



Post-Prohibition *Da'wah* of Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia and Islamic Defenders Front

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ABSTRACT

In 2017 the Indonesian government has officially banned two Islamic da'wah movements, HTI (Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia) and FPI (Islamic Defenders Front). These two da'wah movements are considered to be contrary to Pancasila ideology because they want to establish an Islamic state (Khalifah) in Indonesia. The focus of this research was carried out in the branch areas of HTI and FPI, namely in West Java and Banten. The data in this paper come from direct observation, in-depth interviews and documentation review. This paper finds differences in the pattern of the dakwah movements of HTI and FPI after they were disbanded, both in the dissemination of ideas and in the pattern of recruitment. HTI implemented a massive migration in preaching the idea of a khalifah from direct (offline) efforts to indirect (online) efforts. In its recruitment, HTI continues to maintain its conventional efforts through face-to-face preaching (Daurah), with the addition of using wing organizations as its spearhead. Meanwhile, the decline in the da'wah movement occurred in FPI, mainly due to the absence of the Grand Imam Rizieq Shihab and the loss of elite support for them. Even so, FPI continues to maintain its da'wah activities by disseminating its ideas through recitations at its activist headquarters, mosques and Islamic boarding schools. This research can contribute to the enrichment of the analysis of the hidden da'wah movement that occurs in the field, especially with the front stage and back stage approaches of Erving Goffman.

Keywords: *Islamic movement; campus preaching; propaganda media; HTI; FPI.*

INTRODUCTION

The work of two Islamist movements that are passionate about fighting for the return of an Islamic state (*Khalifah*) must end after the government issued Law Number 2 of 2017 concerning Community Organizations. The two Islamist movements in question are HTI and FPI. HTI is a movement that wants to fight for the *Khalifah* globally, not only in Indonesia but throughout the world. Therefore, this movement is transnational, present

in various countries worldwide. Meanwhile, FPI is a local Islamist movement that wants to establish a Khilafah, but only in Indonesia. FPI is an Islamist movement that only exists in Indonesia and does not exist in other countries, unlike the HTI movement that crosses national borders. Law Number 16 of 2017 marks the end of their work. HTI was first disbanded in 2017 when the law was still in the form of Perppu No 2 of 2017. At that time, the Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs, Wiranto announced the dissolution of HTI for reasons that conflicted with Pancasila and the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, namely that they aspired to form a state above the state, the Islamic Caliphate (Syah & Setia, 2021). After HTI, the government dissolved FPI in 2020 through a Joint Decree (SKB) of the Minister of Home Affairs, Minister of Law and Human Rights, Minister of Communication and Information, Attorney General, Head of the State Intelligence Agency, Head of the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) using Law number 16 of 2017 as the basis (Wiryono, 2021). The government's reason for dissolving FPI was based on Law No. 16 of 2017, one of which is that the FPI movement uses an ideology other than Pancasila and wants to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia.

However, even though the government has disbanded HTI and FPI, their movements are still visible in society. For example FPI, after the government disbanded them, former FPI activists declared a new movement under the Islamic Unity Front (FPI), commonly called FPI Reborn. This movement was formed with the same goal as the previous FPI: spreading amar makruf nahi munkar in Indonesia by making Islamic law the foundation of citizenship (Wiryono, 2021). While HTI, their movement is powerful, especially its activities on social media. Recently, former HTI activists released a film entitled, *Traces of the Khilafah in the Archipelago (JKDN)* (Mahamid, 2022). This film contains narratives about the relationship between the Islamic caliphate in the glorious era of Umayyad, Abbasid and Ottoman Muslims and their versions of the kingdoms in Indonesia. Apart from film, the HTI movement also extends to the online magazine *Media Umat*, the *Kaffah* online bulletin, and Islamic study events via YouTube (Setia & Rahman, 2021).

The struggles of HTI and FPI after they were disbanded show several essential points. First, HTI and FPI are movements based on the ideology of the Khilafah, which is rooted in each of its members born because of the opportunity structure in society. The administrative dissolution of the

movement will not be able to dissolve the ideology rooted in the heads of each of its members. Hilmy's research (2020) on HTI explains that nothing will destroy the caliphate doctrine in HTI. This is because the structure of opportunities creates the existence of any ideology. If social problems such as poverty, injustice, social dislocation, and political oppression continue, the caliphate doctrine can reappear as a response to existing conditions. The same thing happened to FPI, where the collectivity of the movement, which had lived for 22 years, caused the movement to take root, so the disbanding process did not eliminate the ideology of its members. FPI was founded *Reborn* is a sign that FPI's ideology cannot be erased and can be internalized in a new form of organization. Comments from Ihsan Yilmaz and Greg Barton (Yilmaz & Barton, 2021b), assert that while banning the FPI is a significant step against Islamic populism, it does not necessarily weaken it in the long run. The dynamics of national politics which always promote Islamic populism as a strategy, are also getting further away from weakening the FPI movement.

