMI, FPI, HTI and that the latter regard the PKS as an Islamist group that has ‘sold out’ to the secular democratic process. (See appendix A for a brief overview of these radical groups.)

On other occasions the PKS has also lent its weight to political campaigns of a more secular, nationalist nature and which were inspired and instigated by other, more extreme right-wing nationalist groups in the country. One such incident occurred in August 2010, when three members of the Indonesian fisheries authorities were detained by Malaysian coast guard officers in the contested waters between Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. On 16 and 17 August the *Laskar Merah Putih* held several noisy demonstrations in Jakarta and Makassar, Sulawesi and on one occasion (16 August) threatened to enter the precinct of Makassar’s port to attack any Malaysian commercial vessels docked there. In Jakarta and Makassar the Malaysian flag was burned, and the Malaysian embassy in Jakarta was surrounded by members of the *Laskar Merah Putih*, who pelted the building with garbage, and even faeces.<sup>30</sup> With tempers rising in Indonesia then, Indonesian

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<sup>30</sup> The circumstances that led to brief confrontation between Malaysia and Indonesia were rather complex. On Friday, 13 August 2010, five Malaysian fishing boats that were fishing off the waters of Batam were stopped by Indonesian coastal fisheries authorities on the grounds that their boats had drifted into Indonesian waters and were illegally fishing in Indonesian territory. While negotiations were being conducted, a Malaysian coast guard vessel approached the scene and demanded that the seven Malaysian fishermen be released. Further negotiations were then carried out, but in the middle of the process - though the facts remain unclear - it appears that the Malaysian coast guard vessel let off two warning shots in the direction of the Indonesian vessel. Three Indonesian marine officers were then taken aboard the Malaysian vessel and brought back to Malaysia, while the seven Malaysian fishermen were taken to Batam in what may have been an exchange. News of the interception of the Indonesian vessel soon made it to the Indonesian press, and by the next day the Indonesian media reported that three of its officials had been detained illegally by the Malaysian police. By 14-15 August tempers began to rise on the Indonesian side as several Indonesian newspapers and TV channels (notably MetroTV, ANTV and TV One) continued to present it as an act of deliberate aggression by Malaysia against Indonesia, on the eve of Indonesia's national day celebrations (17 August). The situation escalated rapidly in Indonesia between 14 and 15 August when right-wing activists demonstrated in front of the Malaysian embassy in Jakarta, leading to another demonstration where members of the *Laskar Merah Putih* attempted to storm the gates of the Malaysian embassy, defaced the plaque of the Malaysian embassy, and draped a large Indonesian flag in front of the embassy. On 16 August Malaysian authorities stated that the 3 Indonesian officers would be released from their detention at the Police headquarters in Johor as soon as their release papers had been

politicians like Fadel Mohammad called upon Malaysia to release the three detained Indonesian officials immediately. (Fadel Mohammad did however note that the waters where the Malaysian fishermen were fishing remain disputed and it is unclear as to whether it was part of Indonesian or Malaysian territory.) Representatives of the Indonesian Parliament (DPR) argued that Indonesia ought to at least recall its ambassador from Kuala Lumpur, or demand that the Malaysian ambassador to Jakarta be returned. It was at this point that leaders from both Golkar and the PKS demanded that the government of Bambang Yudhoyono take clear action against Malaysia, manipulating the event further to gain leverage against the PD government under SBY. Again, the PKS was seen taking a stand on an issue that had nothing to do with its own commitment to political Islam and which was made a national issue not by them, but rather right-wing nationalist groups instead. However due to the raised political temperature in Indonesia by that stage the PKS – like all the other parties in Parliament – felt it necessary to make its stand known to the public.

