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Questions

- 1) Please provide information on Islam Muhamadyah (or Muhammadiyah)**
- 2) Please provide information on Front Pembela Islam (FPI)**
- 3) Please provide information on the Nahdlatul Ulama Orgainsation of Islam (NU)**
- 4) Please provide information on whether the authorities protect NU over Islam Muhamadyah.**
- 5) Please provide any further information which may be of assistance.**

RESPONSE

Executive Summary

Muhammadiyah, founded in 1912, is the second largest Muslim organisation in Indonesia after Nadhlatul Ulama (NU). It is modernist (in the sense that it favours reform of Islam through a return to the authority of the qur'an and sunnah and modern educational methods) in its approach to Islam, and its founder Ahmad Dahlan "advocated the purification of Islamic thought and practice, the defence of Islam against its critics, and the promotion of these aims through a modernised system of Islamic education". Muhammadiyah is considered the more conservative of the two organisations, as NU is "regarded as more liberal, tolerant, and comfortable with the idea of a secular state, as well as with syncretic patterns of Islam". Both organisations are ostensibly non-political, predominantly socio-religious organisations, providing education, health services, orphanages, and welfare services; nonetheless, both have associations with Indonesia's various Islamic political parties. There is little information to indicate that the two organisations are in conflict – other than disagreements over religious practices – or that members of Muhammadiyah are mistreated, or that Indonesian authorities are pressured by the NU to turn a blind eye to any such mistreatment. Neither

Muhammadiyah nor NU are formally affiliated with the Front Pembela Islam (FPI), a violent militant Islamic group known for its attacks on individuals and institutions deemed 'un-Islamic'; bars, clubs, and brothels on the one hand, and religious groups such as evangelical Christians and the Ahmadiyah on the other. Leaders of both Muhammadiyah and NU have openly condemned the FPI for its attack on a June 2008 rally in Jakarta held by a coalition of groups advocating religious tolerance, and the militant youth wing of NU has been involved in clashes with the FPI in response. Nonetheless, both Muhammadiyah and NU have also been accused of reticence in their dealings with militant Islamic groups, and an unwillingness to openly criticise anti-Ahmadiyah and anti-Christian violence. Similar accusations have been made regarding the unwillingness of Indonesian government figures to publicly criticise violent militant Islamic groups, and particularly the FPI, for fear of alienating Muslim voters and political parties in the lead-up to national elections in 2009. There are also accusations of police inaction in the face of FPI violence, and of police and military involvement in the establishment and funding of the group. The available information indicates that the Ahmadiyah have been one of the main targets of FPI violence (for background information on Muhammadiyah and NU, see: 'Muhammadiyah' (undated), Division of Religion and Philosophy, University of Cumbria website

<http://philtar.ucsm.ac.uk/encyclopedia/indon/muham.html> – Accessed 15 January 2009 –

Attachment 1; Burhani, A. 2004, 'Puritan' Muhammadiyah and indigenous culture', Islam Within Indonesia blog website (source: *The Jakarta Post*), 26 November <http://islam-indonesia.blogspot.com/2004/11/ahmad-najib-burhani-puritan.html> – Accessed 19 January

2009 – Attachment 4; Question 2 of RRT Research & Information 2007, *Research Response IDN32037*, 10 August – Attachment 23; and Eliraz, G. 2004, *Islam in Indonesia – Modernism, Radicalism, and the Middle East Dimension*, Sussex Academic Press, Brighton & Portland, pp. 86-87 – Attachment 24; for background on the FPI, see: Parliament of

Australia, Parliamentary Library 2003, 'The Front Pembela Islam (Islamic Defenders Front-FPI)' <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/intguide/FAD/sea.htm> – Accessed 8 January 2009 – Attachment 12; International Crisis Group 2008, *Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah Decree*, 7 July, pp. 13-14

http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/indonesia/b78_indonesia_implications_of_the_ahmadiyah_decree.pdf – Accessed 8 July 2008 – Attachment 13; and 'Front Pembela Islam (FPI)' 2008, *Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism*, 8 October – Attachment 14; for the attack on the June 2008 rally in Jakarta and the response from Muhammadiyah and NU, see: International Crisis Group 2008, *Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah Decree*, 7 July, p. 7

http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/indonesia/b78_indonesia_implications_of_the_ahmadiyah_decree.pdf – Accessed 8 July 2008 – Attachment 13; and 'Monas square violence is criminal, govt must act resolutely: Muhammadiyah chief' 2008, *The Jakarta Post* (source: *Antara*), 3 June <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/06/03/monas-square-violence-criminal-govt-must-act-resolutely-muhammadiyah-chief.html> – Accessed 19

January 2009 – Attachment 8; for accusations against NU and Muhammadiyah regarding militant Islamic groups, see: Diani, H. 2006, 'Muhammadiyah seen leaning toward more conservative bent', *The Jakarta Post*, 3 February

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2006/02/03/muhammadiyah-seen-leaning-toward-more-conservative-bent.html> – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 7; for clashes between the FPI and NU youth wing militias, see: Reges, B. 2008, 'Jakarta on the verge of a civil war as moderate and radical Muslims battle it out', *Asia News*, 2 June – Attachment 29; for links between the police, the military and the FPI, see: International Crisis Group 2008, *Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah Decree*, 7 July, p. 7

http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/indonesia/b78_indonesia_implications_of_the_ahmadiyah_decree.pdf – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 8; for accusations against NU and Muhammadiyah regarding militant Islamic groups, see: Diani, H. 2006, 'Muhammadiyah seen leaning toward more conservative bent', *The Jakarta Post*, 3 February

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2006/02/03/muhammadiyah-seen-leaning-toward-more-conservative-bent.html> – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 7; for clashes between the FPI and NU youth wing militias, see: Reges, B. 2008, 'Jakarta on the verge of a civil war as moderate and radical Muslims battle it out', *Asia News*, 2 June – Attachment 29; for links between the police, the military and the FPI, see: International Crisis Group 2008, *Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah Decree*, 7 July, p. 7

http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/indonesia/b78_indonesia_implications_of_the_ahmadiyah_decree.pdf – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 8; for accusations against NU and Muhammadiyah regarding militant Islamic groups, see: Diani, H. 2006, 'Muhammadiyah seen leaning toward more conservative bent', *The Jakarta Post*, 3 February

[of the ahmadiyah decree.pdf](#) – Accessed 8 July 2008 – Attachment 13; ‘Front Pembela Islam (FPI)’ 2008, *Jane’s World Insurgency and Terrorism*, 8 October – Attachment 14; and ‘Indonesian Radicals on a Ramadan Holiday’ 2008, *Asia Sentinel* (source: Van Zorge Report), 25 September
http://www.asiasentinel.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1450&Itemid=175 – Accessed 9 January 2009 – Attachment 17; for government inaction over FPI violence, see: Osman, S. 2008, ‘Religious tension simmers in Indonesia’, *The Straits Times*, 24 September – Attachment 16; and Nurhayati, D. 2008, ‘Religious freedom, tolerance in jeopardy’, *The Jakarta Post*, 24 December
<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/12/24/religious-freedom-tolerance-jeopardy.html> – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 10; for anti-Ahmadiyah violence perpetrated by the FPI, see: ‘TAPOL Bulletin No. 190, August 2008’, 1 August – Attachment 43; ‘Front Pembela Islam (FPI)’ 2008, *Jane’s World Insurgency and Terrorism*, 8 October – Attachment 14; and International Crisis Group 2008, *Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah Decree*, 7 July, pp. 13-14
http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/indonesia/b78_indonesia_implications_of_the_ahmadiyah_decree.pdf – Accessed 8 July 2008 – Attachment 13).

1) Please provide information on Islam Muhamadyah (or Muhammadiyah)

Muhammadiyah: beliefs and activities

The Division of Religion and Philosophy at the University of Cumbria’s website provides information the history and practices of the Muhammadiyah organisation. It was founded in 1912 as “a reformist socio-religious movement” which “emphasises the authority of the qu’ran and sunnah as...the sole legitimate basis for the interpretation and development of religious belief and practice”. Muhammadiyah “opposes the effects of syncretism, where Islam in Indonesia has coalesced both with animism/spirit worship...and with Hindu Buddhist values of the pre-Islamic period”, and it also opposes the Sufi tradition. Muhammadiyah functions as an ostensibly non-political, socio-religious organisation, with emphasis on education, with an extensive network of institutions ranging “from infant school level right up to its own university”, as well as “the establishment of clinics, hospitals, orphanages, factories and cottage industries, and a range of publications”. The organisation also maintains women’s and youth wings, and this source estimates its membership as around 29 million, “largely urban and middle class in composition”:

Doctrines: Muhammadiyah affirms the central doctrines of mainstream Sunni Islam. However, as a reformist socio-religious movement it seeks to heighten people’s sense of moral responsibility, and to purify the faith of what it regards as outdated traditions or corruptions of true Islam. To this end it emphasises the authority of the Qur’an and sunnah as supremely normative, and as the sole legitimate basis for the interpretation and development of religious belief and practice, in contrast to the authority traditionally invested in the schools of religious law (shariah) as practised by the legists (ulama). It further opposes the effects of syncretism, where Islam in Indonesia has coalesced both with animism/spirit worship amongst the villagers and with Hindu-Buddhist values of the pre-Islamic period persisting among the upper classes; and it opposes the traditions of the Sufi brotherhoods for allowing the authority of a Sufi leader (shaykh) to challenge or indeed eclipse the authority of Muhammad and even, perhaps, of God himself. The Sufis are further criticised for promoting attitudes of otherworldliness that have no proper basis in the Qur’an and sunnah, and do not match the needs of modern day society; and cults associated with the tombs of Sufi saints have also been a focus of criticism.

History: The Muhammadiyah (followers of Muhammad) was founded in Jogjakarta, Java, on 18 November 1912 by Ahmad Dahlan (age 44), a devout Muslim educated for several years in Mecca, where he had been much affected by the writings of the Egyptian reformist Muhammad ‘Abduh. ‘Abduh advocated the purification of Islamic thought and practice, the defence of Islam against its critics, and the promotion of these aims through a modernised system of Islamic education. These ideas gained support among a minority of Muslims in Indonesia as elsewhere, but the movement founded by Kiyai (teacher) Haji (pilgrimage to Mecca) Dahlan was to become their most important expression.

The Muhammadiyah refrained from political involvement, and took advantage of the toleration it thus enjoyed, both under the Dutch and under the post-independence governments, to develop from modest beginnings (Dahlan began with just twelve followers) into a stable, financially sound organisation actively pursuing a range of socio-religious activities, partly in conscious emulation of Christian missionary organisations. It advocated ‘new ijtihad’ – individual interpretation of Qur’an and sunnah, as opposed to ‘taqlid’ – the acceptance of the traditional interpretations propounded by the ulama.

Dahlan devoted the remainder of his life to the Muhammadiyah cause, until his death in 1923, but his personal example continues to inspire his followers; from his official Muhammadiyah biography and from informal anecdotes alike he emerges as an energetic, effective, modest figure worthy of respect and emulation.

The organisation’s committee structure reflects its spheres of activity, and these include, notably: ethics and Islamic law, women’s affairs, youth organisation, education, evangelism and religious festivals, social welfare and health care, organisational finances and administration of property.

