

SPECIAL SECTION: GROWING RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE IN INDONESIA

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The Politics of Religious Pluralism in Indonesia: The Shi'a Response to the Sampang Incidents of 2011–12

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Abstract

An increasing number of reports and studies on offenses against religious minorities has been published in Indonesia since the country's democratic transition in 1998. While the literature on intolerance unveils the young democracy's institutional problems which have undermined and eroded minority rights, such as direct elections and the lack of judicial independence, it leaves many critical questions to address. Although the number of victims of religious intolerance increased, in the same institutional settings, a large number of religious minorities has managed to prevent escalating violence and avoid being targeted by intolerant groups. Under what circumstances and how do minorities deter attacks in a time of heightened tension against them under a democratic system that has afforded them little protection? This article sheds light on the case of the Shi'a who suffered a series of attacks in Sampang, Madura in the East Java province, but have since gradually developed resilience. A series of attacks in Sampang in 2011–12 was one of the most destructive events against religious minorities in Indonesia. Examining the Sampang incidents, this article argues that if the religious minority can develop a cohesive network with elements of the majority capable of mobilising state power, it would build a safety net preventing attacks by intolerant groups. Thus, this article aims to develop our understanding of how religious minorities address violence caused by hostile socio-political forces and adapt to Indonesia's democracy.

Keywords: Islam; Indonesia; Shi'a; Religious minorities; Civil society; Religious pluralism

Introduction

An increasing number of reports and studies on offenses against religious minorities have been published in Indonesia since the country's democratic transition in 1998. According to the Setara Institute, the Jakarta-based NGO which monitors religious freedom in Indonesia, more than 200 human rights violation cases against religious minorities have taken place almost every year since 2008 (Naipospos 2013). Shi'a, one of the three major groups of victims after Ahmadiyah, has been the most frequently attacked group over the past ten years (Halili *et al.* 2016: 51).¹

Many observers have proposed accounts of factors that induce violence in such cases. For instance, the Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC) argues that increasing political space and new communication technologies, particularly after the fall of Suharto in 1998, enabled intolerant Islamists and other conservative groups to forge alliances and intensify attacks against religious minorities and pluralist groups (IPAC 2016: 11). Given the impact of political liberalisation and democratisation, some scholarly works emphasise the role of political elites in religious violence. Bush (2013) contends that intolerant Islamists consolidated their grip on influence over the executive government, especially during the Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono presidency (2004–2014). As several ministers who held conservative views on religious minorities endorsed the persecution of the Shi'a and Ahmadiyah, the central

¹The other two are Christianity and local religions (*aliran keagamaan*).

government made virtually no effort to prevent violence or promote reconciliation. Adding to this inaction, the silent stance of President Yudhoyono, who was deeply affected by an increasingly conservative point of view among the public majority, emboldened religious intolerance. Drawing on several cases of religious violence, Ahnaf *et al.* (2015) also mention the way in which the political elites in local government who need constituents' support willingly endorse intolerant groups with voting power. On the other hand, Lindsey (2012) and Crouch (2014) note that intolerant groups are increasingly adept at using judicial institutions, especially criminal law (Kitab Undang-undang Hukum Pidana: KUHP). They demonstrate how intolerant groups managed to legitimise violence and attacks against religious minorities by using articles 156 and 156 (a) KUHP to accuse them of blasphemy.

While unveiling the young democracy's institutional problems, such as direct elections granting larger access and influence to actors with voting power and judicial systems not protecting minority rights, these accounts leave us with critical questions to address. Although the number of victims of religious intolerance has increased, given the same institutional settings, we can still observe the existence of religious minorities who have managed to avoid being targeted by intolerant groups and to prevent the escalation of violence. Under what circumstances and how do minorities deter attacks in a time of heightened tension against them under a formal democratic system that has afforded them little institutional protection?

To address this question, it scrutinises the process of how Shi'a, as the religious minority, have strived to promote peacebuilding after some of the most destructive attacks took place in Sampang, Madura, located in the East Java province in 2011–12. Due to the attacks, hundreds of Shi'as evacuated their homes and became internally displaced for more than seven years. At the same time, as the case shows, despite the ongoing sporadic attacks and the vast number of political obstacles faced by religious minorities, the violence prompted Shi'a organisations to actively engage in networking with religious pluralist NGOs, Sunni intellectuals, and politicians in an effort to salvage the victims' lives and provide them with necessities. One of the keys to this progress is developing an intensive and cohesive network with elements of the majority capable of mobilising state power, which is in most cases the largest Islamic organisation, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). This newly cultivated network has exerted pressure on the central government and has the institutional infrastructure to prevent further attacks and help the Shi'a recover their rights. After the inauguration of President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) in October 2014 in particular, religious pluralist activists managed to gain access to the presidential office, gradually making possible government policies toward peacebuilding. In other words, access to political leadership within the government through pluralist activists has facilitated further development for institutional arrangements to protect minorities from intolerant attacks, which significantly distinguishes it from Yudhoyono's administration. Through this analysis, the article argues that it is crucial for minority groups to build multi-level networks consisting of various actors, from grassroots NGOs to presidential advisors, in order to develop a protection system.

This kind of progress requires analytical insights into developing a network as an informal form of protection provided by grassroots civil society actors that have largely been underestimated by most works on religious intolerance in Indonesia. In fact, there has been pervasive distrust toward civil society among the scholarly work on Indonesia's democracy as an agency for its democratic consolidation (c.f. Robison and Hadiz 2004: chapter 5). Against the odds, the recent efforts towards the peacebuilding process of religious intolerance show that civil society increasingly plays a crucial role in salvaging the lives and rights of religious minorities, and they have come to be a force for minorities. Although many scholarly works on social capital note that active civil society is an important element that stabilises and further consolidates democracy (Colletta and Cullen 2000; Newton 2001; Putnam 1993), the growing literature on religious intolerance in Indonesia has overlooked the role of civil society's networking to comprehend the resilience of Indonesia's democracy. Thus, this article contributes to the literature of civil society and peacebuilding in Indonesia by providing new insights into networking as an important form of social capital that can also consolidate democracy, particularly to protect the human rights of religious minorities.²

The following section will review Shi'a's brief history and social background in Indonesia to demonstrate that building a personal network with influential religious figures is one of the primary options for protection from intolerance. It will then provide a chronology of the conflict in Sampang. The next

²Democracy here, does not only refer to the majority rule, but to liberal democracy that maintains the balance between majority rule and individual and minority rights. See Plattner (2010).

section will examine the response of Shi'a groups and pluralist NGOs, from the initial responses to the violent incidents, to overcoming mistrust and improving communication and refugee conditions. Then third section will show how they conduct capacity building and lobby the national and regional governments and politicians. Final section will analyse the responses of two presidencies, Yudhoyono and Jokowi, contrasting the former as a political leadership with little will to address the conflict, and the latter as a positive enforcer of the enhancement of institutional protection for Shi'a and other religious minorities.