Second, disbanding HTI and FPI, which is still considered odd, has caused these two movements to feel the need to fight. The government disbanded HTI and FPI without going through the proper legal channels, namely through prior administrative sanctions and the courts. Because of this, several scholars who focus on this topic have conducted many studies on disbanding HTI and FPI and the future of these two movements. Burhani (2017) takes a picture of the dissolution of HTI; although the laws used to dissolve HTI are supported by mainstream mass organizations, instead it reminds the era of society during the New Order era, which was very authoritarian because the process did not use courts and administrative sanctions before it was disbanded. As a result, it is not surprising that HTI is fighting the law and carrying out its movements in secret. In line with that, (Aswar et al., 2020), also photographed HTI's efforts to fight against the law through lawsuits to the Supreme Court after the government was disbanded. In the FPI case, legal resistance was also carried out in response to the dissolution of its organizational status (Abiyoso & Thohari, 2019).

However, these two essential points in observing the resurgence of HTI and FPI after they were disbanded have yet to comprehensively capture the patterns of HTI and FPI movements, especially in the design of spreading ideas and recruitment activities. Even though the two movements have a strong ideological basis and a long history, the movement can maintain its existence. In addition, the large membership

base also allows HTI and FPI to disseminate ideas and recruitment even though in a hidden way. This hidden activity becomes commonplace when an organization is not politically desirable. For example, Islamic movements during the Suharto era went underground because of government policies. Moreover, for HTI, this is not a problem because their main movement, Hizb ut-Tahrir, in the countries where they were born, such as Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt, has always been under pressure from the ruling government (Osman, 2010).

Previous work on this study is the work of [Burhanudin Muhtadi](#), *The Quest for Hizbut Tahrir in Indonesia* (Muhtadi, 2009). This study views HTI's grand narrative about the global Islamic caliphate and its rejection of the ideas of democracy and the nation-state, so it is based on political science. Furthermore, Asep and Zulkifili, in their work, *Islamic Fundamentalism, Nation-State and Global Citizenship: The Case of Hizb ut-Tahrir* (Iqbal & Zulkifli, 2016) explain that Hizb ut-Tahrir is a global (transnational) network organization which is part, participant, and interpreters of globalization. This study is more based on sociology. [Arifuddin Ismail](#) wrote *Thoughts and Student Religious Movements: Understanding the Spread of Islamic Radicalism on Campus* (Ismail, 2012). This education science-based study concludes that education outside the curriculum has given rise to radicalism on campus. Furthermore, [M. Zaki Mubarak's research](#) entitled *From Islamic Spirit Toward Radical Attitudes: Religious Thoughts and Behaviors of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta Students* (Mubarak, 2013), shows that there is a development of religious thoughts and behavior that tends to be radical among students caused by changes in on the socio-political dimension at the post-reform national level which in turn has implications for more accessible and open campus life. This study is more sociological. Finally, research by [Ahmad Muhammad Al Hammad](#) entitled *Radicalism among Surabaya students: a case study of the criteria for radicalism according to Yusuf al-Qardhawi* (Al Hammad, 2018). This research concludes that four radical student organizations were caused by the introduction of radicalism that glorified conservative Islamic culture and contributed to the emergence of groups that often accused other groups of being enemies and infidels and allowed to be fought. This study is more of Islamic thought. This paper offers another perspective on the efforts of the HTI and FPI movements after they became banned organizations, particularly on the dissemination of ideas and recruitment activities of the two movements. The discussion in

this paper is divided into three parts: the history of HTI and FPI in Indonesia; second, HTI's struggles after being banned, and HTI's struggle after being banned.

The research in this article uses qualitative methods (Mustari & Rahman, 2012). This qualitative method is based on obtaining natural data and information (Creswell & Poth, 2016). In data collection, the research in this paper was obtained through three techniques, first, observation; second, in-depth interviews; and third, documentation review.

Data collection through observation techniques was obtained by attending HTI and FPI activities. Among the activities attended were seminars held by HTI, lectures held by FPI, and major events held by HTI and FPI such as commemorating the collapse of the Khilafah at HTI and sermons at the FPI. Further data were obtained through in-depth interviews with HTI and FPI activists, such as mushrifs at HTI and ustaz at FPI. The final data source was obtained through documentation review techniques, including literature review on HTI and FPI books, mandatory books by An-Nabhani on HTI and Rizieq Shihab's works on HTI. In addition, a documentation review was carried out by conducting online observations of social media accounts on the internet owned by HTI, such as the Khilafah Channel Reborn Youtube channel, the Umat Media website and the Kaffah Bulletin, as well as an Instagram account managed by HTI activists.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

History of HTI and FPI

Hizbut Tahrir or HT (literally means the Liberation Party), is a Pan-Islamic political organization that seeks to reshape the Islamic caliphate by implementing sharia (Islamic law) under the leadership of the Islamic Caliphate, and bring Islamic da'wah to the world. The intended Islamic caliphate will unite Muslims (called the Ummah) (Commins, 1991). This transnational movement grows and develops in the Middle East and spreads to various parts of the world (Ahnaf, 2016; Osman, 2010). Hizb ut-Tahrir was founded in 1953 in Palestine by an Egyptian scholar named Taqiyyudin an-Nabhani, a scholar who graduated from Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt who had also been a judge in the Mandatory Palestine (Ayoob, 2008).