The Muhammadiyah has established an impressive record in education, with its own system paralleling that of the state from infant school level right up to its own university. At the same time, it maintains two types of institution, one more secular (and coeducational), the other more religious (and segregated according to sex). In the latter, the emphasis is less on traditional exegesis of classical texts, and more on key moral teachings of Islam. The overarching aim is to provide an education that is both modern and truly Islamic. Other achievements include the establishment of clinics, hospitals, orphanages, factories and cottage industries, and a range of publications.

A woman’s organisation was started in 1914. Named the Aisiyah (after an influential wife of the Prophet) it has built women’s mosques (allegedly unique to Indonesia), kindergartens, and women’s Islamic schools, encouraging women to be active agents of the spread of Islam among other women; and giving them a dynamic public role, while at the same time emphasising modesty – but not uniformity – of dress. A youth movement, Hisbul Wathan, has some similarities to the Boy Scouts, albeit with a more pronounced religious orientation.

Symbols: The Muhammadiyah has its own flag and logo.

Adherents: At the time of Dahlan’s death in 1923, the organisation reported a membership of 2622 men and 724 women, mostly residents of Jogjakarta (Peacock 1978, 45). Numbers grew steadily – 10,000 in 1928, 17,000 in 1929, and 24,000 in 1931 (Israeli 1982, 191). By the 1930s, moreover, it had begun to establish branches beyond Java, the main centre of population, throughout Indonesia, and today it is said to be the second largest Islamic organisation in Indonesia (just behind its rival Nahdatul Ulama) with 29 million members (Europa Publications Limited I,). The membership is largely urban and middle class in composition.

Headquarters/Main Centre: The national headquarters is in Jogjakarta. However, by 1970 the committee dealing with areas such as education, economics, health and social welfare had been relocated in the national capital, Djakarta, alongside their secular government counterparts ('Muhammadiyah' (undated), Division of Religion and Philosophy, University of Cumbria website <http://philtar.ucsm.ac.uk/encyclopedia/indon/muham.html> – Accessed 15 January 2009 – Attachment 1).

In his 2002 book *Abdurrahman Wahid – Muslim Democrat, Indonesian President*, Australian academic Greg Barton provides a brief summary of the founding of Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, and claims that “almost all modernist Muslims are linked to Muhammadiyah”. Barton states that Muhammadiyah was founded “with a vision of reforming and modernising Islamic thought and practice” in Indonesia, and that it was “the guiding force in a cultural and educational movement”:

Just as NU was, and is, the main organisation representing Islamic traditionalism in Indonesia, so almost all modernist Muslims are linked to Muhammadiyah. The modernists differ from the traditionalists in their approach to interpreting the Qur'an, in their attitude to mystical practices and beliefs, and in their cultural integration into modern urban life.

Muhammadiyah was founded in Yogyakarta in 1912, as a result of the rise of the modernist movement in the Middle East, with a vision of reforming and modernising Islamic thought and practice. It was successful as an organisation and as the guiding force in a cultural and educational movement. The traditionalist *ulama*, or *kiai*, who ran the *pesantren* eventually came to recognise that if they did not organise themselves in a similar fashion then their culture and approach to Islam, and particularly their *pesantren*, would quickly lose public support. Consequently, in 1926 NU was formed. The traditionalists within NU were concerned that the success of Islamic modernism might see their approach understanding Islam, with its heavy reliance on classical scholarship and deep appreciation for Sufism, gradually lose influence within Indonesian society, but they were not completely opposed to the ideas of Islamic modernism. And, in time, many of the key elements of modernism reform were picked up and incorporated into NU circles (Barton, G. 2002, *Abdurrahman Wahid – Muslim Democrat, Indonesian President*, University of NSW Press, Sydney, 2002, pp. 54-55 – Attachment 2).

For the current leadership of Muhammadiyah, please see Attachment 3 ('Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah 2005-2010' (undated), Muhammadiyah website http://www.muhammadiyah.or.id/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=63&Itemid=27 – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 3).

A November 2004 article sourced from *The Jakarta Post*, and located on the 'Islam within Indonesia' blog website, provides information on the history of Muhammadiyah with particular reference to the struggle for control between the conservative and progressive factions within the organisation. According to this report, traditionally “the Muhammadiyah paid serious attention to social welfare and educational activities by founding schools and hospitals”, while “[t]he agenda for modernising and rationalising religious beliefs was regarded as a secondary project”. This has changed in recent years, as “the liberal-cultural versus puritan” struggle within Muhammadiyah “spread to Muhammadiyah universities and its supporting organisations”. Nonetheless, the report concludes that “the face of Muhammadiyah today is still dominated by moderate and pluralistic Muslims”, and that “[t]his is the reason why the movement is considered moderate, modern and pluralistic”:

Muhammadiyah has for a long time been associated with the “puritan” Islamic movement. This is a style of religiosity based on the view that the Koran and the hadith (the collection of narratives describing the actions and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) are the only proper basis of any religious authority. These purists are against any acculturation or inclusion in the religion of external elements such as local culture. Is it a correct view about Muhammadiyah?

...Cogently, in line with the interests of its main supporters and its dominant members, the Muhammadiyah paid serious attention to social welfare and educational activities by founding schools and hospitals. The agenda for modernising and rationalising religious beliefs was regarded as a secondary project.

Why then did Muhammadiyah change and become a puritanical movement? Why did Muhammadiyah change its cultural character? The influence of several prominent members from Sumatra and the victory of Wahhabism for control of Mecca and Medina in 1924 forced Muhammadiyah to pay more attention to religious beliefs and behaviour than it had done before.

...On the eve of the 21st century, two contrasting trends emerged in Muhammadiyah. There were several groups within Muhammadiyah who regarded the group’s move toward puritanism to be inconsequential and superficial, making it too slow and soft in forcing a puritan agenda. They demanded the movement strengthen the puritan agenda in its activities. In the opposing camp were Muhammadiyah members who regarded the movement as showing extreme rightist tendencies. They believed Muhammadiyah was too puritanical.

Over the last several years, the tug-of-war between these two opposing groups became a serious problem in Muhammadiyah. Each group tried to drag Muhammadiyah in opposite directions, reflecting their own interests; the liberal-cultural versus puritan.

The struggle between the liberal-cultural group, led by current Muhammadiyah chairman Syafii Maarif, Amin Abdullah and Munir Mul Khan, and the puritan group, Muhammadiyah Members Who care about Sharia, was intense from 1999 to 2003. Their conflict spread to Muhammadiyah universities and its supporting organisations.

The spread and growth in the numbers of kaum berjenggot (people who wear beards as a symbol of religiosity) and radical Muslims at some Muhammadiyah universities was countered by the Muhammadiyah Student Association with the introduction of Sufism, pluralism and liberalism.

Fortunately, the face of Muhammadiyah today is still dominated by moderate and pluralistic Muslims, such as Syafii Maarif. This is the reason why the movement is considered moderate, modern and pluralistic.

Of course, it would be counterproductive for the organisation if the radical and puritanical wing took the lead and disseminated their teachings. This would change the face of Muhammadiyah and Islam in Indonesia from the smiling and tolerant Islam to a more puritanical Islam (Burhani, A. 2004, ‘Puritan’ Muhammadiyah and indigenous culture’, Islam Within Indonesia blog website (source: *The Jakarta Post*), 26 November <http://islam-indonesia.blogspot.com/2004/11/ahmad-najib-burhani-puritan.html> – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 4).

Muhammadiyah, conservatism, and the Front Pembela Islam (FPI)

A February 2006 article from the *International Herald Tribune* notes the “departure” of a “renowned liberal Muslim scholar” Dawam Rahardjo from Muhammadiyah, and claims that

the organisation has moved toward a “more conservative brand of Islam under the leadership of Din Syamsuddin”, the head of Indonesia’s Council of Ulama, “which has issued edicts banning Islamic interpretations based on liberalism, secularism and pluralism”:

The popular embrace of conservative Muslim mores has some worried that despite Indonesia’s newly won democratic credentials, its tradition of moderation and tolerance is threatened.

The question was brought sharply into focus with the recent departure from a mainstream Islamic organisation of a renowned liberal Muslim scholar. Dawam Rahardjo has said he was dismissed for objecting to religious prejudice. “I can’t just sit still watching fellow Muslims prevent Christians from praying,” he said, referring to a recent rash of church closures.

The 30-million strong Muhammadiyah movement, founded on modernist Islamic teaching, has veered sharply toward a more conservative brand of Islam under the leadership of Din Syamsuddin, who is also head of Indonesia’s Council of Ulama, which has issued edicts banning Islamic interpretations based on liberalism, secularism and pluralism (Vatikiotis, M. 2006, ‘In Indonesia, Islam loves democracy’, *International Herald Tribune*, 7 February <http://www.ihf.com/articles/2006/02/06/opinion/edvatik.php> – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 5).

A March 2006 article in *The Jakarta Post* contains an interview with the rector of Muhammadiyah University Malang, Muhadjir Effendy, in which he claims that “Christians and followers of other religions should not be concerned at any perceived shift in the philosophy of Muhammadiyah under the new leadership of chairman Din Syamsuddin”. Effendy states that the Ahmadiyah should be tolerated, and that he is opposed to the actions of the Islamic Defenders Front (or Front Pembela Islam (FPI)). Of the FPI, Effendy states: “I’m against the Islamic Defenders’ Front, which raids nightclubs, smashes bottles and intimidates foreigners. This is very wrong. We have no right to impose our views on others. We have to coexist. The government is weak in not prosecuting such people”:

In an interview with *The Jakarta Post* on his return from studying education systems in Scotland, the member of the organisation’s doctrinal committee believes:

- The Ahmadiyah sect, persecuted by hard-line Muslims, should be tolerated.
- Indonesia is not a secular society, because the government is involved in religious affairs.
- Christians should not be called kafir (infidel).
- People ought to accept the Liberal Islamic Network even if they disagree with some of its doctrines.
- The government and police should exercise their legal powers to arrest and prosecute lawbreakers, who take violent action in the name of Islam.
- He supports the introduction of sharia law with qualifications.

...He expressed agreement with observers who have said the organisation had become more conservative, but its values and interpretations remained open to debate.

“But it’s wrong to assume from this that Muhammadiyah is in any way a threat to anyone. Please don’t say that Muhammadiyah has only one view. It is not unilateral – it is tolerant. There are many factions.

...Muhadjir would not be drawn into discussion on the election of Din, who is also the leader of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI). Last year, the MUI issued edicts “banning” secularism and pluralism for Muslims, as well as Islamic liberalism.

...Muhadjir accepted that he was a pluralist, but declined to label himself a liberal, preferring to use the term “accommodationist”. He said he was a member of the silent majority that recognised and accepted that Indonesia was a multi-faith, multi-cultural society.

... “Ahmadiyah is a sect of Islam. Of course it should be tolerated,” he said. “If some aspects of their beliefs don’t conform to Islam, we should call them back to Islamic doctrine.

“They should not be kicked out of Islam.