Shi'a in Contemporary Indonesia

Shi'a is a religious minority group in Indonesia, the most populous Sunni-majority country in the world. Though its origin and early formation in Indonesia are still debatable, Shi'a is not a newcomer or stranger. To achieve a better understanding of Shi'a's historical background and its ambiguity within the Sunni majority in Southeast Asia, Formichi and Feener (2015) propose a concept called 'Alid piety' which is commonly embraced including Shi'a in this region. Alid piety reframes the reverence for Ali, the Prophet's son-in-law, Fatima, the Prophet's daughter and wife of Ali, and their progeny, which is not necessarily exclusive to the Shi'a tradition but which many Sunni also acknowledge. Shi'a in Indonesia have strived to emphasise their commonality with the Sunni to acquire social recognition. In an effort to establish Shi'a organisations in the Sunni-majority country, they identify themselves as Ahl al-bayt, using it in their organisation names and avoid using "Shi'a" so that the organisations are more acceptable to Sunni. For example, the Indonesian Council of Ahlu Bayt Associations (Ikatan Jamaah Ahlul Bayt Indonesia: IJABI) and Ahlul Bayt Indonesia (ABI).³

The Iranian Revolution in 1979 was primarily perceived in a rather positive light by many Sunni intellectuals and activists at the time, although a small number of Sunni Islamists and Suharto's authoritarian government raised concerns. The revolution cultivated greater interest in Shi'ism among many Muslims. First, the revolution inspired campus activists to learn Shi'ism not only as a religious orthodoxy, but also as a political ideology. Books written by Iranian ideologues and philosophers such as Ali Shariati and Morteza Motahhari were translated into Indonesian and have been widely read; they influenced many Muslim student activists. In the beginning of the 1980s, the differences between Sunnism and Shi'ism did not raise issues or controversy among campus activists and intellectuals. For instance, Amien Rais, who later became the chairman of Muhammadiyah (1995–2000), was also inspired by Ali Shariati. IJABI, founded by former Muhammadiyah-affiliated Jalaluddin Rahmat in 2000, represents Shi'a activists from university campuses in Indonesia.⁴ Although he did not openly claim to have converted to Shi'a during Suharto's authoritarian regime, Jalaluddin Rahmat was one of the leading youths and pluralist intellectuals in the 1980s. It is important to note that IJABI was formed in 2000, when Abdurrahman Wahid (commonly known as Gus Dur) was president. Gus Dur, who chaired the NU from 1984–99 and became the fourth president of Indonesia, was known as a defender of religious minorities and promoted liberal and progressive thought. He claimed that NU and Shi'a share the same culture even though there are theological differences (for example, see Wahid 1989: 27–28). Shi'a activists often quote Gus Dur's statement to assert the legitimacy of their presence in Indonesian society.

³Speaking of the number of Shi'as in contemporary Indonesia, there are several assumptions. Those who emphasise the threat of Shi'a tend to exaggerate the number. The State Intelligence Agency (Badan Intelijen Negara: BIN) considers the number to be between one and two million. The IJABI assumes the number to be between one and five million (interview with Miftah Rakhmat, 15 February 2016; for example, IPAC 2016: 2; Zulkifli 2009: 15). For a brief history of Shi'a in Indonesia, see Zulkifli (2009: 15–54).

⁴Another former Bandung student activist and respected intellectual, Haidar Bagir, was similarly attracted to Shi'ism in the 1980s. Haidar established the publication company Mizan in 1983. He has published tens of translations on Shi'ism, in addition to general books on Islam. Mizan has become one of the largest and most successful publishers in Indonesia. Haidar does not consider himself either Sunni or Shi'a, and emphasises that the dichotomy is historical creation (interview with Haidar Bagir on 3 November 2015). It should be noted that his father, Muhammad al-Baqir Al-Habsyi (b. 1930), was familiar with Shi'ism long before the Iranian Revolution and practised an eclectic version of Sunni and Shi'a jurisprudence (Zulkifli 2009: 41).

Second, the revolution triggered the conversion of hundreds of *sayyid* (Arabs who claim descent from the Prophet, who are commonly called *habib* in Indonesia) to Shi'a.⁵ Those *sayyid* who were influential in their communities contributed to a further increase in the number of Shi'a. Some of the *sayyid* were sent to Qom, Iran, and returned to Indonesia in the 2000s. Aside from maintaining a privileged position, *sayyid* tended to place more importance on Shi'a orthodoxy, namely, Ja'fari (Twelver) jurisprudence (*fiqh*), than campus activists (Assegaf 2015; Formichi 2014; IPAC 2016). Therefore, these *sayyid* of the younger generation who graduated from Qom were largely reluctant to join Jalaluddin's IJABI and formed the ABI in 2010 as a different way to engage in Shi'a teachings. Among the 270 graduates from Qom, only one became involved with IJABI's current leadership: Miftah Rakhmat, a son of Jalaluddin (interview with Miftah Rakhmat, 15 February 2016).

In the peacebuilding process, a personal network among influential religious figures is an important key to enhancing the network as a strength of Shi'a in Indonesia. Contrary to Ahmadis, another religious minority under increasing attack, most Shi'a leaders have built close relationships with national and regional Sunni leaders, which have become an important form of infrastructure to prevent intolerant attacks. Following Gus Dur, the current NU chairman (2010–present) Said Aqil Siradj and former Muhammadiyah chairman (1998–2005) Syafii Maarif are known for their commitment to religious pluralism. They hold central positions in pluralist networks in Indonesia. Even Din Syamsuddin, another former Muhammadiyah chairman (2005–15), often wavers between pluralists and Islamists, but when it comes to Shi'a, he is consistent in his pro-Shi'a position. For Shi'a, forming an alliance with him is vital because Din has been a key figure in the Indonesian Council of Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia: MUI) and can be a strong ally in countering intolerance from MUI. Furthermore, Shi'a is immune to attack from the notorious Islamic Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam: FPI) led by Rizieq Shihab, a *sayyid* who is known for attacks against religious minorities, especially Ahmadis, as ABI Chairman Hasan Alaydrus has kept his relationship with Rizieq intact since childhood.⁶ Keeping FPI away from the Shi'a issue has been crucial for their safety. As this article shows, however, the violence in Sampang, the most serious and destructive case since 1998, became a more significant driver to build and fortify networks as their social capital, since it encouraged the Shi'a groups, including ABI, to reach out to religious pluralists more than ever before.