Hizbut Tahrir has spread to more than 50 countries, with an

estimated number of members of up to one million people. Its spread is known to Europe such as England, Asia, Central Asia, including Arab countries even though it is prohibited by their respective governments (Malik, 2004). Hizb ut-Tahrir has been banned in countries such as Russia, Germany, China, Egypt, Turkey, Pakistan, and all Arab countries except Lebanon, Yemen, and the United Arab Emirates (Brandon, 2006).

In Indonesia, it is known that the leader of HT Australia, Abdul Rahman al-Baghdadi in 1982 first brought Hizbut Tahrir. Abdul Rahman al-Baghdadi moved to Bogor at the invitation of KH Abdullah bin Nuh, the head of the Al-Ghazali Islamic Boarding School (Alles, 2016). Both of them then preached HT in the Bogor area. After that, this movement developed and spread on Indonesian campuses. Therefore, HTI members are synonymous with intellectuals, academics, and including youth or students (Arifan, 2014). However, in July 2017, the Indonesian government officially revoked the HTI organization permit through Perpu no. 2 of 2017 concerning Community Organizations and prohibited all forms of the organization's activities. The government banned HTI because it was considered contrary to Pancasila, and wanted to establish a Khilafah state in Indonesia (Setyawan, 2017).

Meanwhile, the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) is a local Islamic-based movement born and grown in Indonesia. FPI was born on August 17, 1998 based on the results of a religious leader meeting to commemorate the 53rd Indonesian Independence Day. The gathering occurred at the al-Umm Islamic Boarding School in Ciputat, South Tangerang, Banten. The event was attended by religious leaders affiliated with *haba'ib* (scholars from the descendants of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad), especially Muhammad Rizieq Shihab. The meeting discussed important issues faced by Muslims, namely the proliferation of immorality, killings of Muslims in places such as Tanjung Priok and Aceh, and the lack of Islamic mass organizations upholding *Islam. amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*. Since then, FPI has been established, whose initiator was Rizieq Shihab, with support from military and political figures at the time.

The FPI movement aims to implement sharia law in Indonesia. FPI has realized this goal by turning itself into a pressure group, which furthers its political motives by promoting religious or racial propaganda and occasional anti-government campaigns (Munajat, 2012). In addition, the movement held many mass religious and political protests, including a protest against the Governor of Jakarta in 2016, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama,

because of his involvement in a blasphemy case. FPI also frequently demonstrates in front of the Embassy, especially the US in Jakarta, for several protest purposes, such as condemning the Iraq War.

On December 30, 2020, the Indonesian government issued a joint ministerial decree and state institutions banning FPI through the implementation of Law Number 16 of 2017. The government explained that FPI was banned because it had threatened Indonesia's national ideology, carried out illegal raids and violence, including terrorism, and its organizational permits had been finished. As evidence, the government showed footage of Rizieq Shihab with FPI members' allegiance to the Islamic State (ISIS) and supporting the establishment of a caliphate.

The impact of banning the HTI and FPI movements is that they lose space in maintaining their existence and spreading their activism. When the government still recognized the two organizations, they were free to carry out movement efforts. However, after being banned, that opportunity became impossible. On the other hand, maintaining the movement's existence and spreading the movement's ideas cannot just stop, especially since the two movements have a strong ideological foundation, namely the similarity in the ideals of establishing a formal Islamic state. Therefore, to maintain their existence and spread their ideas, HTI and FPI adopted new strategies so that their activism efforts would not encounter more significant problems.