That the PKS has been compelled to take a stand on issues that are not necessarily related to its own agenda is not unique to the PKS alone: Malaysia's Islamic party PAS has likewise been forced to take a stand on issues raised by other fringe movements like the numerous far-right Islamist NGOs and ethno-nationalist groups in the country, the most recent example being the rally against Christian missionary activity in the country that some right-wing groups claim to be a national issue.<sup>31</sup> Like PKS, PAS too has had to

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processed. By the morning of 17 August 2010 the Indonesians had released all seven of the Malaysian fishermen and the Malaysians had released all three of the Indonesian officers. It has to be noted that throughout the event, almost all of the Indonesian popular TV channels had presented only the Indonesian side of the story, while in Malaysia there was almost no coverage at all of the developments in Malaysia. To the credit of some Indonesian TV channels (ANTV), not all of the news was lop-sided as it was later revealed that the Malaysian fishermen maintained that the GPS system on their boats indicated that they were fishing in Malaysian waters, and the fishermen later claimed that once their boats were boarded by the Indonesian officers the GPS systems of their boats were shut down and re-calibrated to show different coordinates, thereby raising doubt about the Indonesian claim that the Malaysian boats were indeed in Indonesian waters.

<sup>31</sup> Malaysia's PAS is likewise challenged by both non-state Islamist actors like the *Hizb'ut Tahrir* of Malaysia (HTM) and right-wing ethno-nationalist movements like *Perkasa*, *Pekida*, etc. In mid October 2011 some right-wing ethno-nationalist groups declared that they will organize a 'one million Muslims' rally in the town of Shah Alam, Selangor, to protest against Christian missionaries who they allege are converting Muslims in secret. PAS, as part of the three-party *Pakatan Rakyat* coalition, was forced to take a stand on the issue and finally (on 19 October 2011) declared that it will not support such a rally as it did not



distance itself from some of these movements in order to underscore its own stand and orientation as an Islamist party that is now embedded in mainstream national politics.

Granted that the PKS's cadre-training system accounts for the party's cohesion and the discipline of its members; and granted that at times the party's leadership has been forced to take a stand on other matters not related to the PKS's primary objectives, the question remains as to whether the cadre-training system of the PKS can guarantee that its individual members are not swayed by the rhetoric and arguments of other Islamist or radical secular groups.

PKS leaders we spoke to emphasised that the party remains a pragmatic one that – *as a party* – sees politics as a means to an ends and which recognises that the only way for PKS to govern and change Indonesian society in the long run is through the democratic process. PKS Parliamentarian Fahri Hamzah, for instance, insists that the objective of the PKS remains that of *state capture*:

“As a political party, we (PKS) say (to our critics): Be realistic. There is no point boasting about Islamic ‘resurgence’ when you have no concrete results to offer. And that’s what we want: State capture and state control is less about just gaining power and more about showing that with power we can deliver real, tangible results that are meaningful and real to people.

We in PKS have always taken the middle path and we work towards winning control of a plural state. The state is therefore the resource base (*sumberdaya*) for us: Through the state we can do many other things, including dealing with radical groups like that.

In the end we wish to win power over a plural state because we want to prove that Islamist politics is plural and that it can deal with pluralism for the common good of all. I emphasise the point of the common good here, for this is where we differ with some radical groups that say ‘Muslim

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take the threat of Christian missionary activity that seriously. But even though the leadership of PAS did not endorse the rally, it could not prevent its own members from joining the rally on an individual basis.

power for Muslims only'. That's not true. Islam is for everyone and if we come to power we wish to prove that we can cater for the common good of all people, including non-Muslims.

Now some radical groups don't like that, and don't agree with that- but that's our position because we see Islam in universal terms. If they wish to limit themselves then that's their right, but not ours."<sup>32</sup>

A similar view was expressed by another PKS Parliamentarian, Zulkieflimansyah, who echoed the pragmatic approach of Fahri Hamzah thus:

"I emphasise that what we are trying to do is to demonstrate that Muslims can alter the political system from within, but not by knocking the system too hard. Our approach is pragmatic, calculated. And the cadre system and our training programmes are there to teach our members to be pragmatic in this way: They learn to speak to the public, to convey their message to their constituencies, to promote things like transparency and anti-corruption. That's what we do. What is the point of having ceaseless debates about things like *Hudud*? We remind our members: We need to convince the electorate that Islamist politics is not just about symbolism and rites and rituals. It's not the dress that counts, but the delivery. Now how on earth can we convince voters to support our programme if all we do is talking about chopping off hands or stoning people to death? Try to win an election on that basis- you cannot. Nobody can win votes by going to the public talking about things like *Hudud* punishments and the death penalty, nobody."<sup>33</sup>

Notwithstanding the pragmatic approach that the PKS takes to politics and democracy, there are nonetheless dissident elements within the party as we have mentioned earlier. The leaders of the PKS do not deny the fact that even within the ranks of the PKS there