The remainder of the article will briefly present the Sampang incidents and analyse how Shi'a have come to make ally with religious pluralists and adapted in the changing local context after 1998 in an effort to secure their living spaces and strengthen their safety networks in a time of heightened intolerance.

The Sampang Incidents

Madura is an island off the eastern part of Java and is administratively located in the East Java province. The Sampang Regency is one of four regencies in Madura. It is the poorest and has the lowest human development index in the province (BPS 2017). The social and political influence of the religious leaders (*kiai*) who usually lead Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) is prominent on the island. Most of these *kiai* and their followers identify as members of the NU. With the Sunni authority and its overwhelming majority, most of the small Shi'a enclaves have been careful to avoid any trouble or noticeable problems with their neighbours.

Shi'a hamlets in two villages, Desa Karang Gayam in the Omben District (Kecamatan) and Desa Blu'uran in the Karang Penang District of Sampang, lie next to each other and were in the embryonic

⁵The Arab community in Indonesia has been divided as *sayyid* and non-*sayyid* since the colonial era. The non-*sayyid* founded Al-Irsyad in 1914 and separated from *sayyid*-led Jama'at Khair (established in 1901). Al-Irsyad is a modernist organisation similar to Muhammadiyah, including criticism of devotion to *sayyid*. See Jonge (1993).

⁶Rizieq Shihab was invited to Iran around 2007 with Abdul Mu'ti and Imam Daruquthni (Muhammadiyah), Iqbal Sullam (NU), Joserizal Jurnal (founder of Islamic medical NGO Mer-C), and several *sayyid*, including Hasan (interview with Hasan Alaydrus, 2 March 2016).

stage soon after the Iranian Revolution. Ma'mun, a locally respected *kiai*, was attracted by the revolution and started to learn Shi'ism on his own in the early 1980s. He sent his children, including the current leader, Ali Murtadha, commonly known as Tajul Muluk (b. 1973), to a Shi'a school (Yayasan Pesantren Islam: YAPI) in Bangil, Pasuruan Regency, in 1983. Tajul's uncle, Kiai Ali Karrar Shinhaji, protested his nephew's Shi'a education and then persuaded Ma'mun to send Tajul to the *sayyid* Muhammad Al-Maliki School in Saudi Arabia in 1993. However, Tajul dropped out of the school and worked in Saudi Arabia until he returned to Karang Gayam village in 1999.

Tajul's return resulted in a significant change to the community in terms of traditional authorities. After he returned to the village, the number of Shi'a followers grew rapidly, to an extent that the local Sunni *kiai* could not ignore. Tajul and his brothers built a religious school called Misbahul Huda in early 2004. Unlike his father, Tajul openly claimed his inclination towards Shi'a and propagated its teachings (KontraS Surabaya 2012: 3). Aside from teaching Shi'ism, Tajul started to criticise the existing religious leaders for taking money from the poor for blessings during Maulid, the Prophet's birthday celebration. Tajul's teachings threatened and offended the religious authorities in the surrounding area.

The anti-Shi'a offense began shortly after Tajul's respected father, Ma'mun, died in June 2004, when Tajul's uncle, Ali Karrar, started to attack him. Ali Karrar lives in the nearby Pamekasan Regency, but he also has many followers in Sampang, where some of his former disciples also run schools. Ali Karrar, who is a particularly provocative *kiai*, often instigates issues to mobilise people. He became the chairman of BASSRA (Badan Silaturahmi Ulama Pesantren Madura, Association of Pesantren-Based Ulama in Madura, founded in 1991) around 2009, when it reformed its organisational structure to strengthen ties with grassroots society (for example, Pribadi 2013: 72–74). He worked on religious and political authorities in the local government and mobilised them to attack Shi'a communities. The anti-Shi'a *kiai*, led by Ali Karrar, started relentless smear campaigns that Tajul preached deviant teachings and blasphemed against Sunni traditions, such as that Shi'a promotes free sex in the name of *nikah mut'ah* (temporal marriage contract), that Shi'a insults wives and friends of the Prophet Muhammad, and that Tajul used the false Quran (Ahnaf *et al.* 2015: 23; IPAC 2016: 15–16).

In April 2007, when Tajul held Maulid and gathered followers in his mosque, a mob numbering a few thousand appeared with hatchets and clubs and intimidated those within the mosque (KontraS Surabaya 2012: 4–5). Ali Karrar along with other *kiai* intensified pressure in the name of BASSRA. They persistently demanded that Tajul stop teaching Shi'ism or leave Sampang, not only through religious authority, but also through bureaucratic pressure by powerful *kiai*. Friction caused by different ideas about teachings between Tajul and Rois Al Hukama, Tajul's younger brother and a leader of the village thugs, also intensified the conflict (Afdillah 2016: 54). It is also said that a marriage between a 16-year-old female student and her neighbour mediated by Tajul deeply upset Rois because Rois had intended to marry her. He was infuriated by Tajul and joined the Sunni side. Rois started to actively spread hate speech against Shi'a and Tajul. Rois also mobilised the anti-Shi'a masses in accordance with BASSRA in February 2011, and demanded that Tajul leave Sampang (KontraS Surabaya 2012). Thus, a conflict that erupted primarily within a local elite family developed into sectarian attacks involving mass violence coupled with the denouncement of the religious minority.