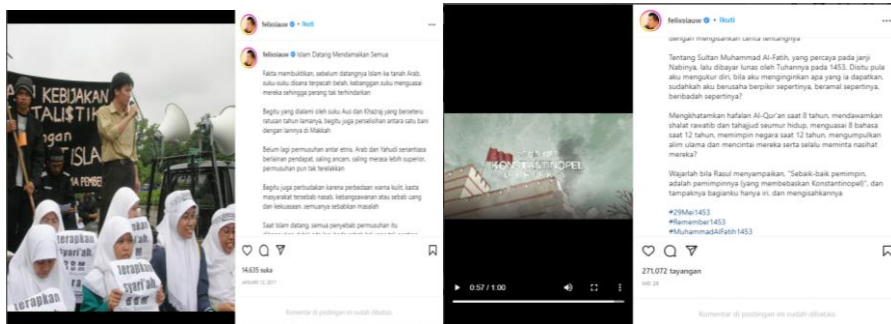
The Struggle of HTI After It Was Banned: Spreading the Idea of the Caliphate on Social Media

After being banned in 2017, the efforts of the HTI movement in disseminating the idea of a Khilafah have focused on social media. Efforts to disseminate ideas by HTI are carried out with four types of activities, all of which use social media. *First*, dissemination of the idea of the Caliphate through Instagram and Twitter. *Two*, spreading the idea of Khilafah through studies on YouTube. *Third*, making the film *Traces of the Khilafah in the Archipelago* (JKDN). *Fourth*, the transformation of the dissemination of magazines and bulletins to online media.

First, dissemination of the idea of the Caliphate through Instagram and Twitter. The effort most often encountered by the community is disseminating ideas through brief information on Instagram and Twitter. On Instagram, information about the ideas of the Khilafah were promoted by former members of HTI, without bringing up the name of HTI. The

reason is that netizens cannot easily identify the Khilafah campaign.

Figure 1. The spread of the idea of the Khilafah on social media Instagram before and after HTI was banned.



Source: Instagram @felixsiauw (2017 & 2022).

In Figure 1, it can be seen that there are differences in the narratives of spreading the idea of the Khilafah by HTI members before and after the government banned HTI. In the post on the left, the account @felixsiauw wrote content about Islam Comes to Peace for All, which is supported by pictures of the account owner's oration with several posters "Apply Sharia". From the narrative conveyed by the account owner, it can be seen that the Islam promoted by HTI, namely the Khilafah, will bring peace to all Muslims worldwide. The account owner posted this content on January 12 2017, before the government banned HTI. This is different from the post on the right. In the same account @felixsiauw wrote content about the events of the conquest of Constantinople by Muhammad Al-Fatih in 1453 AD. There are no Khilafah or Sharia narratives in the content, so netizens who are unaware of efforts to spread the idea of the Khilafah will assume that the content is not from spreading HTI Caliphate. However, the event raised as content, namely Constantinople by Muhammad Al-Fatih, was always presented by HTI as an experience that motivated their struggle to establish an Islamic Caliphate. [Ismail Yusanto's](#) statement reinforces that the commemoration of the conquest of Constantinople is part of the spirit of faith that can motivate Muslims to achieve victory by upholding Islamic Sharia (Yusanto, 2020; Aliyudin & Rustandi, 2023). This content was posted on May 28, 2022, after the government banned HTI.

Meanwhile, on Twitter, HTI's efforts in spreading the idea of the Khilafah can be seen from the mastery of several hashtags or *hashtag* (#),

which have been designed and is the talk of netizens on Twitter. A hashtag usually represents a particular campaign message that HTI has carefully planned. Usually, a campaign message contains HTI's views and alternative solutions regarding current phenomena or events at the national and international levels. One of the issues that became a trending topic on Twitter in 2019 was the case of violence that occurred Muslims in India (BBC, 2019), which HTI took advantage of by campaigning #WeNeedKhilafah. The hashtag contains HTI's campaign on the idea of a Khilafah (single Islamic leadership) as a solution to protect Muslims worldwide. Furthermore, the hashtag that became a trending topic and was also designed by HTI in 2019 is #Remember3rdMarch1924 which contains a campaign to 'recall' the events of the collapse of the Ottoman caliphate by Mustafa Kemal Attaturk in 1924. This event is considered the end of the Islamic caliphate according to HTI's beliefs. These two hashtags were each tweeted by more than 300 thousand people on Twitter.

Second, dissemination of the idea of the Caliphate through lectures on YouTube social media. HTI made another effort to disseminate the idea of the Khilafah through online recitation activities on YouTube social media. It is known that HTI has several channels as a medium for communicating the concept of a Khilafah, such as the Muslimah Media Center and the Khilafah Channel Reborn. Although several of these YouTube channels are affiliated with HTI, they are all managed by several different departments. The Muslimah Media Center channel is managed by the HTI Muslim women's organization, while the Khilafah Channel Reborn is the official channel managed by the central leadership of HTI. On the Khilafah Channel Reborn channel, the content or information conveyed is in the form of Islamic teachings, which are packaged after establishing the Khilafah as a solid solution for humans. For example, the recitation delivered by HTI spokesperson [Ismail Yusanto](#) on the importance of maintaining Muslim brotherhood.

“...but what must be understood is that *ukhwwah* is not something brotherhood *per se*, not something that is only a gift, but the real *ukhwwah* is to contribute to defending Islam from the tyranny of rulers and dreadful people. The real contribution is by standing together, fighting, and upholding Islam in all corners of the world because there is no longer the right solution other than Islam” (Yusanto, 2020).