“As a Muslim I oppose alcohol, but I’m against the Islamic Defenders’ Front, which raids nightclubs, smashes bottles and intimidates foreigners. This is very wrong. We have no right to impose our views on others. We have to coexist. The government is weak in not prosecuting such people.

“These violent attitudes are quite out of date. We all have to live together and respect each other’s beliefs. You won’t find members of Muhammadiyah taking part in such demonstrations, I guarantee that” (Graham, D. 2006, ‘Christians need not be concerned: Muhammadiyah rector’, *The Jakarta Post*, 15 March
<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2006/03/15/christians-need-not-be-concerned-muhammadiyah-rector.html> – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 6).

A February 2006 article in *The Jakarta Post* reports on the dismissal, or resignation, of Dawam Rahardjo, and the perception that this “indicates a growing and unbending conservatism of the country’s second largest Muslim organisation”. According to this report, “Dawam said Muhammadiyah, which boasts about 30 million members, was becoming radical, and would not take a position in an interfaith conflict”, including attacks on Christians and the Ahmadiyah. The report also quotes a “former Muhammadiyah executive”, who “said he regretted the organisation’s growing conservatism, which he said made moderate members uneasy”:

Complaints about Dawam, he said, ranged from poor performance, disrespect of the organisation and a dissenting viewpoint. The latter centered on Dawam’s open stance toward Ahmadiyah and Lia Aminuddin, the sect’s founder and self-proclaimed prophet who was arrested in late December for blasphemy.

...Dawam, meanwhile, denied he resigned or that he was dismissed from his position as economic supervisor, saying he would request an explanation from the organisation.

He believed he was dismissed for refusing to stay silent on religious prejudice.

“I must’ve been dismissed because of my standpoint against violence against religious groups. I can’t just sit still watching fellow Muslims prevent Christians from praying,” he said, referring to the closure of several churches in different areas of the country.

Dawam said Muhammadiyah, which boasts about 30 million members, was becoming radical, and would not take a position in an interfaith conflict.

...The conservative Din is also leader of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), whose edicts in 2005 include the banning of Islamic interpretations based on liberalism, secularism and pluralism.

The edicts also stated that Muslims must consider their religion to be the true one religion, and consider other faiths as wrong, as well as stipulating that Ahmadiyah was heretical.

Former Muhammadiyah executive Muhammad Syafi'i Anwar urged Din to take a more intellectual position on issues and protect all members of the organisation.

Regardless of the controversy about Dawam, Syafi'i said he regretted the organisation's growing conservatism, which he said made moderate members uneasy (Diani, H. 2006, 'Muhammadiyah seen leaning toward more conservative bent', *The Jakarta Post*, 3 February <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2006/02/03/muhammadiyah-seen-leaning-toward-more-conservative-bent.html> – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 7).

Two June 2008 articles in *The Jakarta Post* provide information on the response from Muhammadiyah to a June 2008 attack by FPI (and other militant Islamic groups) on a peaceful rally in Jakarta. The rally was organised by the Alliance for Freedom of Religion and Belief (AKKBB), an Indonesian NGO, to celebrate the 63rd anniversary of *Pancasila*, or the five founding principles of the Indonesian state.

On 3 June, the *Post* quoted Muhammadiyah chairman Din Syamsuddin stating that “[t]hose acts are clearly criminal in nature and must be addressed resolutely. The government must take concrete and firm action lest such behavior becomes a widespread habit and Indonesia turns into a violence-ridden country”. The report continued:

Speaking to reporters after a meeting with President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono here Monday, the leader of Indonesia's second largest Muslim organisation said the government must take concrete measures to enforce the law consistently.

But Syamsuddin said there was some truth to the belief that the government's indecision on the Ahmadiyah issue was an indirect cause that the attack by Islam Defenders' Front (FPI) members on a peaceful rally conducted by the Alliance for Freedom of Religion and Belief (AKKBB).

...Muhammadiyah was not in a position to support or oppose the dissolution of any organisation because, in its view, the existence of an organisation was not the business of society.

“We must co-exist with all other groups in the world,” he said.

On the other hand, Syamsuddin said, the state cannot interfere in the convictions and beliefs of a society, but has the right to disband any group in societal terms when the group commits acts of violence and dislocates society (‘Monas square violence is criminal, govt must act resolutely: Muhammadiyah chief’ 2008, *The Jakarta Post* (source: *Antara*), 3 June <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/06/03/monas-square-violence-criminal-govt-must-act-resolutely-muhammadiyah-chief.html> – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 8).

On 20 June, the *Post* quoted Din Syamsuddin claiming that “[v]iolence by members of a radical Islamic group earlier this month has damaged the international image of Indonesian Muslims”. The report claims that Syamsuddin “admitted criticisms of mainstream

organisations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah for their failure to speak out against extremist and conservative elements were partly justified”. According to this article, “observers” have claimed that “NU and Muhammadiyah had allowed hard-line groups too much leeway in taking the public stage and claiming to represent all Indonesian Muslims”:

The attack by the Islam Defenders Front (FPI) on a pro-pluralism group had undone five years of hard work spent eradicating the violent image of Indonesian Muslims after religious-based bombings and horizontal conflicts, Muhammadiyah chairman Din Syamsuddin said Thursday.

“We have to start again from square one to recapture the image of moderation after the attack,” Din told *The Jakarta Post*.

...The image was tarnished after FPI members, armed with bamboo sticks, beat and kicked activists of the National Alliance for the Freedom of Faith and Religion during a rally at the National Monument park on June 1, leaving some 70 people injured.

The peaceful rally was to commemorate the 63rd anniversary of Pancasila state ideology and to show support for Islamic minority sect Ahmadiyah.

Before the attack, Din said, Indonesian Muslims had been gathering trust for their moderate stance.

“But with newspapers globally publishing the story of the attacks and TV stations vividly broadcasting the pictures, I can’t say what kind of image we have now,” he said.

...He admitted criticisms of mainstream organisations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah for their failure to speak out against extremist and conservative elements were partly justified, but said the attacks should not be linked to religion.

“A violent attack is a purely criminal act and the state should take action against it. Violence has no root in Islam. It’s a misuse or abuse of religion,” Din said.

“The reason we seem to be doing nothing is because we don’t want to be provoked.”

Observers have criticised moderate Muslim organisations for failing to demonstrate their religious tolerance following a government decree against Ahmadiyah.

They said NU and Muhammadiyah had allowed hard-line groups too much leeway in taking the public stage and claiming to represent all Indonesian Muslims.

The anti-Ahmadiyah decree was issued by the government earlier this month amid intense pressure from several extremist groups, including the FPI and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (Khalik, A. 2008, ‘FPI attacks damage RI Muslims’ image: Muhammadiyah chairman’, *The Jakarta Post*, 20 June <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/06/20/fpi-attacks-damage-ri-muslims039-image-muhammadiyah-chairman.html> – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 9).

Two December 2008 articles from *The Jakarta Post* provide recent information on Muhammadiyah, including a forum on religious tolerance hosted by the organisation, and a report claiming that Muhammadiyah and NU do little to promote pluralism at a grass-roots level, despite public protestations to the contrary.

A 24 December article reports on a forum held at Muhammadiyah's headquarters, at which "Syamsuddin...expressed regret over the state's failure to tackle acts of violence committed by hard-line groups, calling it proof of the government's ignorance":

Indonesia has suffered major setbacks in upholding religious freedom and tolerance, enshrined in the Constitution, as evident in a series of attacks on pluralism, a year-end discussion heard Tuesday.

Worse, the government, through its own policies, has seemingly given carte blanche to hard-line groups to flourish and attack minority groups they deem "deviant", Pramono Tantowi, director of the Centre of Religious and Civilisation Studies, told the forum held at the headquarters of Muhammadiyah, the country's second largest Muslim organisation.

Pramono said a joint ministerial decree, issued earlier this year, banning the Ahmadiyah Islamic sect from spreading its teachings, showed the government's support for violence in the name of religion at the expense of minority groups.

"The government has failed to protect its citizens. It should have acted as a mediator that stands above all parties and protects individuals' right to exercise their freedom of religion," Pramono said.

He added the proliferation of radical groups this year indicated a worrying trend toward Islamic fundamentalism.

Political parties, he went on, had exacerbated the situation by siding with mainstream aspirations, for their own interests.

"The issue of fundamentalism has been exploited by political parties not only religious-based ones, but also nationalist ones, to woo voters ahead of the 2009 elections," he said.

He added some parties lacked the guts to go against the mainstream for fear of losing votes from the majority Muslims in the elections next year, as was evident in the passage of the anti-pornography bill, which moderate Muslims and human rights activists lambasted for curtailing pluralism.

With the elections drawing near, political parties will now reduce religious issues to political gimmicks, Pramono warned.

Muhammadiyah chairman Din Syamsuddin also expressed regret over the state's failure to tackle acts of violence committed by hard-line groups, calling it proof of the government's ignorance.

He cited an attack in June by the Islam Defenders Front on activists of the Alliance of Religious Freedom in Jakarta, despite a heavy security presence (Nurhayati, D. 2008, 'Religious freedom, tolerance in jeopardy', *The Jakarta Post*, 24 December <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/12/24/religious-freedom-tolerance-jeopardy.html> – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 10).

A 12 December article accuses Muhammadiyah, and NU, of failing "to promote pluralism" the grassroots level, despite official rhetoric, as a majority of *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) teachers oppose pluralism (Nurrohman 2008, 'NU, Muhammadiyah have failed to promote pluralism at grassroots', *The Jakarta Post*, 9 December <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/12/09/nu-muhammadiyah-have-failed-promote-pluralism-grassroots.html> – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 11).

2) Please provide information on Front Pembela Islam (FPI)

The Australian Government Parliamentary Library website provides a concise summary of the Front Pembela Islam (FPI), or Islamic Defenders Front, an “Indonesian radical Islamic group” formed in 1998 and based in Jakarta. This source claims that “[t]he FPI’s stated goal is the full implementation of Islamic Sharia law, although it supports Indonesia’s present constitution and avoids calling for an Islamic state”. The report also notes that “[t]he FPI has a paramilitary wing called Laskar Pembela Islam and is well know for organising raids on bars, massage parlours and gaming halls”, and suggests that “[s]ceptical observers suspect that the police turn a blind eye to, or are complicit in, these activities, knowing that the victims will be encouraged to maintain protection monies to the police”:

The *Front Pembela Islam* (Islamic Defenders Front–FPI) is another Indonesian radical Islamic group. The FPI was formed in August 1998 and now claims branches in 22 provinces. Based in Jakarta, the FPI is led by Habib Muhammad Riziek Syihab, a religious teacher who was educated in Saudi Arabia. Like Habib, many of the top FPI leaders have Arab blood. The FPI’s stated goal is the full implementation of Islamic Sharia law, although it supports Indonesia’s present constitution and avoids calling for an Islamic state. The FPI has a paramilitary wing called Laskar Pembela Islam and is well know for organising raids on bars, massage parlours and gaming halls. The FPI justifies these raids on the grounds that the police are unable to uphold laws on gambling and prostitution. Sceptical observers suspect that the police turn a blind eye to, or are complicit in, these activities, knowing that the victims will be encouraged to maintain protection monies to the police. The FPI in late 2001 took the lead in threatening to sweep Americans out of Indonesia because of the US operations in Afghanistan, although the threat was not in fact carried out (Parliament of Australia, Parliamentary Library 2003, ‘The Front Pembela Islam (Islamic Defenders Front–FPI)’ <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/intguide/FAD/sea.htm> – Accessed 8 January 2009 – Attachment 12).