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<sup>32</sup> Interview with Fahri Hamzah, PKS Member of Parliament/Commission III of the PKS Jakarta, Mulya Hotel, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Zulkieflimansyah, Member of Parliament of the PKS, Jakarta, Citos, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

are the more conservative elements who may wish to take a more conservative approach to its politics, as noted by Zulkieflimansyah himself:

“There is still the old guard of course, and I am not going to deny that there are still conservative voices even in PKS, including those who talk of an Islamic state, *Sharia* Law, *Hudud*, etc. But in time the new generation will take over, and that’s what the cadre training is all about. Of course all parties have to maintain some cohesion and discipline among its members. Like I said, PKS is a community, and like all communities there are members who may think differently. What can we do? PKS cannot be authoritarian and demand that all members think alike can we? I accept that we have pockets of different opinions in our party, but isn’t that true of all parties, including secular ones?”<sup>34</sup>

PKS relies on its cadre-training system and its own internal disciplinary system to ensure that the majority of its members stick to the party’s programme and do not slip beyond the fold of the party-community; or involve themselves in activities that may be detrimental to the PKS’s image as a legitimate, constitution-abiding political party. This includes making sure that they do not support any violent activities or get themselves involved in violent actions such as those promoted by some of the more radical groups in the country.<sup>35</sup> For PKS leaders like Zulkieflimansyah, these internal mechanisms function as a sort of *‘preventive radicalisation mechanism’*. In his words:

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<sup>34</sup> The PKS leader added: ‘As I said the PKS is a community and it is a learning community. We are learning how to come to power and how to change the nature of power in a state system in a plural society. Look at me: I studied in the United Kingdom and I am an economist. In 1994 I was President of the Students’ Council. As an economist I do not look at the world through the lens of some nostalgic Islamic kingdom from the past, but from the present-day reality of markets. What we want to do is engage with that reality and change the way we govern and interact with that reality. Economists see the world in terms of markets, market forces, and we accept that the world is complex and with differences. There are no simple solutions for the likes of me: We don’t accept simple slogans that promise instant results.’ (Interview with Zulkieflimansyah, Member of Parliament of the PKS, Jakarta, Citos, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2011.)

<sup>35</sup> The PKS leaders I interviewed were particularly concerned about the rise of religious violence in Indonesia over the past few years and insisted that the PKS will not endorse any violent campaign against any of the religious minorities, or even alternative/deviant/minority cults in the Muslim community. In the case of the latter, the Ahmadiyah Muslim sect has been the target of many violent pogroms over the past few years, though PKS has never been directly involved in any of the attacks against them. PKS leader Zulkieflimansyah noted that ‘On issues like (violence against) the Ahmadiyah minority, we expect the

“You can call it a sort of preventive radicalisation mechanism that we have instituted inside the party from day one. The way in which we teach our members to understand the struggle of the PKS is such as to focus them on the political path and to adopt realistic, practical and deliverable modes of activism; not something counter-productive like violence. PKS remains opposed to that, for the simple reason that a party can never come to power or gain the people’s trust and support that way.

We do, in fact, have standard operational procedures that are followed in such instances, which also apply in any other case when any member breaks our code of conduct. PKS’s cadre system is one with internal checks and balances where the errant behaviour of any member, of whatever level or status, is first reported. The report is then checked and then an investigation will take place to verify the report. In the most extreme cases the case is brought up to the PKS’s *Dewan Sharia* (Shariah Council); and this applies to cases of misbehaviour or members who go against party directives. So no, though we are a community in PKS and we do encourage our members to think for themselves, its not a free-for-all either.”<sup>36</sup>

But even leaders of the PKS like Fahri Hamzah and Zulkieflimansyah admit that as a political party with hundreds of thousands of members, there is practically no way that the party leadership and its disciplinary council can monitor the actions of every single member. Zulkieflimansyah thus admitted that the PKS can only go so far as to lay down the party’s directives and programme, but had neither the right nor the ability to account for the actions of each and every member of the PKS:

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members of PKS to abide by the party’s ruling. At no point is any member allowed to take the law into his own hands.’