The implications of recitation on the Khilafah Channel Reborn

YouTube channel can be seen from the consistency and large number of visitors. They can compete with the YouTube channels of large organizations such as the NU Channel and Muhammadiyah TV. This is because the Khilafah Channel Reborn channel also presents a variety of creative content supported by supporting video and audio quality. Not to forget, this channel also provides a direct experience through live-streaming reviews to subscribers and visitors.

Third, making the film *Traces of the Khilafah in the Archipelago* (JKDN-- *Jejak Khilafah di Nusantara*). HTI also disseminated ideas after they were banned through film publications. The film produced by HTI has garnered public attention. HTI, across all social media platforms, distributed this film. This JKDN film contains historical traces of the relationship between the Islamic caliphate and Islamic kingdoms in the archipelago. Even though the traces of the caliphate in Indonesia referred to by HTI were denied by historians in Indonesia to the point where they drew a lot of criticism, this film became the trending topic in the virtual world of Twitter in the past 2020 times span. The nuances of spreading the idea of Khilafah are very felt in this film, so viewers who do not have qualified literacy will be amazed when watching this film and believe that the presence of Khilafah is essential in Indonesia (IMB, West Java HTI Manager, Interview, June 11, 2022).

Fourth, changes in the distribution of magazines and bulletins to online media. According to Sabari (Sabari, 2017), HTI is the most actual mass organization in discussing public themes because they always try to answer every problem with alternative facts, namely, returning to the urgency of the Islamic caliphate. This is evidenced by the HTI media, which always focuses on voicing the idea of the Khilafah in arguing for every problem that occurs both on a local and international scale. The media in question include the Media Umat newspaper and the Kaffah Bulletin. Since HTI was banned, these two media are now widely disseminated via the internet. Media Umat can be accessed at <https://mediaumat.id/> and the Kaffah Bulletin at <https://buletinkaffah.id/>. Both of these media are still accessible to the public without any attempts by the government to block them.

The four efforts to spread the idea of the Khilafah by HTI show that there has been a change in the instruments of social movements in the Islamic world. According to Bunt, Islamic activism in the contemporary era has experienced a massive migration toward the online world (Bunt, 2003).

This Islamic activism is what Bunt calls the Islamic cyber environment on the internet. Its characteristics can be seen in that every Islamic movement is competing to spread ideas about Islam on the internet. In addition, every Islamic movement that carries out activism on the internet must equip itself with the ability to enter blogs or domains. The ultimate goal of Islamic movement activism on the internet is to promote ideas, ideas, and propaganda to the public (Bunt, 2009; Rustandi, 2022).

The context of this study is relevant to HTI's dissemination efforts, especially after their activities were banned in public spaces. The internet is a solution for migrating movements from offline to online. HTI makes media, bulletins, recitation agendas, content dissemination, and filmmaking as a form of movement migration to the internet world. Migration efforts do not even appear as a strategy to cover up their status after being banned. All efforts on social media look purely as part of a change in their movement. Even though HTI was not too frontal in packing information in spreading their Khilafah idea, the nuances of spreading the Khilafah idea could still be tucked in well so that it did not arouse a lot of public suspicions.

Recruiting New *Syabab*: *Dakwah* to New Members

The presence of new members, or so-called *Syabab* (in Indonesian means youth), is HTI's effort to maintain the movement's existence after it was banned. The presence of new members is essential in continuing the movement relay. Therefore, HTI's recruitment activities are still being carried out, even with a hidden strategy. This is evident that even though HTI status has been banned since 2017 the loyalty of HTI members remains strong, including in the addition of new members. Findings in the field, particularly in two provinces, West Java and Banten, show that HTI membership remains stable. For example, based on the results of interviews in two cities, namely Bandung and Tangerang, it has been stated that if the totals for the two cities are added together, the number of HTI members is in the range of thousands of members (MA, Bandung HTI management, interview June 6 2022 and AM, Tangerang HTI management, interview June 9 2022).

Furthermore, in the recruitment process, HTI still uses conventional methods. Although this is contrary to HTI's efforts in disseminating the idea of a Khilafah, which is carried out through social media, HTI's recruitment modifications were carried out in response to their

organizational status after being banned. Recruitment transformation lies in using the HTI wing organization to recruit new members. If, previously, HTI had always been open about recruiting activities, then after being banned, they used wing organizations to carry out organizational activities.