A July 2008 report from the International Crisis Group (ICG), titled *Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah Decree*, provides information on the FPI, describing it as “basically an urban thug organisation led by Habib Rizieq Shihab”. The ICG report states that the FPI “has branches in most of Indonesia’s provinces, some of which are less thuggish than the Jakarta headquarters”, and that it “attacks places it sees as emblematic of vice and decadence”. According to this report, the FPI “has been closely associated with individual police and military officers”, and that “the police have had close ties with the group” since its inception in 1998. The report notes the irony of the FPI’s close ties to the police, given that the “FPI is largely associated with violence, both organised raids on nightclubs, karaoke bars and other dens of iniquity as well as on ‘unauthorised’ churches and Ahmadiyah property”:

The FPI is basically an urban thug organisation led by Habib Rizieq Shihab, a Saudi-educated scholar of Arab descent, that has been running anti-vice campaigns since its founding in August 1998. Its stated goal is the implementation of Islamic law in Indonesia and upholding the principle of “doing good and avoiding evil”. One part of FPI focuses on religious outreach (dawaa) to the Muslim community, urging stricter adherence to Islamic tenets; the better known part, a kind of morality militia, attacks places it sees as emblematic of vice and decadence. It has branches in most of Indonesia’s provinces, some of which are less thuggish than the Jakarta headquarters. In Poso, for example, the FPI head is also the respected leader of al-Chairat, a broad-based, largely moderate organisation.

From the beginning FPI has been closely associated with individual police and military officers, including the presidential candidate and former armed forces commander, General Wiranto, and his ally, the former commander of the elite Kostrad forces, Lt. Gen. Djadja Suparman. As a Crisis Group report noted in 2000:

It is not suggested, however, that Wiranto and other military officers ... share the goals of FPI but only that they have found it useful to maintain contacts with Islamic organisations that have the capacity to mobilise supporters in the streets.

Another officer present at the creation of FPI in 1998 was the then Jakarta police commander, Nugroho Djayusman, and the police have had close ties with the group ever since. The FPI leadership acknowledges only that for the first two years, it coordinated all actions with the police. But cooperation lasted well beyond two years, despite Habib Rizieq's arrest in October 2002 for incitement. In November 2002, the organisation was briefly dissolved, in part to avoid any association with terrorists who had carried out the Bali bombing on 12 October, in part because the bombing led to a temporary funding shortage for all organisations deemed radical (there was never any association between FPI and Jemaah Islamiyah, the organisation behind the Bali bombs).

But in November 2006, police sponsored a speaking tour for Habib Rizieq around the Poso, an area hit by communal conflict and terrorist activity, hoping that his anti-vice message might attract young people susceptible to recruitment by terrorist organisations. In a speech in Luwuk on 29 November, he spoke of how the FPI and the police were "like husband and wife", both committed to upholding public order. It was an ironic message, given that FPI is largely associated with violence, both organised raids on nightclubs, karaoke bars and other dens of iniquity as well as on "unauthorised" churches and Ahmadiyah property. It is not surprising, then, that in a coalition with Hizb ut-Tahrir, FPI members would be the enforcers.

It was more surprising, but encouraging, that following a decade of FPI's ability to commit crimes against property and sometimes individuals with near-total impunity, the public outcry against it subsequent to 1 June 2008 was so strong. President Yudhoyono, after silence in the face of earlier FPI attacks, said that such violence would not be tolerated. The coordinating minister for political, legal and security affairs said he was looking into whether FPI as an organisation could be banned under the 1985 law on mass organisations. On 5 June, as noted above, police arrested 59 men at FPI headquarters, including Habib Rizieq, who, after questioning, was officially declared a suspect along with nine others.

FPI has been able to last as long as it has not just because of official toleration and its targeted use of extortion, but also because the public up until now has been willing to distinguish between what many see as the admirable goal of protecting morality and the deplorable means used to achieve it. Anger at the images of a vicious assault on clearly peaceful civilians was high, however, and a survey in the country's largest daily newspaper showed 86 per cent of those polled were concerned about the "militarism" of mass organisations (International Crisis Group 2008, *Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah Decree*, 7 July, pp. 13-14 http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/indonesia/b78_indonesia_implications_of_the_ahmadiyah_decree.pdf – Accessed 8 July 2008 – Attachment 13).

The ICG report also provides a summary of events leading up to the attack carried out by the FPI on the AKKBB rally in Jakarta in June 2008:

On 1 June 2008, in the absence of a decree and in the hopes of forestalling one, AKKBB organised a rally on behalf of freedom of religion, intending to demonstrate support for tolerance and rejection of hardline views. Police, knowing there was to be a demonstration the same day led by Hizb ut-Tahrir to protest oil price hikes, asked the organisers to move from

their original location around the National Monument (Monas), a large obelisk in central Jakarta, to a traffic circle not far away. The organisers agreed but decided to gather at Monas first. The demonstrators, including hundreds of Ahmadiyah families as well as many of the signers of the 10 May statement, were attacked by a stick-wielding Muslim militia shouting anti-Ahmadiyah slogans, who hurt dozens before they were dispersed by police. Among those injured was a Muslim scholar from Cirebon; the head of the Wahid Institute, a think tank associated with Gus Dur; and several other Muslim leaders known for their moderate views.

The assault caused national outrage, with the president for the first time weighing in and saying that violence would not be permitted – despite the fact that one of the main groups involved, the FPI, had been wielding violence since it was founded, with police and army support, in 1998. One of the field coordinators of the militia was Munarman, a former human rights lawyer from Palembang turned Muslim militant, who was shortly thereafter named a suspect by police.

For one week, the country was riveted by the police search for Munarman. On 5 June, over 1,000 police were deployed to the area around FPI headquarters, as a team went in and arrested 53 members, including the leader, Habib Rizieq Shihab. Munarman was not there, and speculation increased that he had left Java, left the country or been killed. But on the same day, he released a video from his hiding place, saying that he would turn himself in if and when the government banned Ahmadiyah (International Crisis Group 2008, *Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah Decree*, 7 July, p. 7 http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/indonesia/b78_indonesia_implications_of_the_ahmadiyah_decree.pdf – Accessed 8 July 2008 – Attachment 13).

Jane's World Insurgency And Terrorism provided an extensive assessment of the structure and activities of the FPI in October 2008. Of interest may be an assertion that between “2005-2008 FPI was at the forefront of attacks on the Ahmadiyah sect which according to the Indonesian Ulama Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia: MUI) is heretical”, and that “FPI has also harassed, threatened and targeted Indonesian Christian groups, schools, churches and foreign Christian aid organisations involved in disaster relief such as in post-tsunami Aceh”. According to this *Jane's* report, the “FPI leadership claims to have 15 million members in 18 provinces”, but “independent assessments place the figure closer to tens of thousands with several thousand members in Java alone”. The report also states that “Indonesian media sources in 2002 alleged that FPI had been heavily financed by powerful political families”, and quotes “Western intelligence sources” who claim that the “FPI has had informal links to both Indonesian military (Tentara Nasional Indonesia: TNI) and police generals, most of whom are now retired”. Further claims come from “[m]edia sources” who “also allege that elements in the police have contributed to the group’s finances and have used FPI to threaten entertainment establishments which have not willingly paid protection money to the police”, and that the “FPI was initially also used to counter pro-democracy protests”. The report states that the paramilitary wing of the FPI, which carries out its violent activities, is known as the Laskar Pemebel Islam (LPI), or Islamic Defenders Forces:

Evolving from its role as a vigilante group, FPI’s activities have tended to concentrate on raids, particularly, but by no means exclusively, in Jakarta, where it has targeted bars, pool halls, nightclubs and areas where it claims prostitution and gambling are common.

The group relies upon intimidation to achieve its goals, sometimes rallying large numbers of members outside a venue and threatening to burn it down unless the proprietor adheres to their demands. Members frequently storm entertainment venues with little or no warning, including areas popularly associated with young, foreign, budget travellers. In addition to

tearing down posters and signs depicting activities of which it disapproves, the group damages property and has assaulted bystanders or perpetrators they accuse of 'unclean' acts.

FPI attacks generally peak during the period leading up to and during the month of Ramadan. In the past through co-ordinated attacks on venues, rallies and sit-ins, the group has succeeded in having by-laws that allow entertainment centres to operate under limited hours during Ramadan revoked. A typical FPI attack involves a group of young men dressed in white, Arab-style clothes, and armed with machetes, long knives, and sticks. FPI does not possess firearms.

Since the US-led offensive in Afghanistan in late 2001, the group has demanded the Indonesian government sever diplomatic ties with Washington and has threatened to undertake actions to drive all US citizens out of Indonesia. FPI members were among the numerous groups involved in protests outside the US embassy in February 2005 over the issue of the cartoons of the Prophet Muhammed and in May 2005 over reports that the Quran had been desecrated during the interrogation of Muslim detainees in the US detention centre in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. FPI also led demonstrations against the Indonesian version of Playboy when that magazine was first launched in April 2005. In 2005-2008 FPI was at the forefront of attacks on the Ahmadiyah sect which according to the Indonesian Ulama Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia: MUI) is heretical. FPI has also harassed, threatened and targeted Indonesian Christian groups, schools, churches and foreign Christian aid organisations involved in disaster relief such as in post-tsunami Aceh. The group can be expected to continue undertaking protest actions along these lines. There is no indication that FPI wields a mandate to undertake more serious activities. However, its wider appeal and ability to mobilise demonstrators nonetheless make it a possible catalyst for further instability.

...The FPI leadership claims to have 15 million members in 18 provinces. However, independent assessments place the figure closer to tens of thousands with several thousand members in Java alone. In the area of Jabotek (Jakarta, Bogor, Tangerang and Bekasi) FPI has some 180 active cadre who carry out regular sweeps. Members come from a variety of backgrounds, although the majority are from the lower and lower-middle classes, with many in their teens coming from across Java and Sumatra. FPI also recruits from numerous Islamic cultural and political organisations. Membership in Jakarta tends to be Betawi.

Recruits to the group's paramilitary wing are generally persons known to existing members in an attempt to ensure that outsiders do not infiltrate the organisation.

...Although the group claims to have 22 branches across 18 provinces, it has proven most active in Java and southern Sumatra. Moreover, many groups such as FPI Maluku or FPI Surakarta do not see themselves as branches of FPI but as independent, loosely affiliated organisations, sharing aims and a name.

...The FPI has used traditional weapons to carry out their activities. These include bamboo sticks, sharpened poles, machetes, stones and knives. Trucks enable them to transport large groups of activists at a time, maximising the effect of their weaponry.

...Indonesian media sources in 2002 alleged that FPI had been heavily financed by powerful political families, although FPI has denied such links. According to Western intelligence sources, FPI has had informal links to both Indonesian military (Tentara Nasional Indonesia: TNI) and police generals, most of whom are now retired.