Violence and Criminalisation

Severe violence took place at the end of 2011 for the first time. On 20 December, a mob numbering around 500 burned down houses of Shi'a followers and Tajul, as well as their religious schools. Nearly 600 people needed to evacuate to the Sampang Sports Stadium (Gedung Olahraga: GOR). As a way to legitimise the violence against Tajul and his followers, Ali Karrar demanded that the regional MUI issue a legal opinion (*fatwa*). Shortly afterwards, on 1 January 2012, the regional MUI stated that Tajul's teachings were deviant and that he had committed blasphemy against Islam (MUI Sampang 2012). The NU branch in Madura issued a similar statement the following day. Rois then reported Tajul to the police on 3 January. Prosecutors immediately decided to charge Tajul for religious blasphemy on 4 January. Moreover, Bakorpakem (Badan Koordinasi Pengawas Aliran Kepercayaan Masyarakat, Coordinating Board for Monitoring Mystical Beliefs in Society) in Sampang decided on 11 January

that Shi'ism was deviant (KontraS Surabaya 2012: 14).⁷ Responding to pressure from BASSRA and the district MUI, the East Java provincial MUI issued a *fatwa* that found Shi'ism to be deviant on 21 January 2012.⁸ A parallel motion from the state apparatus emerged due to the *kiai's* strong pressure on the regional head, Noer Tjahaja, who was desperately seeking the *kiai's* support for the upcoming election, which was expected to be a very tight race (Ahnaf *et al.* 2015: 24–26; IPAC 2016: 17–18; Tempo.co 2013a). Noer Tjahaja also condemned Tajul's teachings, labelling Shi'a as deviant, and declared that Tajul and his followers should be expelled from Sampang during his campaign. Along with Sampang's regional government, the provincial government was mobilised for the purpose of persecution. East Java Governor Soekarwo and Vice Governor Saifullah Yusuf owed a debt of gratitude to the *kiai* in Sampang, who mobilised support in the 2008 gubernatorial election (Ahnaf *et al.* 2015: 29).⁹ The gubernatorial election of East Java was also to be held the following year. The momentum of the approaching local elections worked in Ali Karrar and the Sunni group's favour.

The central government also virtually endorsed the violence rather than stopping it. The minister of religious affairs, Suryadharma Ali, said that "Shi'a is not Islam" and even repeatedly condemned Shi'a, referring to the MUI's 1984 *fatwa*, which emphasised the differences between Sunni and Shi'a. He made an arbitrary interpretation of the *fatwa*, which did not in fact state that Shi'a is not Islam or deviant (Beritasatu.com 2012). Suryadharma Ali, as president of an Islamic party, the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan: PPP), needed to retain voters' support in Madura, mostly ensured by the *kiai*, as one of the party's largest bases (Ahnaf *et al.* 2015: 18). Although President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono ostensibly criticised the police at the outset of the violence and summoned a meeting to establish stern measures to prevent further violence, he did not stop Suryadharma Ali from emboldening the attackers (Bush 2013: 244; Fealy 2013: 115).

Winning disproportionate support from political elites from both the regional and central government, some Sunni *kiai* succeeded in legitimising the violent attacks against Tajul and his followers. Tajul was finally arrested in March 2012 for blasphemy. The Sampang Regional Court sentenced Tajul to two years in prison in July of the same year. The situation for Shi'a worsened during the same month, as East Java Provincial Governor Soekarwo issued a regulation on religious activities and cult monitoring (Peraturan Gubernur Jawa Timur No. 55 Tahun 2012), which further endorsed discrimination and offenses against Shi'a. Again, on 26 August, a mob of 1,500 people attacked two Shi'a communities. One of Tajul's followers was slashed to death, several people were seriously injured, and almost 50 houses were destroyed. A few hundred people needed to evacuate to GOR again. In July 2013, after spending 10 months in GOR, 354 people were relocated to the Puspa Agro blocks in the Sidoarjo Regency, more than 100 km from their home, without any prior consultation or notification. Most of them are still living as refugees as of April 2019.¹⁰

⁷Bakorpakem (officially referred to as "Tim Pakem" in the related statutes) was originally set up under the Ministry of Religion in 1953 to collect information regarding traditional mystical beliefs and sects and to monitor them. In 1961, it was transferred under the Public Prosecutors Office by Law No. 15/1961 Article 2 (3), about the principal of the Public Prosecution. Then, the Decision of the Chief Public Prosecutor (Surat Keputusan Jaksa Agung) No.004/JA/01/1994 ordered the establishment of the current form of Bakorpakem. Tim Pakem in the central government is composed of a Chief Prosecutor as the head, deputy Chief Prosecutor of intelligence (Jaksa Agung Muda Intelijen), and representatives from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Education; the Ministry of Religion; the Ministry of Education and Culture; the military; police; and BIN; the Forum of Religious Harmony (Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama). For membership of the provincial and regional Pakem, see Regulation of Chief Prosecutors Office (Peraturan Jaksa Agung) No. 019/A/JA/09/2015, Articles 4 and 5.

⁸Tajul was sentenced to two years in prison by the Sampang Regional Court on 12 July 2012. The Sampang Regional Court deducted two years from the prosecutor's demand of four years. Tajul appealed to the higher court of East Java, which raised the sentence to four years on 10 September 2012. The Supreme Court rejected Tajul's request and upheld the four-year sentence in January 2013. All the courts referred to the *fatwa* statement and decision issued by the MUI, NU, and Bakorpakem branches in Sampang in January 2012 as evidence for the intent to violate criminal code 156 (Supreme Court decision, No. 1787 K/Pid/2012). Tajul Muluk's blasphemy charge was based on criminal code 156a. This article has been a tool for attacking religious minorities, particularly those who adhere to interpretations of Islam that deviate from the mainstream form of Islam in Indonesia (Amnesty International 2014: 6–7; Crouch 2014; Lindsey 2012: 401–444).

⁹In 2008, they took office due to a landslide victory in Madura. Three out of four Madura regions, including Sampang, were the only regions to carry out a revote following the Constitutional Court's order.

¹⁰There were 369 people living in the Puspa Agro as of December 2016. The number of families increased from 74 to 82, as 8 families who went to Malaysia for work returned (interview with Tajul Muluk, 19 December 2016).