HTI conducts recruitment through wing movements in schools, mosques, and universities. These wing movements are commonly called *Mantel* organizations. HTI wing movements that are active in recruitment, such as the School Dakwah Board (LDS—*Lembaga Dakwah Sekolah*), which is in charge of recruiting new members in the school environment, the Campus Dakwah Institution Coordination Body (BKLDK—*Badan Koordinasi Lembaga Dakwah Kampus*) and The Echo of Liberation (GP—*Gema Pembebasan*) which is in charge of recruiting new members on campuses, and Mosque Prosperity Council Network (JKDM—*Jaringan Dewan Kemakmuran Masjid*) which is in charge of recruiting new members in the mosque environment. The wing movements carry out recruitment efforts through their respective programs. For example, LDS recruits new members through Islamic Spiritual (ROHIS—*Robani Islam*) activities in schools. BKLDK and GP recruit students through an alternative discussion approach on campuses. Meanwhile, JKDM is in charge of recruiting DKM leaders in mosques. Specifically, JKDM uses HTI media such as Media Umat newspaper, distributed for free to communicate with mosque managers. These wing movements were previously more in charge of disseminating and introducing HTI in their respective environments. Meanwhile, after HTI was banned, they were tasked with recruiting new members (F, HTI Manager, Interview, June 2022).

In carrying out recruitment, HTI wing movements have the same movement corridor following HTI provisions, namely carrying out recitation programs as a recruitment effort. This recitation is usually called *Daurah*, which is generally held once a month in every region, either *Mahaliyah* district, regency, or city. The *Daurah* program is a recitation that introduces and strengthens HTI themes. The resource persons for *Daurah* recitation are the heads in charge of HTI in each district and city. *Daurah* participants are recruitment targets who have previously undergone a series of discussion processes about strengthening their confidence to become HTI members. This means that *Daurah* participants are prospective new members who are sure to become members of HTI. At the end of the *Daurah*, the participants will be sworn in as new members and divided into small groups to carry out their new obligations as HTI members, namely

Halaqah.

An example of Daurah implementation to recruit *Mahaliyah* Cikokol Tangerang, Banten, carried out new members. Although only ten prospective members participated, the Daurah process continued and produced new members for the Mahaliyah mentioned above. According to the head of *Mahaliyah*, AM, Daurah is a bridge for new Syabab candidates to join and fight for Islamic *Sharia* in a *Kaffah* way. Although the status of HTI has been banned, membership in HTI will not be extinct because Allah SWT has destined the struggle to establish the Khilafah as an absolute obligation. AM believes that joining new members in all obstacles and obstacles to the movement is a gift from Allah SWT to continue fighting for the Khilafah in the world (AM, Interview, June 2022).

FPI Struggle After Banning

As a local-based movement, FPI is independent. Unlike HTI, which has the support of international HTI, FPI must consolidate its movement independently. This has an impact on the pattern of movement that is done. FPI is not as dominant as the HTI movement. After being banned by the government, the efforts of the HTI movement remained visible, even being carried out predominantly on social media. Meanwhile, at FPI, their movements are not visible at all; they tend to recede. The FPI website and FPI's social media efforts are always suppressed by the Indonesian government through blocking steps. In contrast to HTI, which has many ways on social media so that the government does not preclude it, such as making films and reciting lectures on social media.

Another visible difference between the two movements is the matter of political views. Although the two movements both carry a formal Islamic state, the Khilafah Islamiyah, the process of struggle is different. If HTI has a political statement on upholding the Islamic Caliphate without being involved in practical political movements, FPI is the opposite; they are directly engaged in reasonable political efforts. According to research (Andriyani & Ghofari, 2019), FPI has been proven to be involved in the political movement for the 2017 DKI Jakarta Pilkada. FPI is also one of the most vocal actors in the demonstration of volumes of blasphemy cases by Basuki Tjahaya Purnama (Ahok) in Jakarta (movement 212) (Woodward & Nurish, 2016). On the other hand, these efforts were not carried out by HTI. Although it is known that HTI is also involved in the 212 Action in Jakarta, they only operate behind the scenes, not as vocal and as strong as

FPI.

As a result, after the government banned the FPI, the movement's efforts were not as massive as before they were banned. The FPI movement has faded and is not as vocal as before. The FPI movement, always seen on the streets, did sweeping, and the demonstration disappeared from public view. This study then uncovered several factors that caused the decline of the FPI movement as follows:

First, the absence of a charismatic leader, Rizieq Shihab. After the legal case for the spread of fake news wrapped around Rizieq Shihab, the great leader of the FPI disappeared from public information. He was no longer heard giving speeches at the FPI demonstration platforms. Moreover, after he was named a suspect and sentenced to four years in prison, his role in the Islamic FPI movement was no longer visible. Their general secretary, Munarman, then took over FPI's leadership. FPI intensely feels the absence of the figure of Rizieq Shihab, because no one can replace him. This was seen when the government officially banned FPI in 2020, where Rizieq's absence caused this movement to appear to be weakening. There was no significant resistance by FPI, even a lawsuit to the State Administrative Court (PTUN) to cancel the SKB, which prohibited their organization was also canceled by FPI (CNN Indonesia, 2020).