Media sources also allege that elements in the police have contributed to the group's finances and have used FPI to threaten entertainment establishments which have not willingly paid protection money to the police. FPI was initially also used to counter pro-democracy protests.

There are unsubstantiated reports that some sections of the organisation have funded themselves by directly collecting bribes to allow some nightspots to remain open.

The group has various business interests and also receives financial support from its members. Reports that it has received funds from the Al-Qaeda network remain unsubstantiated, but the linkages of its leadership into the Middle East support claims that the group has received funds from numerous Islamist sources.

...The leadership of the group has stated publicly that it is willing to work with any individuals or groups that share their 'mission and vision'. The organisation is reported to have ties with the radical Kumpulan Mujahideen Malaysia (KMM), the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in the Philippines, militant organisations in southern Thailand and Jemaah Islamiyah. These reports should be treated with caution as FPI is above all a Javanese group concerned with local issues. There have also been reports of links with Al-Qaeda which the FPI's leadership denies. These reports are almost certainly untrue. However, FPI does have links with other Indonesian Islamist groups including Laskar Mujahideen and Laskar Jihad.

...The group has a secretariat organised along the following lines:

- Investigation (intelligence gathering)
- Anti-Vice
- Law
- Anti-Violence
- Recruitment
- Expert Council

The organisation also has a series of designated branches that cover areas from foreign relations and home affairs, to religion, education and culture and a security/national defence and jihad department.

Laskar Pembela Islam: LPI (Islamic Defenders Forces)

Attacks on venues that are considered haram (unclean) are carried out by the group's paramilitary wing, Islamic Defenders Forces (Laskar Pembela Islam: LPI). Its members are distinguished from the rest of the organisation by the distinctive white robes and green sashes they wear when carrying out raids or protests. New recruits enter in squads of 22 to 40. Each one of these squads is based at kelurahan (suburb level), directed by the security/national defence and jihad department, and the wing is strictly structured along military lines. In descending order the ranks are:

- Imam Besar and Wakil Imam Besar (highest ranks)
- Imam (leader of several provinces)
- Wali or Panglima Perang (head of a particular province. There are 13 of these commanding some 10,000 to 15,000 men)
- Qoid (at municipal level commanding 2,000 to 3,000 men)
- Amir and Wakil Amir (at district level commanding 200 to 400 men)
- Rois and Wakil Rois (at sub-district/suburb level commanding 22 to 40 men)
- Jundi (soldier)

...FPI has an extensive network of Islamic religious schools and organisations as well as numerous councils.

...FPI makes extensive use of pamphlets, videotapes and cassettes containing religious sermons.

...FPI is led by Al-Habib Muhammad Rizieq bin Hussein (Habib Rizieq) born in 1965 of native Jakarta (Betawi) and Arab descent. He studied in Saudi Arabia in the 1980s, receiving a scholarship from the Organisation of Islamic Conference to complete his studies at King Saud University in Riyadh. Having decided not to complete his Masters degree at the International University in Malaysia, Rizieq returned to Indonesia and married the granddaughter of a Muslim scholar active in the Dutch colonial period. A field commander of FPI recruits, he is renowned for his austere lifestyle and his religious teachings. His two books, the first released in 1991, the second in 2000, have sold hundreds of thousands of copies, with sales extending beyond Indonesia into Malaysia and Brunei.

Rizieq was arrested and appeared in court in May 2003 charged with inspiring his followers to destroy 'immoral' advertisements and forcibly shut down bars and nightclubs. He was sentenced to seven months in jail and released in November 2003.

Rizieq was re-arrested in June 2008 in connection with an attack on an inter-faith rally in Jakarta on 1 June, and he was charged with spreading hatred. His trial is currently ongoing.

...With suspected support by elements of the Indonesian police and to a lesser extent the military, the group has survived the transition to democracy and the presidencies of Abdurrahman Wahid, Megawati Sukarnoputri and now Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono through careful politicking. Avoiding partisan politics, FPI advocates specific issues, concentrating its energies on matters that it considers to be offensive to Islam: alcohol, pornography, Western culture, heretical groups such as Ahmadiyah, the US, and increasingly Christians ('Front Pembela Islam (FPI)' 2008, *Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism*, 8 October – Attachment 14).

A June 2008 article from *The Straits Times* provides a description of the attack on the AKKBB (the National Alliance for Freedom of Religion and Belief) marchers in Jakarta on June 1, and the response of the police and government. The report also notes "calls to ban the FPI, including from mainstream Muslim groups threatening to take matters into their own hands if Jakarta does not act decisively", including "the Ansor Youth of the Nahdlatul Ulama":

The victims of the FPI's violence that day were members of the AKKBB (the National Alliance for Freedom of Religion and Belief). Most were mainstream Muslims who had gone with their families to commemorate 63 years of Pancasila – the state ideology which espouses, among other things, religious pluralism.

They felt that Indonesia's motto Bhineka Tunggal Eka (Unity in Diversity) was being besieged by Muslim radicals, and wanted to show solidarity with members of the Ahmadiyah, a marginal Muslim group accused of being deviant.

According to Muslim scholar Musdah Mulia, the event had barely started when masked FPI thugs burst in, armed with swords, bamboo sticks, rocks and broken glass. They attacked everyone in sight – including women, the elderly and children – crying 'Allahu Akbar', 'This is a religious war', 'English and American imperialist puppets', 'Communist lackeys', and so on.

...At a bizarre press conference later, FPI leader Habib Rizieq Shihab accused the AKKBB of instigating the violence, suggesting that mothers on a Sunday outing with their children were carrying guns.

But if so, why did they not use those guns to protect their children? In fact, not one FPI member was among the 32 people hospitalised that day.

Shihab also accused the 289 people whose names were on the event's invitation card – including me – of instigating the violence, as if we had somehow 'forced' the FPI to organise an attack on peaceful demonstrators.

...And the police? More than 1,200 eventually turned up but, incredibly, most just looked on. The excuse? They did not want to 'make the situation worse' by arresting FPI members. Call that logic?

A few days later, after calls for the FPI to be banned, the police did arrest 59 FPI members, including Shihab. But on Monday, bowing to pressure from extremist groups, the government ordered Ahmadiyah to stop spreading its teachings or face prosecution.

Ahmadiyah was not actually banned, but Jakarta acted to placate vociferous hardliners. By doing so, it sent the message that it is afraid to be firm with FPI, which has a clear track record of violent criminal acts.

...There have been calls to ban the FPI, including from mainstream Muslim groups threatening to take matters into their own hands if Jakarta does not act decisively. Among them are the Ansor Youth of the Nahdlatul Ulama, the world's largest Islamic group.

In the 1960s, Ansor was involved in the annihilation of the Communist Party. If it gets involved in this issue, there might be street fights and the rise of lawlessness.

How the government responds to the FPI will be a watershed for post-Suharto Indonesia. The government must stand fast against the FPI and all thugs, religious or otherwise. If it does not, it will signal that anyone can use violence as a political weapon (Suryakusuma, J. 2008, 'Zero tolerance for bullies and thugs', *The Straits Times*, 12 June – Attachment 15).

A September 2008 article from *The Straits Times* provides information on religious tensions in Indonesia, with particular reference to the activities of groups such as the FPI, claiming that "law enforcement has been woefully lax against those who perpetrate violence against worshippers":

Tensions today can be attributed partly to the activities of Islamic radical groups that have emerged since the fall of Suharto in 1998.

These groups claim to be protectors of Islam. They want to protect Muslims from being converted to other faiths and hence are intolerant of non-Muslim bodies.

The most prominent of these groups are the Front Pembela Islam (Islamic Defenders Front) and Forum Anti Gerakan Permurtadan (Anti Apostasy Forum), which have been blamed for many of the attacks on churches and deviant sects the past one year.

The groups' ideas about threats to Muslims and Islam are purveyed by several hardline publications that have also emerged after the fall of Suharto. The fortnightly Sabili magazine, for example, has a regular section criticising Christianity.

These radical groups and hardline Muslim literature thrive in the post-Suharto era because the government has been reluctant to take tough action against them, lest it be construed as being anti-Islam.

The government under President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono still needs the support of Muslims and Muslim-based parties in the coming elections next year.

There is also the fear of a backlash from the extremists. This is why even the police often turn a blind eye to the violence. No one has been prosecuted for attacking churches.

In the past, religious tensions tended to flare up most in the predominantly Muslim province of West Java, the birthplace of a radical movement in the 1950s which wanted to set up a Darul Islam or Islamic state in Indonesia.

Of late however, religious tensions have erupted in urban centres, including Jakarta, in areas where large numbers of migrants from the predominantly Christian Eastern Indonesia congregate.

...Unfortunately, law enforcement has been woefully lax against those who perpetrate violence against worshippers.

Without the state stepping in more forcefully, there is a limit to how much grassroots efforts at religious harmony can achieve.

Christians and Muslims must know that the state will be neutral and fair in protecting their rights (Osman, S. 2008, 'Religious tension simmers in Indonesia', *The Straits Times*, 24 September – Attachment 16).

A September 2008 article from the *Asia Sentinel* website, sourced from the Van Zorge Report website, notes that the FPI has not been as active during Ramadan as it has been in previous years. The article speculates that the arrest of FPI leader Habib Rizieq Shihab and Munarman, "the head of the FPI's militant, stick-wielding wing", may have diminished its activities, although this is denied by FPI leaders. The report quotes "Ahmad Suaedy, executive director of the moderate Wahid Institute", who suggest that the Indonesian government has been reluctant to take action against militant Islamic groups because it needs the support of Islamic political parties. The report also speculates that the FPI's lack of violent actions may be because "the FPI have found that their Ramadan anti-vice campaigns threaten not just conflict with local gangs that benefit from nightlife activities, but also the protection rackets and criminal collaborations that keep the Jakarta police's pockets lined":

It is Ramadan, so where is the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), Indonesia's self-appointed enforcers of virtue? In past years during the Muslim fasting month, dozens of white robed and skullcap-clad cadres of the FPI have regularly descended on bars, brothels and nightclubs to "remind" proprietors and patrons to respect the holy month by refraining from activities considered haram, or illegal, under Islamic law.

This Ramadan, however, the FPI has been conspicuously absent, and Jakarta's raucous nightlife seems to be continuing largely unabated.

The FPI's leaders say the group is currently "consolidating," but maintain that it has not diminished its activities even as its two most prominent members remain in detention. Habib Rizieq Shihab, the FPI's leader, and Munarman, the head of the FPI's militant, stick-wielding wing, are currently standing trial for inciting followers to attack participants of a June 1, 2008 rally in favour of pluralism and religious tolerance at the National Monument, or Monas, in central Jakarta.

...Ahmad Suaedy, executive director of the moderate Wahid Institute, was a participant in the June 1 rally that the FPI violently dispersed. According to him, the audacity of that attack,

which injured scores of peaceful rally supporters – some seriously – forced an otherwise weak-kneed government to take action against the FPI.

“The president needs the support of Islamic parties like the PKS, PPP and PBB,” said Suaedy referring to three prominent Muslim parties. “They control the religious agenda.”