<sup>36</sup> Interview with Zulkieflimansyah, Member of Parliament of the PKS, Jakarta, Citos, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

“As far as our individual members are concerned, like I mentioned we are a political party and like all parties our membership is wide and vast. No party, not even the PKS, can control every single member and we should not be blamed if one or two do things that go against the party’s policy. But the whole point of the cadre training system is to inculcate the values we talked about earlier, and to render them immune to the rhetoric of other more violent or emotional groups.”<sup>37</sup>

It is this internal mechanism that PKS hopes to use in order to maintain the cohesion of its membership and to distance itself from the more radical and violent Islamist groups in Indonesia today; the latter of which do not seem to hold much influence or importance in the calculations of the PKS’s leaders. In the course of our interviews with PKS leaders, they seemed to agree that the more vocal and sometimes violent groups like the FPI, HTI, FBR, JAT (see appendix A) are more of a nuisance than a real threat to the political future and fortunes of the PKS. For Zulkieflimansyah at least, the threat potential of these radical Islamist groups is minimal:

“I cannot account for the rise of groups like FPI or HTI, but let’s not exaggerate their importance. These are small groups and they have minimal impact as far as the political evolution of Indonesia is concerned. These groups make noise, shout, do demos, but have they really changed the face of Indonesian politics? I don’t think so. Personally I don’t even bother with the likes of HTI or FPI, because they have nothing to teach us or to contribute to our cause. And as long as they remain violently radical,

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<sup>37</sup> Interview with Zulkieflimansyah, Member of Parliament of the PKS, Jakarta, Citos, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2011. Fahri Hamzah likewise echoed the same view, insisting that the PKS cannot be authoritarian in the manner in which it regulates the lives and thoughts of its members: ‘Of course we as a party cannot be responsible for each and every one of our members, and even I have to admit that there is no total control over everyone in PKS. But our cadre-training system is focused on the individual, so that it ends up creating independent-minded Muslims who know why they support PKS, and want to support PKS. The main idea that we inculcate in our cadre training is the concept of universalism and the value of rationalism. We tell our new members from the outset: “*Even anarchy is better than authoritarianism*” (“*Kebebasan yang anarkis jauh lebih baik dari autoritarianisme*”) Why? Because our cadres need to be thinking cadres, who think and know and want to support our cause. It has to be part of them, it has to come naturally from them, and not out of force or fear.’ (Interview with Fahri Hamzah, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2011.)

then they cannot and will not get the support of the mainstream of Indonesian society. And furthermore, the more radical and extremist they get, the better for us, because as a result PKS looks even more moderate!

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For other PKS leaders like MP Fahri Hamzah the radical anti-state Islamist groups have simply failed to understand that for the PKS the state is the necessary tool for social transformation, and that they (PKS) regard such radical groups as being vocal but unrealistic:

“Groups like the FPI or HTI do not see that the rise and fall of Muslims depends on the resources we have at our disposal, and that among those resources we have is the state. The state is one of the resources that Muslims must avail themselves to. We cannot neglect the state in that respect.

But at the same time we (PKS) do not believe in empty rhetoric or nostalgia about quick solutions, like the idea of the Islamic state. The state is a resource, like I said, but there is no such thing as an Islamic state. The state is just a tool, it can and has to be used by Muslims. But that does not mean it is Islamic. Talk of such an Islamic state has just made so many Muslims confused (*keliru*). Even Medinah was not an Islamic state I would insist: The Prophet Muhammad did not create a state in the modern sense, but what he did was introduce the concepts of a civil society and concerns about social and civic welfare, etc. The state is a new concept and has only come about over the past couple of centuries, but now that it is here and it is a reality, it is a resource we need to learn and control.

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<sup>38</sup> Interview with Zulkieflimansyah, Member of Parliament of the PKS, Jakarta, Citos, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

That's what groups like the FPI, HTI do not seem to understand, because they do not understand what we mean when we say that Islam is an idea that can be inculcated into governance and state-building.”<sup>39</sup>

Describing the radical and militant Islamist anti-state groups as a ‘*nuisance*’, Fahri Hamzah went on to add that:

“They are no challenge (to PKS), because compared to us their knowledge of Islam is shallow (*cetek*). Ismail Yusanto (leader of the HTI) cannot debate with us, as his own knowledge of Islam is shallow compared to our cadres. The same goes for groups like FPI or MMI. Look at Abu Bakar Ba’asyir now- where is he now? Before he was arrested he was even ousted from the MMI he created. These groups will splinter because they are focused on narrow concerns based on their shallow understanding of religion and their narrow approach to dealing with real socio-political challenges. These groups are institutionally bankrupt of ideas, and that is why they fragment all the time. They challenge us, but who is in power- us or them? All this criticism of PKS’s role in politics is based on a form of escapism. They reject democracy because they know that they do not stand a chance in an open, plural democratic space.