Responses of Shi'a Groups and Civil Society Organisations

As Tajul and his followers were evacuated to GOR and then transferred to Sidoarjo, several Shi'a groups began to initiate intense communication with religious pluralist NGOs, Sunni intellectuals, and politicians. ABI and NGOs tried to negotiate with the regional governments in Sampang, the East Java province, and local religious authorities and appealing to the national media. They also pursued legal recourse; they sought defence against Tajul Muluk's blasphemy charge and lobbied various elites to promote reconciliation and to return the Shi'a home. In the process, NU-affiliated activists, especially those from the Asian Muslim Action Network (AMAN) and Lakpesdam, started to involve themselves in the issue beginning with Yudhoyono's administration. They adopted a different approach to seek a feasible solution so that they could also involve the actors who were hostile towards Shi'a. In addition, Jokowi's administration which opened much more access to those activists than previous one has gradually paved the way to promoting reconciliation. This section analyses the way in which Shi'a groups have built broader relationships with other NGO activists since the Sampang incidents and their efforts to address the issues. It also discusses how the interaction with religious pluralist activists gradually fostered changes among the Shi'a.

Communication, Negotiation, and Lobbying

In the initial process, due to the ad-hoc nature of the coordination and the various ways of approaching the conflict, the Shi'a groups and NGOs encountered many issues such as miscommunication and distrust among themselves that eventually caused some groups to leave. The internal conflict they initially faced, however, prompted Shi'a groups to engage in further discussions to seek a better way of maintaining cooperation, thereby building multi-level networks.

IJABI, as the sole national Shi'a organisation at the time, was among the first to be involved in negotiations. IJABI organised a special team for Sampang as early as 2006 and tried to initiate dialogue with social and religious leaders in Sampang. To connect with fellow Shi'a outside Sampang, IJABI officially installed Tajul Muluk as its head for the Sampang District in 2007. This attempt, however, only resulted in stimulating anger and anxiety among the *kiai*. The Sunni *kiai* started to severely condemn Tajul for disturbing the Sunni majority from time to time and forced him to sign documents in which he "confessed" his wrongdoing and agreed to stop spreading Shi'ism. However, Tajul never stopped teaching and even refuted other *kiai*. IJABI then decided to be an arbitrator and sought a compromised but peaceful resolution rather than only supporting Tajul. IJABI talked to the provincial government and convinced Tajul to leave Sampang with financial support from the provincial government to avoid further confrontation. Tajul was disappointed with IJABI's pragmatic proposal and eventually left IJABI in 2010 (interview with Jalaluddin Rahmat, 25 February 2016; interview with Miftah Rakhmat, 15 February 2016; interview with Tajul Muluk, 19 December 2016). Although IJABI made an effort to salvage Tajul and his followers from the initial period of the conflict, their methods of seeking a solution were clearly not coordinated with other stakeholders, and there was no platform to solve the miscommunication.

Tajul then began to seek support from ABI, the other Shi'a organisation newly established in 2010. ABI had come out in front since the outbreak of violence at the end of 2011. ABI started to appeal to the national media and public to take legal action involving other NGOs and intellectuals. Shortly after the first attack at the end of 2011, 48 organisations, including ABI, IJABI, and human rights NGOs, released joint communiques for national media and organised fact-finding teams. Hertasing Ichlas from YLBHU (Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Universalia, Universal Legal Aid Foundation), which was close to the ABI's leadership and members, acted as an initial coordinator for the NGOs (interviews with Hertasing Ichlas, 16 February 2016, 7 August 2017). Muadz, represented ABI's Surabaya branch, became an important facilitator in the communication between the NGOs and Shi'a refugees. Alongside ABI's Secretary General Ahmad Hidayat, who also headed the ABI's Sampang Crisis Centre, all three of the most active Shi'a activists on the Sampang issue were from Makassar, South Sulawesi, where many former student activists came to engage in Shi'a organisations.

As Tajul Muluk faced his blasphemy trial, legal aid institutions (lembaga bantuan hukum: LBH) and some academics were actively involved, along with ABI.¹¹ The lawyers from LBHs have been engaging in religious minorities' issues since around 2005, when they participated in cases involving the blasphemy law and related laws (interview with Asfinawati, 31 August 2017; interview with Faiq Assiddiqi, 22 August 2017). They also invited progressive and pluralist scholars as expert witnesses, such as Zaenal Abidin Bagir from Gadjadara University in Yogyakarta, Zainun Kamal from the State Islamic University (UIN) Jakarta, and Umar Shahab from ABI.¹² Moreover, Gadjadara University-graduated legal experts examined the court ruling in detail and protested injustice in the legal process and interpretation (Alim *et al.* 2012; Merdeka.com 2012; interview with Zaenal Abidin Bagir, 28 August 2017). Furthermore, ABI appealed to the Constitutional Court for a judicial review of the Criminal Code in 2013. The plaintiffs were Tajul Muluk, Hassan Alaydrus, Ahmad Hidayat, Umar Shahab, and Sebastian Joe, who was also charged with religious blasphemy because of a Facebook post (Decision of the Constitutional Court No. 84/PUU-X/2012, 19 September 2013); three of them were ABI leaders. ABI insisted that religious freedom in Indonesia should be secured for everyone, including religious minorities, through the efforts of judicial review. Even though these claims were not accepted in the rulings, the court acknowledged problems in the Criminal Code and suggested the need for revision (Bagir 2013).

ABI and NGOs were involved in negotiations with local governments of the East Java province and Sampang Regency. They won a relatively better deal due to their intensive lobbying and advocacy. NU activists such as Alisa Wahid, the head of Gusdurian,¹³ and Imaduddin Rahmat, a member of the National Commission on Human Rights (Komnasham) at the time, used NU connections and became involved in negotiations with Vice Governor Saifullah Yusuf; Saifullah was an NU activist of the same generation (interview with Imaduddin Rahmat, 1 October 2015). The East Java provincial government provided 709,000 rupiah (about US\$70) each month to all refugees, including children. That was a good amount of financial support for them because the monthly income in their village in Sampang was around 300,000 rupiah, but village life was much less dependent on a cash economy (interview with Hanifah Haris, 11 August 2017). However, the local governments were reluctant to settle this issue, especially on returning refugees home, because they were afraid of the opposition from religious leaders. While they kept trying to build better bridges with local authorities, influential figures, and villagers so that the hostility towards Shi'a would cease when they returned, ABI and NGOs also started to approach the central government and members of the national parliament.