This, he said, has left President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono unwilling to take actions that might possibly be construed as “anti-Islamic.” But an attack on a peaceful rally – on Pancasila Day, the holiday that commemorates the state ideology enshrining religious tolerance – left Yudhoyono and the National Police with little choice but to take action against the FPI.

Rizieq counters that the FPI’s shift away from sweeping does not constitute a tacit admission that the group has crossed a line, but rather that it is a calculated decision based on the FPI’s previous successes at putting vice elimination on the national government agenda. The fact that the government has issued new regulations on nightlife during Ramadan is a victory the FPI is quick to claim. Those regulations, he said, provide the FPI with a legal instrument through which to lobby the government for greater action.

...A more compelling explanation for the FPI’s change of tactics probably lies in the changing dynamics of its relationship with the state. Rizieq described the five-step procedure the FPI’s various branch offices must follow when deciding which places to target.

The process involves first receiving a request from local citizens that the FPI pay attention to activity in a certain area, which the FPI then follows up with an investigation by its intelligence wing, Badan Intelijen Front. The FPI then submits an initial report and another follow-up report to the appropriate levels of government, gives the government an ultimatum and then and only then can it make a raid. No less importantly, the FPI chooses places where it minimises its risk of “horizontal conflict” with other groups.

This last criterion ultimately appears to be the most restrictive. In fact, the FPI have found that their Ramadan anti-vice campaigns threaten not just conflict with local gangs that benefit from nightlife activities, but also the protection rackets and criminal collaborations that keep the Jakarta police’s pockets lined.

“The FPI opposes all preman [street gangs] and all mafia,” Rizieq said, “and the police are the biggest mafia.”

Much has changed since the late 1990s when the FPI emerged under the alleged stewardship of former Army chief and presidential candidate Gen. (ret.) Wiranto in order to weaken the student-led reform movement. While FPI leaders still boast support from elements within the state security apparatus – police complicity in the FPI’s destruction of a number of mosques belonging to the Ahmadiyah sect would lend some credibility to these claims – the direct financial and logistical backing of non-state thugs that was a hallmark of the Suharto era and early reformasi period is increasingly a no-no in democratic Indonesia.

Rather than risk clashes with local gangs, and rather than backing the police into a confrontation, the FPI has instead opted to try to establish authority and legitimacy as the most “authentically” Islamic entity in the country by substituting increasingly fiery rhetoric for action that might bring reproach (‘Indonesian Radicals on a Ramadan Holiday’ 2008, *Asia Sentinel*, (source: Van Zorge Report), 25 September http://www.asiasentinel.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1450&Itemid=175 – Accessed 9 January 2009 – Attachment 17).

A September 2008 article from *The Jakarta Post* reports on a clash between members of the FPI and members of the NU youth wing 'militia' *Banser* outside the Central Jakarta district court where the FPI leader was undergoing trial for the June 1 attack:

Supporters of the Islamic hardline group Islam Defenders Front (FPI) and a group of men clad in T-shirts emblazoned with the word *Banser* – a paramilitary group tied to another Islamic organisation, Nahdlatul Ulama – came to blows during the trial's midday break.

Four people wearing *Banser* T-shirts and three FPI supporters were injured during the Thursday fracas. Sultan, a witness, said both sides had also thrown stones at each other.

Both sides claimed that the other party had been the aggressor.

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M. Guntur Romli denied Rizieq's suggestion of third party involvement on his part. Guntur is a member of the National Alliance for the Freedom of Faith and Religion (AKKBB), organizers of the June 1 rally.

"It was not a clash! We were attacked and none of the *Banser* members carried weapons. They came to the district court to show support for us. They're members of Gus Nuril's *Banser*," he told *The Jakarta Post*.

He said the 33 men wearing *Banser* T-shirts came showed up to support him and other witnesses in the June 1 Monas ambush case. The witnesses had planned to hand out a letter stating that they were boycotting the trial because they had not gotten a safety guarantee from court authorities (Setiawati, I. 2008, 'Groups skirmish during Rizieq trial', *The Jakarta Post*, 26 September <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/09/26/groups-skirmish-during-rizieq-trial.html> – Accessed 16 January 2009 – Attachment 18).

An October 30 article from the *Antara News* agency states that FPI leader Habib Rizieq was sentenced to 18 months in prison by the Central Jakarta District Court "for his role in a violent attack against an interfaith rally in June":

The FPI chief was charged with mobilising a mob and letting a violent act, which is against the Penal Code (KUHP) article 170 on mass assault.

The judge said that Rizieq as an Islamic teacher should have prevented his mass from staging a rally. The judge held Rizieq responsible for letting the rally which led to the violence.

The defendant had been jailed once and caused the public to feel restless, according to the judge.

Habib Rizieq and a number of FPI members were named suspects and arrested by the Jakarta Police last June 2008 for a violent incident at the National Monument (Monas) in central Jakarta.

FPI members attacked activists of the National Alliance for Freedom of Religion and Faith (AKKBB), a supporter of Ahmadiyah which Muslims consider to be a deviant sect ('Habib Rizieq sentenced to 18 months for inciting violence' 2008, *Antara News*, 30 October <http://www.antara.co.id/en/arc/2008/10/30/habib-rizieq-sentenced-to-18-months-for-inciting-violence/> – Accessed 9 January 2009 – Attachment 19).

An October 2008 article from *The Jakarta Post* provides detail of a clash between police and FPI members after the handing down of the Rizieq verdict. The report also states that the FPI members then went to a nearby Ahmadiyah mosque to close it down, but were prevented from doing so by police. The report claims that police "officers had frequently been engaged by the FPI in clashes throughout the trial" ('FPI members clash with police after Rizieq verdict' 2008, *The Jakarta Post*, 31 October <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/10/31/fpi-members-clash-with-police-after-rizieq-verdict.html> – Accessed 16 January 2009 – Attachment 20).

A December 2008 article from "Indonesian commercial news website Detikcom" (description by *BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific*) states that "[t]he Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) will consider forming a political party if Islamic parties continued to fail to uphold Islamic values". According to this report, "the party would fall under the FPI's Central Leadership Council and its main focus would be to implement Shari'ah completely within the framework of Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia" ('Indonesia's Islamic Defenders Front mulls setting up political party' 2008, Detikcom website, 16 December – Attachment 21).

A December 2008 report in *The Jakarta Post* suggests that Indonesian politicians have no will to combat militant Islamic groups like FPI because they need the electoral support of Muslim voters and parties:

Yudhoyono's commitment to pluralism has similarly come under public scrutiny. He did not intervene to stop the issuance of a joint ministerial decree banning the non-violent Jamaah Ahmadiyah sect from spreading its religious teachings.

The President did condemn a brutal attack on pro-pluralism activists from the Alliance for the Freedom and Faith of Religion by followers of the radical Islam Defenders Front (FPI), and ordered an investigation into the incident.

But Yudhoyono failed to take more stringent measures to combat radicalisation in the predominantly Muslim nation and to ensure similar FPI attacks on other groups would stop.

...The pornography law and Ahmadiyah, as well as the power of hard-line groups, are sensitive issues for most Muslim voters – issues Yudhoyono and many other leading politicians would prefer to steer clear of.

The President's reticence over such sensitive religious issues could earn him more political credit from Muslim voters, believed to be mainly conservative (Nurhayati, D. 2008, 'Time for SBY, JK to gain voters' trust', *The Jakarta Post*, 22 December <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/12/22/time-sby-jk-gain-voters039-trust.html> – Accessed 16 January 2009 – Attachment 22).

3) Please provide information on the Nahdlatul Ulama Organisation of Islam (NU)

Question 2 of *Research Response IDN32037* provides extensive information on Nahdhatul Ulama (NU), the largest Muslim organisation in Indonesia, including its history, tenets,

structure, and activities. It also contains a section on the attitude of NU to the Ahmadiyah movement (RRT Research & Information 2007, *Research Response IDN32037*, 10 August – Attachment 23).

In his 2004 book *Islam in Indonesia – Modernism, Radicalism, and the Middle East Dimension*, Giora Eliraz provides a summary of NU and Muhammadiyah, which have “dominated Islam in Indonesia for most of the twentieth century” and are “counted among the largest Islamic organisations in the world”. Eliraz states that “NU claims 35-40 million members”, and that of the two groups it is “regarded as more liberal, tolerant, and comfortable with the idea of a secular state, as well as with syncretic patterns of Islam”. Nonetheless, Eliraz states that within NU there can be found “individuals with a fundamentalist frame of mind who disagree with the position of the *Pancasila* as the state ideology and wish to see the *shari’*a as the sole foundation of Indonesian law”. Eliraz also draws attention to the educational and welfare activities of both organisations:

...the two largest Muslim organisations in Indonesia, which represent the two main streams of domestic Islamic orthodoxy: the traditionalist Nahdlatul Ulama (NU); and the modernist Muhammadiyah. Both have dominated Islam in Indonesia for most of the twentieth century. They are even counted among the largest Islamic organisations in the world: NU claims 35-40 million members, and Muhammadiyah about 30 million. The two movements share the acceptance of *Pancasila* and the basic idea of pluralism. The traditionalist NU is regarded as more liberal, tolerant, and comfortable with the idea of a secular state, as well as with syncretic patterns of Islam. This can be partly explained by the fact that NU’s followers are mainly from the rural areas of Java, and as such they share the Sufi tradition of tolerance, and are also influenced by Javanese Hindu-Buddhist and animist traditions to a certain degree. Muhammadiyah has become more conservative in strictly Islamic terms and there are still some people within this movement who bid for a greater role for Islam in the Indonesia polity. It is also possible to find among its millions of members, and even in the ranks of the NU, individuals with a fundamentalist frame of mind who disagree with the position of the *Pancasila* as the state ideology and wish to see the *shari’*a as the sole foundation of Indonesian law. So far, however, these two movements have clearly proved themselves to be essentially moderate.

Combined, the two organisations form the backbone of civil society in Indonesia... Both of them, the NU in particular, were active in setting up NGOs that greatly assisted in the process of the building of civil society. Their contribution to the general well-being, by voluntarily providing services that otherwise would not have been done by government agencies, has proved itself to be a significant element in building civil society. This was done through the wide network of Muhammadiyah schools and its philanthropic institutions such as orphanages and hospitals, and through thousands of *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) and other charitable foundations of the NU.

...The wide educational infrastructure of both Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, as well as the welfare components they possess, enables them to significantly strengthen their hold on the Muslim population and their position as the main pillars of civil society (Eliraz, G. 2004, *Islam in Indonesia – Modernism, Radicalism, and the Middle East Dimension*, Sussex Academic Press, Brighton & Portland, pp. 86-87 – Attachment 24).

A list of the current NU Executive Council members is provided as Attachment 25 (‘Executive Council’ (undated), NU Online website <http://www.nu.or.id/page.php?lang=en> – Accessed 20 January 2009 – Attachment 25).