The radical Islamist groups are no challenge to us, for our cadre system keeps us solid. But the real challenge is to speak with and to the liberals in

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<sup>39</sup> Interview with Fahri Hamzah, PKS Member of Parliament/Commission III of the PKS Jakarta, Mulya Hotel, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2011. The PKS leader added that in his opinion ‘these are extra-state movements that bypass the state and hope to escape the state. I don’t think this is possible in the long run, for the state, as a tool, is hegemonic and it has the ability and power to regulate the lives of all of us through laws and political authority. That is why in the end we (PKS) aim to win the state, for once that happens then through the state we can deal with such groups – through more effective means like education, laws, rules and regulations. The state in the end may render groups like them ineffective. Anti-political Islamist groups that criticise Islamist parties are naïve because they often fall back on nostalgia and Utopian visions of the future. Some talk about the ‘*Khilafat*’ and the coming of a new Caliphate rule that is extra-territorial, beyond the nation-state, etc. But honestly, how many times have we heard this, and has any of this become reality? As a political party, we (PKS) say: Be realistic. State capture and state control is less about just gaining power and more about showing that with power we can deliver real, tangible results that are meaningful and real to people. *Hizbut Tahrir* does not believe in a democracy for example. Well, then, tell us what sort of system do they have in mind then? All this talk of non-democratic *Khilafah* governance has just been promises with nothing tangible. Show us some results then! How will they govern and manage the most basic things like wages, public transport, water for the people?’

Indonesia, for they are the ones who have the dominance over the media and they control the terms of the mainstream political discourse. Engaging with the urban liberal intelligentsia is, for us, a bigger and more important challenge than dealing with anti-state and anti-political radical Islamist fringe groups; who cannot harm us in the long run.”<sup>40</sup>

Whether the PKS will be able to maintain the cohesion and discipline of its membership in the years to come remains, of course, an open question. Thus far it can at least be said that the cadre-training system of the party has paid off dividends – as far as its recruitment of new members is concerned. And it ought to be noted too that in a country like Indonesia where violence has become normalised and routine (re: Sidel, 2006<sup>41</sup>), and where Muslim-Christian as well as intra-Muslim violence has been on the rise, *no member* of the PKS has been arrested for violent activities so far.

#### **IV. Conclusion: PKS’s cadre system and its subject-position in the mainstream of Indonesian politics.**

We end this paper with some general observations and concluding remarks:

Firstly, it has to be said that the *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (PKS) is now a national party with national political aspirations. Notwithstanding the convoluted and sometimes tumultuous nature of Indonesian politics, the PKS’s presence in all the provinces and cities of Indonesia now makes it a pan-Indonesian party that is firmly embedded in the political landscape of the country. The PKS is *inside*, and not *outside*, the political system in Indonesia, and will remain there.

Secondly, when looking at the cadre-training of the PKS and the kinds of programmes and courses offered through its extensive *tarbiyyah* system, it should be noted that much

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<sup>40</sup> Interview with Fahri Hamzah, PKS Member of Parliament/Commission III of the PKS Jakarta, Mulya Hotel, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

<sup>41</sup> John Sidel, *Riots, Pogroms, Jihad: Religious Violence in Indonesia*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2006.



of the training that the PKS's cadres go through are in fact preparing them for *active engagement in national, mainstream politics*: Learning to run websites, conducting surveys, canvassing opinion, organising rallies, etc. are all symptoms of a mainstream party that is pro-state rather than anti-state, for the objective of the PKS – as noted by the PKS leaders we interviewed earlier – is state capture rather than state-opposition/denial. This makes the PKS a mainstream party that is inside, and not outside, the political system and the norms and mores of conventional politics.