The supporters of the Shi'a refugees tried to influence the central government by appealing to national media, aiming at pressuring the president by drawing public attention. The Shi'a refugees made a long journey by riding bicycles for 16 days to reach Jakarta from Surabaya, which is more than 700 km away. They managed to meet President Yudhoyono in July 2013. Furthermore, Azumardi Azra, president of AMAN and advisor to the Vice President, Jusuf Kalla, intermediated a meeting with the vice president (interviews with Juir, KontraS Surabaya, 18 December 2016, 18 August 2017). In October 2013, a Shi'a refugee representative from Madura came to Jakarta to meet Jusuf Kalla and several other high officials and politicians (ABI 2013b; Kompas 2013b; Tempo.co. 2013b). Eva Sundari, a former human rights activist from Surabaya, now a Member of Parliament from PDIP, had daily communications with NGOs and religious minority groups, including Shi'a organisations. She arranged a meeting with Sidarto Danusbroto, chair of MPR (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat, People's Consultative Assembly), also from PDIP, and Albert Hasibuan, a senior lawyer and member of Wantimpres (Dewan Pertimbangan Presiden, the Presidential Advisory Council) (interview with Eva Sundari, 15 August 2017). Though not every meeting was successful, ABI and the NGOs' wide range of networks created a number of chances to engage in dialogue, which resulted in government responses.

¹¹Tajul's defence counsel was headed by Othman Ralibi, a Shi'a lawyer adviser to ABI. Additional lawyers included Asfinawati (YLBH) and Faiq Assiddiqi (LBH Surabaya) from LBHs in East Java.

¹²Zainun Kamal and his institution, UIN Jakarta, formally headed by Azumardi Azra, also president of AMAN, is known for his progressive juridical interpretations and commitment to religious pluralism. Umar Shahab is a Qom graduate who currently heads the religious council of ABI.

¹³Alisa Wahid is the daughter of Gus Dur and Gusdurian is an advocacy NGO and network aimed at realising the pluralist ideal of the late Gus Dur.

ABI and NGOs were also aware of the importance of building communication with local *sayyid* and *kiai* who could talk to other local authorities and Sunni residents. Musa Kazim Al Habsyi, as one of the ABI leaders, utilised his personal network to reach *sayyid* and *kiai* in Madura (interview with Musa Kazim Al-Habsyi, 23 January 2016).¹⁴ They also approached a local strong man (*blater*) in jail who had mobilised the mob when the first attack against Shi'a took place. He was offended by those who asked him to mobilise his men to attack Shi'a because not only did they not reward him, but he was also jailed for the incidents. Therefore, this *blater* was cooperative in reconciliation.¹⁵ The ABI and NGOs sent a few Shi'a followers to their villages to gauge reactions from Sunni villagers and local authorities. They also invited Sunni from Sampang to Sidoarjo. Through the facilitation of multiple exchanges with both parties, Shi'a refugees and 73 Sunni agreed on the "People's Peace Treaty" (Piagam Perdamaian Rakyat) in Puspa Agro on 23 September 2013 (ABI 2013a; Beritasatu 2013; interview with Abdullah Alhinduan, 24 August 2017).

ABI and NGOs boosted support for Tajul and his followers, but this also impeded coordination and caused friction among supporters with different ideas and wills. As a result, the internal frictions significantly discouraged many activists from sustaining their commitment to the Shi'a refugees on a daily basis. To address the internal conflicts and to restore cohesion among the activists, they held meetings including some academics, but it proved to be very difficult to settle the issues where leadership and a solid scheme were not established (at CRCS on 29 June 2013 and at Airlangga University on 6–7 September 2016).¹⁶ Although many activists decided not to be involved due to a number of difficulties in the coordination, several groups have remained in the Shi'a reconciliation by accommodating the local context to develop their communication with many actors in East Java as well as the central government.

From Improving Refugee Conditions to Capacity Building

Three NGOs and Shi'a groups have remained involved in the capacity building of Shi'a refugees and the peacebuilding process: the Surabaya branch of KontraS (Komisi untuk Orang Hilang dan Korban Tindak Kekerasan, Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence), AMAN, and YEU (Yakkum Emergency Unit). Tajul Muluk, his elder brother Ikil, or other Shi'a representatives always accompanied activists from these groups when they met with regional government representatives.

Along with ABI, the Surabaya branch of KontraS, which is one of the most well-known human rights NGOs in Indonesia, has closely monitored and supported Shi'a refugees. AMAN is an international Muslim organisation based in Bangkok (with Indonesian headquarters in Jakarta; Azumardi Azra, former principal of the State Islamic University [UIN] Jakarta, is the president of AMAN Indonesia). AMAN has been involved in legal and political solutions, as well as capacity building among the refugees. YEU has mostly taken care of health issues in the refugees' daily lives. YEU is part of Yakkum (Yayasan Kristen untuk Kesehatan Umum, Christian Foundation for Public Health), a Central Java-based Christian charity.

Those Shi'a expelled from their villages spent nearly ten months in GOR in the Sampang Regency and more than five years in the Puspa Agro blocks in Sidoarjo. AMAN and YEU have periodically sent teams to support the refugees' psychological and sociological conditions. With AMAN and YEU's efforts, living conditions were much improved after the refugees moved to Sidoarjo. YEU conducted programs aimed at improving health conditions, especially for children, in the Puspa Agro blocks.¹⁷ AMAN and YEU

¹⁴See the joint statement in the name of Madurese *sayyid* (*habaib*) (Syiah Ahlul Bait 2014). Musa is the son of Husein Al-Habsyi, who was a respected *sayyid/kiai* and the founder of the Shi'a school YAPI in 1976.

¹⁵This man was offended because he was not only unpaid, but was also jailed, and some of his henchmen were injured. He, therefore, volunteered to serve as a witness for Tajul's blasphemy trial, which was not realised due to the difficulties of witness protection (interview with Hertasing Ichlas, 7 August 2017; interview with Asfinawati, 31 August 2017).

¹⁶The Centre for Religious and Cross-Cultural Studies (CRCS), Gadjadara University (UGM), is one of the leading academic institutions advocating for religious pluralism in Indonesia. It has been headed by Zainal Abidin Bagir, who is the younger brother of the aforementioned Haidar Bagir. Hertasing Iklas (YLBHU) earned his master's degree at CRCS.