“Yes, we miss our high priest (Rizieq Shihab). He is the one who never ceases to inflame the spirit of struggle for us. His figure will never be replaced in us (FPI). And, indeed, his absence makes us a little weaker; maybe because of that, no one can replace him. However, this struggle will never end” (FN, FPI sympathizer, interview, June 7 2022)

The absence of the figure of Rizieq Shihab due to the legal bondage wrapped around him, plus the fact that the organizational status of the FPI was revoked, made the FPI movement weaker. According to [Hidayat](#), this further emphasizes that FPI's dependence on the figure of Rizieq Shihab is substantial. It was proven that when Rizieq Shihab was not around, it seemed very easy for the government to ban the organization ([Hidayat, 2021](#)).

The figure of a leader is always considered essential in every movement, especially Islamism. For example, the death of HTI's first leader, [Taqiyudin An-Nabhani](#), caused many gaps in the movement's decline that could not be quickly overcome as in the [An-Nabhani](#) era.

Likewise, after Hassan al-Banna finished leading the Muslim Brotherhood, this movement became weak and even banned by the Egyptian government. The leaders of the Islamist movement are always considered to have high charisma for their followers (An-Nabhani, 2016).

In Weber's concept, charisma is the quality of a person's personality that is different from others and is obtained from God's gift in the form of extraordinary abilities so that person becomes a role model and leader (Weber, 1993). The charismatic figure identical to Weber's intention is the Prophet. Talcott Parsons identifies this Weber concept as Durkheim's argument about a divine being (the sacred) (Bendix, 1998). However, because Weber's concept of charisma is polysemic, it causes some social scientists not only to pin charisma on the figure of a prophet or God's messenger but also on a leader who is created or through an artificial charismatic process.

In that context, the figure of Rizieq Shihab seems worthy of being pinned on as a charismatic leader for FPI followers. His character, also a *habib* or descendant of the Prophet Muhammad, further adds to Rizieq's charismatic image. Therefore, Rizieq's absence when the FPI's license was revoked further weakened this Islamist movement. In addition, the legal case that happened to another FPI leader, namely Munarman, has recently added to this organization's bad image.

Second, no elite political support. FPI's long history will never be separated from its practical political efforts. Several studies (Facal, 2020; Wilson, 2014) regarding FPI's involvement in Indonesia state that FPI has always been a hot commodity for political elites to gain people's votes in elections. For example, during the 2017 local elections and the 2019 elections, even though Rizieq Shihab, the FPI leader, was currently seeking refuge in Saudi Arabia, many political elites visited him there. For example, candidate for Governor of West Java, Sudradjat admitted that he met Rizieq while carrying out the pilgrimage to the holy land. Rizieq has also been visited by other political elites, such as Deputy Secretary General of the Gerindra Party Andre Rosiade, who also met Rizieq in Mecca. The peak of the elite's great support for FPI occurred after the 212 Action organized by the FPI, and the 212 Alumni Brotherhood succeeded in sending Ahok to prison through the 212 Action (Gueorguiev et al., 2018). At that time, FPI and the 212 Alumni Brotherhood established the National Movement to Guard Fatwa (GNPF) Ulama and nominated Prabowo and Sandiaga Uno as presidential candidates in 2019. Much support flowed, especially

from the bearers of the presidential and vice-presidential candidates. The figure of Rizieq Shihab, considered a unifying figure for Muslims, is why the political elite approached him. Rizieq could have mobilized his many members (Yilmaz & Barton, 2021b).

However, the support of the political elite for FPI after the government banned them disappeared. The narrative of identity politics was consistently echoed by FPI, including during the 2017 DKI Jakarta regional elections, and the 2019 presidential election caused the political elite to stay away. Their support for Prabowo-Sandi in the 2019 presidential election also did not significantly impact because both Prabowo and Sandiaga Uno joined Jokowi's government coalition after both failed to become the president and vice president.

In the study of social movements, the support of political elites is a factor in the emergence or size of action. The theory that explains the support of political elites in social movements is the theory of political opportunity. A country's political situation influences a social movement's success and failure. One dimension of political opportunity theory is elite support for certain social movements (Eisinger, 1973). The existence of elite alliances and political support can be an opportunity for the birth of social movements, while the absence of elite support will become an obstacle to the birth of social movements. This context is relevant to the situation of the FPI, because the lack of elite support for them causes the movement's efforts to be hampered and even disappear.

However, even though in plain view the FPI movement has faded in the eyes of the public, in fact they are still active in carrying out the movement's efforts, especially within the movement within the existing limitations. FPI only works through Islamic boarding schools and mosques, their headquarters to spread ideas. According to an FPI member, the movement's activities were carried out only for activists through recitation at Islamic boarding schools without being exposed to the public after they were banned. At their headquarters, recitation and strengthening of the faith are still being held as usual. They understand that their activities are not prohibited as long as they do not touch the public (AM, FPI member, interview, June 8 2022).