Thirdly, the PKS's own internal disciplinary mechanisms and its cadre-training system are designed to keep the party membership in tow, and to produce committed party activists that keep to the guidelines of the party. Though PKS leaders readily admit that no system is perfect and that the PKS cannot be so authoritarian as to monitor the private lives of each and every member, it does seek to ensure that the members of the party do not veer too far off the track and engage in the sort of violent, radical, anti-state activities that are associated with some of the more violent and radical Islamist groups in the country. Radical Islamist violence, as noted by the PKS leaders we interviewed, does nothing to improve the electoral chances of the PKS at the polls, and instead has the opposite effect of scaring the electorate away from any kind of politics that has an Islamist connotation to it.

Fourthly, the PKS as we have seen is competing for votes and support in a country that is predominantly Muslim and where Islam has now saturated all levels of public discourse. This means that new opportunity structures have been opened up – particularly in the wake of Suharto's fall and the end of the New Order regime – for all kinds of new, and sometimes radical and violent groups to emerge. How the PKS positions itself in relation to these groups is also an ongoing concern of the party leadership, but as noted by the PKS Parliamentarians we interviewed, the presence of radical groups like the FPI, HTI, MMI, JAT, FBR etc also means that PKS is positioned relatively closer to the centre, which is beneficial to the party and its image.

Fifthly, as the PKS moves to the mainstream of national politics it will, like many other parties that have moved to the centre, also have to make the necessary adaptations that will adapt it to the realities of national politics. Here the PKS has to be compared to other *political* parties, and not to the radical groups on the fringe of Indonesia. An apt comparison will be with Britain's Labour Party that was modernised, reformed and liberalised under Tony Blair and which then re-packaged itself as '*New Labour*', shedding its old image as a hard-left party committed to things like economic nationalisation. In the course of doing so Tony Blair was exposed to the wrath of the old guard of the Labour Party who accused him of selling out the party's principles. But it could also be argued that without the reforms that he instituted the Labour party might never have come to office. Indonesia's PKS is facing the same dilemma today, as it presents itself as a national party with the slogan '*PKS for all*'.<sup>42</sup> In some of the provinces like Tana Toraja (Sulawesi) and West Papua, the PKS has even fielded Christian Parliamentary candidates, cognisant of the ethnic-religious realities of the outer island provinces. But in the course of doing so, the PKS will of course have to revise the form and contents of its own cadre-training programme and materiel: It is hard to imagine how Christian Papuans or Torajans would be attracted to joining the PKS if its cadre-training material includes works by Irwan Priyanto's *Kepribadian Da'I* (2002), that talks about the Christian conspiracies against Islam!

Critics of PKS who remain wary of the Islamist party should therefore be more circumspect in some of their criticisms, for it would be naïve to think that an organic grassroots party like the PKS, which today harbours national political aspirations, would jeopardise all that they have gained thus far through crude and violent electoral pyrotechnics and hyperbolic discourse. Like their counterparts in Malaysia PAS, the PKS aims higher in order to make its way to a position of state leadership and governance. Casual dismissals of the party simply because it happens to be Islamist in its ideology misses the point that the PKS – like PAS in Malaysia – is also a *political* party that seek political power and state capture; which cannot be done by adopting counter-productive

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<sup>42</sup> Which is, by the way, the same slogan that has been adopted by Malaysia's Islamic party PAS, which now runs under the slogan '*Pas untuk semua*' (PAS for All).

stances and strategies that include violence and terrorism. The PKS is hardly a radical anti-state entity: In the complex landscape of post-Suharto Indonesian politics, it may well be one of the most pro-state parties in Indonesia today.

## Appendix A

### New Radical Islamist groups and NGOs in Indonesia: A cursory Overview

Owing to the relatively open political environment in the wake of the fall of Suharto in 1998, Indonesia has witnessed the emergence of new political parties (such as the PKS, PBB, PAN, PDS, etc) as well as a wide range of new and more radical Islamist groups as well. Some of these have been demonstrated to have close links with elements of the state's own security forces, political leaders and members of the business community; and some have since been disbanded – such as the *Laskar Jihad*.