¹⁷In addition to the three NGOs, Surabaya-based CMARs (Center for Marginalized Communities Studies) and the Catholic student organisation PMKRI (Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Katolik Republik Indonesia) provided volunteers to teach children

committed to enhancing refugee women's roles, along with the general improvement of living conditions. For instance, among the refugees, there are only a few men who could speak the Indonesian national language. Since most of the women were only able to speak Maduranese and were illiterate, it was challenging for them to adapt to their new lives in Sidoarjo, where the majority speak Indonesian and Javanese. Therefore, AMAN and YEU helped teach the women to read and write in Indonesian. AMAN also sent some of the activists to Kendeng, Central Java, where female farmers have actively engaged in protests against the government over the issue of building a cement factory, so that they could learn how to express themselves in public and how to organise orderly protests. These efforts have gradually encouraged them to become more independent, not only in their families, but also in the refugee community (interview with Hanifah Haris, 11 August 2017; interview with Ruby Khalifah, 9 August 2017). These NGOs' committed efforts have slowly yet certainly improved the living conditions of displaced Shi'a followers and enhanced their capacities.

In addition to these NGOs, activists who have network with NU's organizations significantly contributed to expanding the network of Shi'a groups. In particular, NU-affiliated activists from AMAN and the research institute of NU, Lakpesdam (Lembaga Kajian dan Pengembangan Sumberdaya Manusia, Institute for Research and Human Resource Development), have come to play a crucial role in coordinating government institutions to facilitate aid from the central government and peace talks between local elites and Shi'a and Sunni villagers. Those activists using a common language and gestures shared among the traditional members of NU have eventually managed to find a way to talk to provocateurs in order to advance reconciliation.

Government Responses

Yudhoyono's Unfulfilled Promises

As demonstrated earlier in this article, at the outbreak of violence in Sampang from 2011 to 2012, the central government did virtually nothing with regard to conflict settlement. President Yudhoyono ostensibly promoted "religious harmony" and "moderate" Islam internationally, but he did not stop Minister of Religious Affairs Suryadharma Ali from repeatedly condemning the Shi'a. The president's attitude towards religious intolerance faced severe criticism when he received the World Statesman Award from the New York-based Appeal of Conscience Foundation in May 2013, ironically, as an achievement in promoting religious tolerance. The dislocation of Shi'a refugees from Sampang to Sidoarjo was conducted two months after he received the controversial award. This section examines the changing outcomes of negotiation and lobbying by activists from Yudhoyono to Jokowi's presidencies.

Responding to the Shi'a representative's demands, President Yudhoyono promised to return the Shi'a refugees home to Sampang (BBC Indonesia 2013). Shortly after Yudhoyono met them, he appointed Abd A'la, the rector of the State Islamic University (UIN) Surabaya, as the head of the Reconciliation Team (Tim Rekonsiliasi Sampang) on 15 July 2013 (Kompas 2013a). By the end of the month, the Public Housing Minister and PPP politician Djan Faridz announced that he would provide special funds worth 1 trillion rupiah (about US\$100 million) as financial aid to rebuild Shi'a's homes and to renovate Sunni's homes in two villages in Madura (The Jakarta Post 2013). ABI then worked on a senior PPP politician/*kiai* Nur Iskandar SQ for assistance to push the initiative forward. Although Nur Iskandar SQ was affiliated with PPP, whose president was inclined to be anti-Shi'a, he maintained good relationships with ABI leaders. As a result, Djan Faridz visited Sampang five times in two months in early 2014 to implement the project. He then issued a memorandum to build houses in Sampang to accommodate refugees

(interview with CMARs volunteers and personal observation in the Puspa Agro blocks, Sidoarjo, 2016). CMARs was founded in 2004 by NU-affiliated academics and activists. It shares the same office as Gusdurian in Surabaya, and some members belong to both organisations. For older, capable children, ABI offered scholarships to Shi'a schools, including an IJABI-run school in Bandung; six of these children managed to enter universities. One of them went to law school and became a correspondent for YLBHU (interview with Kholis, 21 August 2017).

in March 2014. BASSRA, MUI, and NU in Madura agreed with the project but on the condition that Shi'a would be trained for "returning to Sunni".¹⁸

However, the Reconciliation Team and the housing projects were poorly executed. Yudhoyono did not issue any official decree or order for the Reconciliation Team. It was clear that the president did not have any intention to support the reconciliation and he even told A'la that he would be better off concentrating on campus matters and gave no orders (anonymous interview in Surabaya, 22 August 2017). The team had to decline handling the fund because they were concerned that such a large amount of money without an official letter would only attract scavengers. In fact, the fund's execution process, handled by the Sampang regional government for housing with poor management, soon revealed corruption and did not develop any further (Antara Jatim 2014; interview with Lakpesdam Sampang members, 24 August 2017). ABI and the NGOs' efforts managed to work on some government figures, but the government's central leadership lacked the will to participate in the peacebuilding process.

Gradual Change since Jokowi's Government

The formation of Jokowi's government in October 2014 brought new hope for Shi'a, as many pluralist NGO activists and volunteers supported Jokowi's presidential campaign. Jokowi ran for office supported by the nationalist PDIP. IJABI's Jalaluddin Rahmat also ran for Parliament from PDIP in the 2014 election. According to him, the Sampang incident motivated him to run for office (interview with Jalaluddin Rahmat, 25 February 2016; for example, Rahmat 2014). The newly appointed minister of religious affairs, Lukman Hakim Saifuddin, is also from PPP. As Lukman was a member of NU's research institute Lakpesdam for a decade before he became a politician in 1999, he was part of NU's activist network. Regarding the issue of Shi'a, he does not express a discriminative view like his predecessor, Suryadharma Ali. He even allowed ABI to hold its national congress at the facility of the ministry in November, and also visited the evacuation site of Shi'a refugees in December. The new government, supported by many activists, opened access to religious minorities, including Shi'a.

With support from the Coordinating Ministry of Human Development and Culture (Kementerian Koordinator Bidang Pembangunan Manusia dan Kebudayaan) and the US government-sponsored Asia Foundation, Lakpesdam initiated a "Care Program" (Program Peduli) for post-conflict communities at the end of 2014. Sampang is one of thirteen areas that Lakpesdam selected where religious minorities face oppression from intolerant groups.¹⁹ The program aims to improve villagers' access to basic needs, such as clean water and electricity, and to provide training and support for agriculture, education, and enhanced cooperative activities involving the Sampang regional government. Activists and government officials who are now involved in the peacebuilding programs have come to share the idea that anyone engaging in the Sampang issue must refrain from emphasising Shi'a's human rights and from pushing the "reconciliation between Sunni-Shi'a" because it would only inflame religious tensions (interviews with Lakpesdam Jakarta members 2017, 2018; interviews with Lakpesdam Sampang members, 24 August 2017, 10 February 2018; interviews with Lakpesdam Jakarta members, 30 August 2017, 16 March 2018). NU-affiliated Lakpesdam has particularly advantageous access to local *kiai* because it belongs to NU. Through intense communication with *kiai* who lead regional branches of NU, Lakpesdam has been able to carry out its program with little difficulty.