In a chapter titled 'The Islamic Factor in Post-Soeharto Indonesia', from a 2000 collection of essays titled *Indonesia in Transition – Social Aspects of Reformasi and Crisis*, Azyumardi Azra outlines the political connections of NU and Muhammadiyah:

...the National Awakening Party (PKB) and, to a lesser extent, the National Mandate Party (PAN). These parties are, as a rule, closely related to Muslim socio-religious organisations. Thus the PKB, for instance, could be thought of as the political wing of the Nadhlatul Ulama (NU), representing the traditionalist spectrum of Indonesian Islam; while the PAN is overwhelmingly supported by the modernist members of Muhammadiyah (Azra, A. 2000, 'The Islamic Factor in Post-Soeharto Indonesia', in Manning, C. & Van Diermen, P. (eds), *Indonesia in Transition – Social Aspects of Reformasi and Crisis*, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, pp. 309-318, p. 310 – Attachment 26).

A December 2008 article in *The Jakarta Post* states that "[o]f the 38 political parties which have qualified for the 2009 elections, three of them – PPP, PKB and the National Awakening Party – claim to represent the political aspirations of NU" ('Clerics choose politics over followers: BIN' 2008, *The Jakarta Post*, 21 December <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/12/21/clerics-choose-politics-over-followers-bin.html> – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 27).

A November 2008 article in *The Jakarta Post* notes the passing of new electoral legislation, which it claims "will not make the politics of coalition easier in 2009". According to this report, "[t]he law requires that a party or a coalition of parties must obtain a minimum of 20 percent of the House seats or 25 percent of the popular vote to secure the right to nominate a package of presidential and vice presidential candidates". The article speculates on the likelihood of the major parties requiring the support of Islamic parties in order to form a viable governing coalition, or that the Islamic parties may form a coalition of their own in order to field a presidential candidate. The article claims that the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), the most successful Islamic party at the 2004 elections, is likely to form a coalition with either the Yudhoyono's Democratic Party (PD) or Golkar, leaving the Megawati's Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) with the Muhammadiyah-aligned PAN or the NU-aligned PKB as possible coalition partners (Effendy, B. 2008, 'Insight: What does the coalition promise to look like in 2009?', *The Jakarta Post*, 12 November <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/11/12/insight-what-does-coalition-promise-look-2009.html> – Accessed 22 January 2009 – Attachment 47).

For further information on the political affiliations of NU and Muhammadiyah, the political parties associated with them, and other Islamic parties, see the ICG's December 2003 report *Indonesia Background: A Guide to the 2004 Elections*, provided as Attachment 34 (International Crisis Group 2003, *Indonesia Background: A Guide to the 2004 Elections*, 18 December – Attachment 34).

A July 2008 article on the Liberal Islam Network website characterises both NU and Muhammadiyah as representatives of moderate Islam in South East Asia, and makes reference to an October 2003 conference convened by the two organisations, which "asserted the role of moderate Islam in South East Asia, specifically the role that NU and Muhammadiyah actively play in countering radicalism" (Basya, M. 2008, 'Moderate Islam in South East Asia', Liberal Islam Network website, 16 July <http://islamlib.com/en/article/moderate-islam-in-south-east-asia/> – Accessed 20 January 2009 – Attachment 28).

A June 2008 report from *Asia News* states that members of the NU were among those injured when the FPI attacked the National Alliance for Religious Freedom march in Jakarta, and NU youth wing members attacked FPI offices in Cirebon, West Java, in retaliation. According to this report, “the million-strong NU, which includes structured paramilitary groups, is though to be preparing for other attacks” (Reges, B. 2008, ‘Jakarta on the verge of a civil war as moderate and radical Muslims battle it out’, *Asia News*, 2 June – Attachment 29).

A December 2008 article in *The Jakarta Post* states that NU’s youth wing Banser “force helped police officers and soldiers secure churches in capital of Purwokerto” on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day in Yogyakarta (Maryono, A. & Susanto, S. 2008, ‘Solemn Xmas celebrated throughout the country’, *The Jakarta Post*, 26 December <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/12/26/solemn-xmas-celebrated-throughout-country.html> – Accessed 20 January 2009 – Attachment 30).

A November 17 2008 article in *The Jakarta Post* states that both NU and Muhammadiyah leaders “have called on Muslims to cease glorifying the three executed Bali bombers, branding them terrorists rather than martyrs or holy warriors”:

NU and Muhammadiyah said the bombers’ actions destroyed the image of Islam, causing the international community to question whether the religion really fostered peace or violence.

“Glorifying the three Bali bombers as mujahid (martyrs) is a grave mistake. It stems from a delusion that such an honor can be achieved through bombings and shouting ‘Allahu Akbar’ (God is great),” said NU deputy chairman Masdar F. Mas’udi.

He said a jihad or holy war to defend Islam must be done by “improving the Muslim community’s prosperity, knowledge and morality”.

... Muhammadiyah chairman Din Syamsuddin also denounced the misuse of Islam by the Bali bombers to achieve their goals.

Achieving goals through violent means is not part of Islamic teaching that promotes blessings and peace for the universe, he stressed.

“We reject all violence and terrorism. And a jihad can’t be achieved by attacking others, even those considered enemies. We must learn after this that the use of violence and attacks cannot be tolerated in our religion,” he said (Khalik, A. 2008, ‘No sympathy for bombers, say Muslim groups’, *The Jakarta Post*, 11 November <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/11/11/no-sympathy-bombers-say-muslim-groups.html> – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 31).

Two older reports were located which indicate discord between NU and Muhammadiyah, but neither report suggests open conflict between the groups.

An October 2007 report in *The Jakarta Post* notes a disagreement over the date on which the Idul Fitri holiday is to be held, and claims that “this is a return of the old rivalry between Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, the largest and second largest Islamic organisations in the country”. The report states that “for the last several years the ministry of religious affairs has been led by figures affiliated with the NU: Said Agil Husin Al Munawar under President Megawati Soekarnoputri from 2001-2004, and Basyuni under Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono since 2004” (‘Muhammadiyah-NU rivalry’ 2007, *The Jakarta Post*, 17 October – Attachment 32).

A January 2001 interview in *The Jakarta Post* with Mitsuo Nakamura, “emeritus professor at the Department of Cultural Anthropology of Chiba University and veteran observer of the two organisations”, provides information on the differences between the organisations, and on recent unrest between them. Nakamura states that “the two organisations are not engaged in an all-out war to wipe out the other party”:

In the case of the Muhammadiyah and the NU there are obvious differences between them and they represent different ummat (Muslim communities). Sometimes they fight for positions – government positions, in legislatures – DPR, DPRD, in ministries, and even in university administrations and student unions. They fight, and I think that is normal.

The problem now is how to manage the fighting so that it does not become violent. Again what is crucial is the determination of the highest level of leadership both from Muhammadiyah as well as the NU. I am convinced that they are endowed with reason, common sense and wisdom. They are determined to prevent minor conflicts from escalating into confrontation.

...Let me refrain from mentioning the incidents of violent confrontation supposedly occurring between members of the two organisations since I do not have first-hand information on these incidents. The only point I want to make is that the two organisations are not engaged in an all-out war to wipe out the other party. That is unlikely to happen simply because they live in different places in term of social ecology, basically in terms of rural vs. urban.

They may defend their territories but are unlikely to invade others. They do not have to fight for survival. They may fight for positions, as I mentioned before, in the framework of parliamentary democracy. But they will compromise eventually unless they want to abolish their positions or the system itself.

...The Muhammadiyah also mobilises its own self-defence units, including Tapak Suci Silat groups, when necessary like the national congress although they are not as well established as the Banser for NU (Purba, K. 2001, ‘Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah not in ‘all-out- war’, *The Jakarta Post*, 8 January <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2001/01/08/nahdlatul-ulama-muhammadiyah-not-039allout039-war.html> – Accessed 21 January 2009 – Attachment 33).

4) Please provide information on whether the authorities protect NU over Islam Muhammadiyah.

No information was located specifically suggesting that the authorities protect NU over Muhammadiyah. Nonetheless, sources indicate that the Indonesian police turn a blind eye to the activities of Islamic militant groups such as the FPI, and took no action to prevent the FPI-led attack on the AKKBB rally in Jakarta in June 2008.

Sources quoted in previous questions provide information on the attitude of the authorities in Indonesia to militant activity, particularly the FPI, including:

- The March 2006 interview in *The Jakarta Post* with the rector of Muhammadiyah University Malang, Muhadjir Effendy, in which Effendy claims that “[t]he government is weak in not prosecuting” FPI members who commit acts of violence (Graham, D. 2006, ‘Christians need not be concerned: Muhammadiyah rector’, *The Jakarta Post*, 15 March <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2006/03/15/christians->

[need-not-be-concerned-muhammadiyah-rector.html](#) – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 6);

- The 24 December article in *The Jakarta Post* in which Pramono Tantowi, director of the Centre of Religious and Civilisation Studies, states that “the government, through its own policies, has seemingly given carte blanche to hard-line groups to flourish and attack minority groups they deem ‘deviant’”, and that “[t]he government has failed to protect its citizens” (Nurhayati, D. 2008, ‘Religious freedom, tolerance in jeopardy’, *The Jakarta Post*, 24 December
<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/12/24/religious-freedom-tolerance-jeopardy.html> – Accessed 19 January 2009 – Attachment 10);
- The 2003 Australian Government Parliamentary Library report which states of FPI violence that “[s]ceptical observers suspect that the police turn a blind eye to, or are complicit in, these activities, knowing that the victims will be encouraged to maintain protection monies to the police” (Parliament of Australia, Parliamentary Library 2003, ‘The Front Pembela Islam (Islamic Defenders Front–FPI)’
<http://www.aph.gov.au/library/intguide/FAD/sea.htm> – Accessed 8 January 2009 – Attachment 12);
- The July 2008 ICG report which states that the FPI “has been closely associated with individual police and military officers”, and that “the police have had close ties with the group” since its inception in 1998 (International Crisis Group 2008, *Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah Decree*, 7 July, p. 7
http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/indonesia/b78_indonesia_implications_of_the_ahmadiyah_decree.pdf – Accessed 8 July 2008 – Attachment 13);
- The 2008 *Jane’s World Insurgency and Terrorism* report which states that “Indonesian media sources in 2002 alleged that FPI had been heavily financed by powerful political families”, and quotes “Western intelligence sources” who claim that the “FPI has had informal links to both Indonesian military (Tentara Nasional Indonesia: TNI) and police generals, most of whom are now retired” (‘Front Pembela Islam (FPI)’ 2008, *Jane’s World Insurgency and Terrorism*, 8 October – Attachment 14);
- The June 2008 report from *The Straits Times* which claims of the police presence at the AKKBB rally in Jakarta that “[m]ore than 1,200 eventually turned up but, incredibly, most just looked on. The excuse? They did not want to ‘make the situation worse’ by arresting FPI members” (Suryakusuma, J. 2008, ‘Zero tolerance for bullies and thugs’, *The Straits Times*, 12 June – Attachment 15);
- The September 2008 report from *The Straits Times* which claims that “radical groups and hardline Muslim literature thrive in the post-Suharto era because the government has been reluctant to take tough action against them, lest it be construed as being anti-Islam”, and that “law enforcement has been woefully lax against those who perpetrate violence against worshippers” (Osman, S. 2008, ‘Religious tension simmers in Indonesia’, *The Straits Times*, 24 September – Attachment 16); and
- The September 2008 *Asia Sentinel* report which claims that “FPI leaders still boast support from elements within the state security apparatus” and that “police complicity

in the FPI's destruction of a number of mosques belonging to the Ahmadiyah sect would lend some credibility to these claims" ('Indonesian Radicals on a Ramadan Holiday' 2008, *Asia Sentinel* (source: Van Zorge Report), 25 September http://www.asiasentinel.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1450&Itemid=175 – Accessed 9 January 2009 – Attachment 17).