The PKS faces less opposition from the secular radical groups compared to the Islamist groups that have questioned its political agenda and approach. Below is a brief summary of some of the more prominent radical Islamist groups that are today active in Java and the outer island provinces. The common point that links the groups below is the fact that they have all made the headlines in Indonesia, and have come to be known to fellow Indonesians thanks to the high public profile they enjoy. It should be stated however that some of the groups below also happen to be quite localised, and enjoy the support of much smaller local (town or city level) constituencies only.

#### ***I. Fron Pembela Islam – FPI, Islamic Defenders' Front. Offshoot of the Forum Komunikasi Ahlu Sunnah wal-Jamaah (Communication Forum of the Followers of the Sunnah and the Community of the Prophet, FKAWL) and the Komite Indonesia untuk Solidaritas Dunia Islam (KISDI).***

The *Fron Pembela Islam* (FPI, Islamic Defenders Front) was formed on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1998 at a time when Indonesia was in a state of political and institutional crisis. (Zastrow, 2006) In the lead-up to the crisis, numerous right-wing Islamist movements across Indonesia had already begun to mobilise and in February 1998, the umbrella organisation called the *Forum Komunikasi Ahlu Sunnah wal-Jamaah* (Communication Forum of the Followers of the Sunnah and the Community of the Prophet, FKAWL) was formed by Islamist hardliners like Ja'far Umar Thalib. (Hasan, 2006) Emerging from the fold of the *Komite Indonesia untuk Solidaritas Dunia Islam* (KISDI), the FPI was formed with

Habib Rizieq Shihab as its first *Ketua Umum* and Kyai Muhammad Amin Syarbini as its first *Ketua Majelis Syura*.

In the mid-2000s it mobilised its members against the governments of Megawati Sukarnoputri and Abdurrahman Wahid, both of whom were accused of betraying Islam and being ‘too soft’ on the Christian minorities whom they accused of undermining Islam’s position in Indonesia.

## **II. *Hizb’ut Tahrir Indonesia* (HTI)**

The *Hizb’ut Tahrir* of Indonesia was derived from the *Hizb’ut Tahrir* movement that was formed in Palestine in 1953 by Taqiy al-Din al-Nabhani. The Palestinian *Hizb’ut* was a radical militant movement that used *takfir* as a method of discrediting and eliminating its enemies. Its aim was to work towards the toppling of Muslim governments the world over, in order to create a global Islamic Caliphate, the *Khilafah Islamiyyah*. It developed to become the most radical Islamist movement in the Arab world and soon opened up other branches and networks in other parts of the world including North America, Europe, South Asia and Southeast Asia through its students networks. The HTI maintains that any and all forms of democracy are not compatible with Islam, on the grounds that according to its interpretation of Islam political power is not something to be shared and negotiated. Politics, for the HTI is un-Islamic and they reject all Muslim parties that seek power through constitutional-democratic means, and this includes the PKS.

## **III. *Forum Betawi Rembug* (FBR- Batavia Rembug Forum)**

The *Forum Betawi Rembug* is a Jakarta-based Islamist movement that claims to have several hundred members and supporters in the greater Jakarta area. Smaller in size than the FPI, its tactics are similar and sometimes complementary. Like the FPI it engages in low-level intimidation of non-Muslims, protests against Church building across Jakarta and West Java, and has been known to engage in vigilante activities and moral policing, particularly during the fasting month of Ramadan. It has also taken part in protests

against the American-led invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, and has threatened to target Western tourists in the Jakarta area.

The FBR is a new movement, led by Ustaz Lutfie Hakim, who is also a lawyer by training, and part of the *Tim Pembela Islam* (Muslim Lawyers' Team). In 2009 he took part in the defence of the cleric Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. Like the FPI the FBR is anti-Communist, anti-liberal and anti-secularist.

#### **IV. *Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia* (MMI- Indonesian Council of Mujahideen)**

The *Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia* is a Jogjakarta-based umbrella organisation that brings together many Islamist groups that are equally opposed to constitutional democracy and party-politics. It was conceptualised and planned at the 1<sup>st</sup> Pan-Indonesian Mujahidin Congress that was held in Jogjakarta between 5-7 August 2000. The MMI's leader was the Surakarta-based cleric Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, who founded the Ngruki *Pesantren al-Mukmin* of Solo and who stood as the *Emir* of the MMI. In terms of its orientation, it opposes all forms of secular governance and regards democracy as *haram*, and it has also condemned Islamic parties like the PKS, PAN, PPP, PBB on the grounds that Muslims must not engage in any form of democratic politics.