KSP (Kantor Staf Presiden, Office for Presidential Staff) also started to get involved in the Sampang issue by facilitating institutional arrangements surrounding the Shi'a refugees, beginning in early 2017.²⁰ It is part of a national program aimed at empowering minorities and strengthening their legal rights with administrative support by issuing official documents such as identity cards (KTP) and marriage and land certificates in remote areas. Unlike the previous administration, KSP is decisive enough to directly approach the local governments, the ABI, and Tajul Muluk to ensure that the program is carried out

¹⁸Refugees were supposed to study in Nur Islandar SQ's school in Jakarta (Pondok Pesantren Asshiddiqiyah), and *kiai* in Madura were also involved in training (Internal document of Public Housing Ministry, number 60/M/RS.02.02/03/2014, 3 March 2014).

¹⁹For information on the Care Program, see <https://programpeduli.org/>.

²⁰Tenten Masduki, a former anti-corruption activist, and several other notable activists and academics have led KSP.

as planned. KSP's officer in charge of the program in Sampang is also an NU-affiliated former Lakpesdam and Gusdurian activist/academic. Like Lakpesdam activists, KSP has been careful in handling this issue so as not to provoke a dispute with local political and religious authorities. KSP closely coordinates with a member of Lakpesdam in Sampang, who is also a regional staff member of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. *Kiai* also need to respond to the government due to the fact that an officer from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Siti Nur Azizah, a daughter of Ma'ruf Amin, the chair of NU's highest religious authority, occasionally visits Sampang.

With the central government's direct involvement, acting Sampang regional head Fadhilah Budiono, who also commanded Shi'a to move out of Sampang in July 2013, visited Shi'a refugees in Sidoarjo for the first time in July 2017 during Eid al-Fitr, or the fast-breaking celebration, which was a significant step (ABI 2017). Furthermore, one of the positive prospects resulting from these efforts is that all the residents in two post-conflict villages, including those Shi'a in exile, will be able to obtain KTPs and marriage certificates by early 2018 (interviews with KSP staff, 28 August 2017, 22 March 2018; interviews with Lakpesdam Jakarta members, 30 August 2017, 16 March 2018; interviews with Lakpesdam Sampang members on 24 August 2017, 10 February 2018; interview with Ruby Khalifah, 9 August 2017).

Following these developments after the conflict in Sampang, a similar scheme has been introduced by several NGOs and institutions of the central government in other post-conflict areas involving religious minorities. For instance, although the local government has declined to issue KTPs for Ahmadiyah in Kuningan, West Java, since 2012, as a result of intensive lobbying from the Ombudsman and NU's local branch, Ahmadiyah members started to obtain KTPs at the end of 2017.²¹

The change of the central government has resulted in gradual progress, especially in empowering refugees by providing assistance for the institutionalisation of their rights. Progress was made because many pluralist activists shared the same ideas as activists engaging in the Shi'a issue who have gained influential positions in the government. Shi'a and pluralist activists quietly lobby and negotiate with political elites so that their efforts do not draw unnecessary attention from groups that are hostile against minorities. Though intolerance has increasingly overwhelmed social media and politics in Indonesia, pluralists from various institutions are making continuous efforts to strengthen their networks as a vital form of social capital for minorities to survive in Indonesia's young democracy.

Concluding Remarks

The experience of the Sampang incidents that prompted Shi'a groups to reach out to pluralist networks has gradually consolidated their safety net to protect and to make up for the losses suffered by Shi'a refugees. The newly built network empowered Shi'a refugees by providing formal and informal institutional infrastructures, such as capacity building, administrative assistance, and negotiation with *kiai*, in an effort to prevent further attacks. Pluralist networks also function as social capital for Shi'a. In addition, since the Sampang case occurred, Shi'a representatives started to build trust and forge allies with NU activists in other places in East Java, such as Malang and Bangil, which boast a dominant influence in East Java. NU's network is important particularly when they need to facilitate and establish communication with local politicians and religious elites, including hostile attackers, because they have historically been the well-embedded majority in East Java (interviews with Gusdurian activists in Malang and Pasuruan, 26 June 2018). The change of the central government after the 2014 election has also contributed to strengthening the protection of Shi'a refugees by providing assistance to facilitate infrastructure and institutional arrangement for their rights. This was made possible because many former pluralist activists entered the Jokowi administration and they have facilitated the activists on the ground to access state resources from the central government.

Shi'a refugees in Sidoarjo are now living in better conditions in terms of welfare and basic infrastructure than other religious minorities such as Ahmadiyah members in Mataram, West Nusa Tenggara

²¹An Ombudsman is an independent body whose members are appointed by the National Parliament. In the case of Kuningan, coordinated by the Ombudsman, NU and MUI's local branches approached the regent and convinced him to issue KTPs. Ahmad Suaedy, a member of the Ombudsman, is also an experienced NU's human rights activist (interview with Ahmad Suaedy, 5 December 2017).

province, who have similarly been forced to live in ‘temporal housing’ since 2006. After years of stagnation, Lakpesdam NU is now the only organisation that supports Ahmadiyah, which is also a minority in West Nusa Tenggara. It is difficult for Lakpesdam NU to provide similar support to what they provide to the Shi’a in East Java (interview with Ahmadiyah refugees, 17 August 2012; interviews with Lakpesdam Mataram, 17 August 2012, 3 February 2018). The members of Gerakan Fajar Nusantara (Gafatar) who were attacked and expelled in West Kalimantan in 2015, were sent back to their hometown without any protection or financial support and are still vulnerable to intolerant attacks (see BBC Indonesia 2018).

Although social capital with pluralists does enhance the protection and recovery of Shi’a’s rights, achieving the final goal of returning the Shi’a refugees home still requires significant efforts. There is resistance against Shi’a among the local Sunni majority. It is also difficult for every religious minority to forge such networks. Thus, what the Shi’a have built after Sampang incidents is still an ad-hoc and fragile infrastructure that has largely been shaped by personal connections; thus far, there is no comprehensive and universal safety net available for minorities in this young democracy.

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