A November 2008 opinion piece in *The Jakarta Post* claims that "[m]ob power has taken over the role that the state once played in our recent past in curtailing our freedoms", and that "the state is failing miserably in protecting these freedoms – to the point of even being complicit to some of the mob actions" The article goes on to claim that "[t]he police, whose job it is to ensure that these freedoms are respected and defended, in most cases either just stand by and watch, or even became complicit with the mob". As examples, the report cites attacks on the Ahmadiyah, on the June march in Jakarta, and on Christians ('Censored by the mob' 2008, *The Jakarta Post*, 20 November – Attachment 35).

A December 2008 report in the Singaporean newspaper *Today* quotes a (NU-affiliated) Wahid Institute report which claims that "the government has been weak in cracking down on radical groups and punishing violators". According to the Wahid Institute report, "the civilian groups that violate religious freedom as [sic] members of the Islam Defenders Front (FPI), the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) and the Communications Forum for Religious Harmony" ('Wahid Institute slams SBY govt? : Think tank accuses Jakarta of being soft on radicals' 2008, *Today*, 12 December – Attachment 36).

The July 2008 ICG report on the Ahmadiyah decree provides information on clashes between the FPI and NU militia members in East Java, Central Java, and Jakarta in 2006:

Former President Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur, as he is more popularly called), a leader of Indonesia's largest Islamic organisation, Nahdlatul Ulama, and known for his commitment to pluralism, was an outspoken opponent of the proposed law as drafted. He had joked that by the standards of the draft, even the Koran would be considered pornography.

On 23 May 2006, he was invited to Purwakarta, West Java, to take part in a public interfaith dialogue, with hardline groups such as FPI and Hizb ut-Tahrir in the audience. Gus Dur criticised the bill again and said that some participants in the Million Muslim March had been paid to take part by unnamed generals. The head of the local FPI chapter stood up and demanded that he either apologise or leave Purwakarta. He left, amid a hail of rude insults, with the national media reporting that he had been forced out by emotional supporters of the draft, including FPI.

In the aftermath of the Purwakarta incident, clashes took place between FPI and Garda Bangsa, a militia loyal to Gus Dur, in Jember, East Java, and a few other areas. On 15 June, Garda Bangsa prevented FPI head Habib Rizieq Shihab from speaking at a pesantren Islamic boarding school) in Demak, Central Java, threatening to burn the school if he showed up. Banners appeared near the Nahdlatul Ulama headquarters calling for the dissolution of FPI. On 26 June, several dozen young men from Garda Bangsa claimed they were going to march to FPI headquarters in Jakarta, and FPI members, backed by two other hardline groups, readied themselves for defence. Police diverted Gus Dur's supporters, and no violence took place. Serious bad blood between FPI and Garda Bangsa remained, however, and two years later, the government's fear of violence erupting between them was to affect the timing of the joint decree.

...According to a participant, one of the key factors driving the release of the decree that afternoon was the fear that violent clashes would take place between Gus Dur's supporters and the FPI. "The odd thing is that they're both from Nahdlatul Ulama backgrounds", said an NU leader. "It's a question of secular NU vs radical NU" (International Crisis Group 2008, *Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah Decree*, 7 July, p. 7 http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/indonesia/b78_indonesia_implications_of_the_ahmadiyah_decree.pdf – Accessed 8 July 2008 – Attachment 13).

A September 2004 article from *The Jakarta Post* states that the then-leader of NU, Hasyim Muzadi, was the running-mate of Megawati Soekarnoputri in the 2004 presidential elections, in which they were defeated by Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. The report also notes that "several executives" of NU "were part of the campaign team for the Megawati-Hasyim ticket" (Setiogi, S. 2004, 'Hasyim resumes top Nahdlatul Ulama post', *The Jakarta Post*, 22 September <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2004/09/22/hasyim-resumes-top-nahdlatul-ulama-post.html> – Accessed 21 January 2009 – Attachment 37).

Two previous research responses provide information which may be of interest.

Question 2 of *Research Response IDN31829*, of 1 June 2007, provides information on police attitude toward Muslims in Central Java (RRT Country Research 2007, *Research Response IDN31829*, 1 June – Attachment 38).

Question 1 of *Research Advice IDN14734*, of 17 July 2001, provides information on relations between police and NU in Java (RRT Country Research 2001, *Research Advice IDN14734*, 17 July – Attachment 39).

5) Please provide any further information which may be of assistance.

Ahmadiyah [Ahmadiyyah]

While no information could be located on Muhammadiyah being vilified by the FPI as a "misleading organisation which should be abolished", a good deal of information is available on the campaigns against the Ahmadiyah movement in this regard.

The most recent research response addressing the Ahmadiyah in Indonesia is *Research Response IDN33990*, of 14 November 2008. This response provides information from the US Department of State's *International Religious Freedom Report for 2008* for Indonesia, as well as a summary of media reports relating to the Ahmadiyah in Indonesia up to November 2008 (RRT Research & Information 2008, *Research Response IDN33990*, 14 November – Attachment 40).

Question 1 of *Research Response IDN32037*, of 10 August 2007, addresses the central tenets of the Ahmadiyah faith and its history in Indonesia, and Question 3 provides information on attacks on Ahmadiyah members in East Java (RRT Research & Information 2007, *Research Response IDN32037*, 10 August – Attachment 41).

Research Response IDN30493, of 7 September 2006, provides extensive information on the treatment of Ahmadiyah members in Indonesia, and the Government's reaction to the Ahmadiyah and to those who harass them. Question 1 provides information on the history and background of the Ahmadiyah movement in Indonesia, while Questions 4, 5 & 6 provide information on harassment of Ahmadiyah members, the attitude of the Indonesian

government to Ahmadiyah members, and the reaction of the government to the harassment of Ahmadiyah members (RRT Country Research 2006, *Research Response IDN30493*, 7 September – Attachment 42).

The July 2008 ICG report on the Ahmadiyah decree assesses the events leading up to the Indonesian government joint ministerial decree preventing the Ahmadiyah from attempting to “disseminate” their beliefs. The report provides information on the main players in the move to ban the Ahmadiyah, violence against Ahmadiyah in recent years, and the possible reasons behind the government’s decision to act in the lead-up to national elections in 2009:

On 9 June 2008, the Indonesian government announced a joint ministerial decree “freezing” activities of the Ahmadiyah sect, an offshoot of Islam whose members venerate the founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. For months hardline Islamic groups had been ratcheting up the pressure for a full ban, while civil rights groups and many public figures argued that any state-imposed restrictions violated the constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion. The decree demonstrates how radical elements, which lack strong political support in Indonesia, have been able to develop contacts in the bureaucracy and use classic civil society advocacy techniques to influence government policy.

Some senior ministers said publicly that the decree allows Ahmadiyah members to practice their faith, as long as they do not try to disseminate it to anyone else, but this compromise pleases no one. The hardliners want Ahmadiyah either dissolved or forced to declare itself non-Muslim. For them the decree does not go far enough, is worded ambiguously and does not have the force of law. It is also not clear how it will be enforced. They intend to monitor Ahmadiyah themselves and stop any activity not in keeping with their own interpretation of Islamic orthodoxy. For many other Indonesians, the decree is an unnecessary and dangerous capitulation to radical demands that are now bound to increase.

The question no one has answered satisfactorily is about timing. Ahmadiyah members have been living more or less peacefully in Indonesia since 1925 or 1935, depending on whose history one reads. Despite fatwas (religious opinions) on the sect from the Indonesia Ulama Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI) in 1980, warning that it was dangerous, and in 2005, recommending its banning, there was no action by the government until June 2008. Why now?

At least four factors are responsible:

- the systematic lobbying over the last five years of the bureaucracy, particularly the religious affairs ministry, for action against Ahmadiyah;
- the search by hardline groups, including Hizb ut- Tahrir (Hizbut Tahrir is the Indonesian form of the international organisation’s name), for issues that would gain them sympathy and help expand membership;
- the unthinking support given by the Yudhoyono administration to institutions such as the MUI and Bakorpakem, a body set up under the attorney general’s office at the height of Soeharto’s New Order to monitor beliefs and sects; and
- political manoeuvring related to national and local elections.

In the week leading up to the issuance of the decree, two other factors came into play. One was the government’s fear of violence. On 1 June 2008 a thug-dominated Muslim militia attacked a group of the decree’s opponents, sending twelve of them to the hospital and ten militia members to court. Officials were worried that any further delays in ruling on the

Ahmadiyah issue could fuel more violence. Another concern was that the government would lose face if, after promising repeatedly to issue the decree, it failed yet again to deliver.

The result was a decree which is a setback for both Indonesia's image as a country that can stand up to Islamic radicalism and President Yudhoyono's image as a strong leader. The outcome suggests a government that has no clear vision of basic principles itself but rather seeks compromise between those who speak loudest (International Crisis Group 2008, *Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah Decree*, 7 July, pp. 13-14

http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/indonesia/b78_indonesia_implications_of_the_ahmadiyah_decree.pdf – Accessed 8 July 2008 – Attachment 13).

An August 2008 bulletin from Indonesian human rights NGO TAPOL also provides information on the Ahmadiyah decree, the history of violence against the Ahmadiyah in Indonesia, and the June 1 attack on the march for religious tolerance in Jakarta ('TAPOL Bulletin No. 190, August 2008', 1 August – Attachment 43).

A December 2008 report carried by *BBC Monitoring South Asia*, sourced from the Indonesian news website Detikcom, claims that an Ahmadiyah mosque in "Mande, Cianjur, West Java was damaged by members of the Islamic Reform Movement (Garis) on 19 December 08" ('Ahmadiyah mosque attacked in Indonesia's West Java' 2008, Detikcom website, 19 December – Attachment 44).

A January 2009 report from *Agence France-Presse* quotes a study by the Setara Institute for Democracy and Peace, an Indonesian NGO, which found that religious violence increased from 2007 to 2008. The report quotes the study as stating that "[t]he government's ban on the Ahmadiyah sect triggered the escalation of religious violence", and that "[t]he study found 103 religious violence cases alone in June 2008, the month in which the government issued a quasi-ban on the Ahmadiyah sect" ('Religious violence rises in Indonesia: survey' 2009, *Agence France-Presse*, 15 January – Attachment 45).

A June 2008 report from *The Age* on the Ahmadiyah decree states that "[s]ome Ahmadiyah members have indicated they will try to seek asylum in Australia if moves against them continue" ('Jakarta angers all sides in sect row' 2008, *The Age*, 11 June <http://www.theage.com.au/world/jakarta-angers-all-sides-in-sect-row-20080610-2oj3.html> – Accessed 20 January 2009 – Attachment 46).

Question 1 of *Research Response IDN31829* may be of interest, as it provides information on variation in Muslim beliefs and organisations in Indonesia (RRT Country Research 2007, *Research Response IDN31829*, 1 June – Attachment 38).

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