Over the years the MMI has also attempted to present itself in different forms and guises: After the 2004 Tsunami tragedy that affected Aceh in North Sumatra, the MMI sent delegations there to conduct relief work and to help rebuild the province.

The MMI is currently in a state of flux, following the internal division of the movement when Abu Bakar Ba'asyir insisted that he be made its Emir for life, on the grounds that there can be no elections in Islam. Following the split within the MMI several new splinter groups have emerged, like the *Jama'ah Ansharut Tauhid* (JAT) and the *Fron Jihad Indonesia* (FJI).

#### **V. *Jama'ah Ansharut Tauhid* (JAT- breakaway from the *Melejis Mujahidin Indonesia*)**

The *Jama'ah Ansharut Tauhid* group is a relatively small group, with its base in Surakarta, Central Java, that was under the nominal leadership of the Surakarta-based

cleric Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. Ba'asyir left the MMI under a controversy when he argued that as a Caliphate movement the MMI should discard its leadership-selection process, and instead accept him as the permanent *Emir* of the MMI.

It has been noted that the members of the JAT have shown affinity for the members of the terrorist group *Jama'ah Islamiyah*: Following the execution of Amrozi, Mukhlas and Imam Samudra who were allegedly responsible for the Bali bombings in 2002, their graves have been visited by many members of the JAT, who regard it as a site of martyrs. Following the re-arrest of their leader Abu Bakar Ba'asyir in 2010, the JAT has been among the most active groups protesting and campaigning for his release as well.

#### **VI. *Fron Jihad Indonesia* (FJI- Indonesian Jihadist Front, breakaway from the *Melejis Mujahidin Indonesia*)**

The *Fron Jihad Indonesia* is another breakaway faction from the MMI, and is also based in Central Java. In the Central Java city of Jogjakarta the FJI counts several hundred members and supporters on its side and has engaged in numerous razias, 'sweepings' of bars and hotels, and like the MMI and JAT also opposes all forms of constitutional democracy. But apart from its moral vigilantism and moral policing, it has not really made an impact beyond the few towns where it is present.

#### **VII. *Gerakan Pemuda Ka'abah* (Youth of the Ka'abah movement)**

The GPK is based in the capital of Jakarta, and has branches all over Java. In the Central Javanese town of Jogjakarta it is led by Ustaz Ali Topan. It is said to be under the auspices of the PPP party, which was formed during the New Order regime of Suharto as a result of the amalgamation of all the Islamist-inclined parties of the country. Its membership base is no more than a few hundred, but the GPK has engaged in numerous instances of moral policing and vigilantism like the FJI (which is also based in Jogja), during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan.

### **VIII. *Fron Pembela Islam Solo* (FPIS – Surakarta Islamic Defenders' Front)**

Not to be confused with the FPI that is spread across much of Indonesia, the FPIS is a Solo(Surakarta)-based movement with several hundred members. Like the GPK, FJI, JAT etc it is a moral vigilante movement calling for the Islamisation of Solo's society and has shown opposition to the local government that has historically been dominated by the PDI-P party of Megawati Sukarnoputri. It has also raided hotels, clubs and bars, threatening to 'sweep' the city of foreigners. It openly came out in support of the cleric Abu Bakar Ba'asyir after his release from prison, after serving his first sentence for being involved in the Bali bombings of 2002.

### **IX. An-Nassir community, Gowa.**

The An-Nassir community is a cluster of local communities based in and around the town of Gowa in Southern Sulawesi. It is led by Ustaz Luqman and many of its members were formally involved in para-military actions in places like Ambon. The community is introverted and exclusive, and shuns contact with the rest of Gowa and Makassar's Muslim community. Somewhat similar in appearance with other literalist-fundamentalist movements like Malaysia's *Darul Arqam*, the male members of the an-Nassir community don Arabic/Islamic dress while the women are noticeable for their use of the uniform all-black *hijab* and *niqab* which also covers their faces. The community is primarily based in the region of Gowa and has remained largely apolitical, avowing all forms of politics as un-Islamic, though still suspected of harbouring potentially militant leanings.



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