In addition, new members' recruitment activities are ongoing because the instrument used is Islamic boarding schools as educational institutions. There is no excessive effort in recruiting new members. FPI still believes its membership is extensive and loyal throughout Indonesia. Loyalty is also

why FPI is not so loud about recruiting members. This is also why they are not afraid of losing the stage when the government blocks FPI's opinions on social media. This is different from what is happening in HTI, which uses all kinds of methods to survive spreading the idea of the Khilafah on social media. However, both have the same face, namely the necessity to play in two areas, namely the front stage and the backstage, as theorized by [Erving Goffman \(Goffman, 1970; Goffman & Best, 2017\)](#).

In the context of social movements, strategies to maintain the traditions of movements or organizations are commonplace. According to [Tilly \(Tilly, 1979\)](#), a particular social movement sometimes uses a pull-and-hold approach when faced with specific pressures until they manage to get out of it. The pressures that usually appear on social movements are political pressure from the government or authorities. In the Middle Ages, many movements in Europe that fought for justice and freed themselves from the tyranny of rulers faced various pressures. Therefore, the solution to deal with it is to use a defensive strategy. This strategy aims to prevent social movements from running out of energy due to a lack of available resources ([Rahman, 2021](#)).

In line with that, the two movements studied in this paper, HTI, and FPI, use a similar strategy. HTI and FPI implemented a system of surviving all the pressure they received after the government officially banned them. The difference is if HTI survives by using social media as an instrument of movement ([Kidd & McIntosh, 2016](#)), FPI uses traditional ways of their movement by taking advantage of the existence of their headquarters or environment ([Ciabuschi et al., 2012](#)). Therefore, the FPI Islamist movement can grow and expand in the future. For example, [Hilmy \(Hilmy, 2020\)](#) research the possibility of a revival of the HTI movement in Indonesia even though the government has banned it. According to [Hilmy](#), however, no one party can ban an ideology, including the ideology of the Khilafah, which is adhered to by HTI. Therefore, it is not impossible that in the future, the existence of HTI will return to Indonesia, especially if the causes of radical movements are still rampant. Suppose the structure of opportunities for radical movements, such as poverty, social injustice, social dislocation, and political oppression, are still not handled properly. In that case, Pan-Islamic movements such as HTI will still be relevant. The same thing was done by scholars towards FPI, by looking at the future of this Islamic movement after the government banned it. The future of Islamic populism will continue, especially those that the FPI has carried out

(Yilmaz & Barton, 2021a). This is because the regional head elections in Indonesia always use Islamic populism as the key to victory. Therefore, banning FPI will not weaken this movement in the long term because the competition for the political title of the 2024 presidential election could turn to Islamic populism again, as has been done so far by FPI.

CONCLUSION

HTI and FPI continue to make movement activism efforts, especially in disseminating ideas and recruitment activities, even though the government has banned their status through the dissolution of their organizational status. *First*, the efforts made by HTI are inseparable from their status as a transnational movement with a global outlook. Qualified resources support them in carrying out current movement activities. In spreading the idea of the Khilafah, they have entirely migrated from direct dissemination of ideas to indirect ones through social media or the internet. The dissemination of the concept of the Caliphate on Instagram and Twitter by members, the recitations on YouTube, the filming, and changes in the distribution of media and bulletins are proof that their activities of spreading their ideas are currently carried out on the internet. This effort for HTI, apart from responding to the ban against them, is also part of the adaptation to existing technological developments. However, in recruitment activities, HTI still uses conventional methods by recruiting DKM members, school students, and university students through religious recitations (*Daurah*). Although, modifications to the movement were implemented by utilizing wing organizations as the main spearhead, such as using the LDS, LDK, BKLDK, GP, and JDKM institutions.

Second, although not as modern as HTI, FPI's movement efforts are still being carried out by utilizing the available resources. The movement focused on strengthening internal understanding at FPI headquarters, mosques, and Islamic boarding schools. Idea dissemination and recruitment activities are carried out through these institutions. FPI has also tried to use social media as an instrument of the movement, but the government has permanently blocked these attempts. Because of this, there has been a decline in the movement within HTI, mainly due to two factors, namely the absence of their high priest, Rizieq Shihab, due to being entangled in a legal case that ensnared him and the loss of support from the elite for FPI after they became a banned organization. This research can strengthen [Erving Goffman's](#) front-stage and backstage theories, which

are included in the enrichment of the analysis of the hidden *da'wah* movement in the field. Follow-up studies can emphasize the internalization aspect of *da'wah* among the families of Islamic Movement activists so that it can be psychological in the behavioral sciences approach.

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