TERROR IN INDONESIA:
TERRORISM AND THE REPRESENTATION OF RECENT TERRORIST
ATTACKS IN THREE INDONESIAN NEWS PUBLICATIONS WITHIN A
CONTEXT OF CULTURAL AND SOCIAL TRANSITION

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A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
at RMIT University
DECLARATION

I certify that this dissertation does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material which has been submitted for an award of any other university or other institutions. To the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the dissertation. The content of the dissertation is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program. Any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged.

Signed: [Signature]

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SUMMARY

Modern terrorism has been formed and generated through its integration with the mass media and global communication systems. The representation of terrorism in the Indonesian media is associated with complex communicational processes generated through cultural, political economic and organisational patterns and factors. The most recent and publicly extant examples of terrorism in Indonesia have been associated with the more militant factions of radical Islam. Some well-publicized terrorist attacks have been occurring since the fall of President Suharto's New Order regime in 1998. This research examines terrorism in Indonesia and the way it has been constructed and represented in the reporting of several recent terrorist attacks. The research focuses on three news-based publications. These publications are presented as 'case studies' of diversity in the Indonesian print media and the print media's engagement with terrorism and terrorist attacks.

The overarching aim of this research is to examine the ways in which the print media is engaging with Indonesian terrorism within a broader context of the nation's social, political and cultural transition. This process of engagement, representation and meaning-making is situated within broader historical and cultural analysis of the media, including its 'reformation' within the post New Order civic conditions. Specifically, the study is interested in the role of the media, and news reporting in particular, within a civil order that supports freedom of expression, democracy and the fourth estate function of the press.

In particular, the analysis focuses on the 2002 Bali bombing, the 2003 JW Marriott Hotel bombing and the 2004 Australian Embassy bombing. The euphoria that has emerged since 1998, which marks the beginning of Reformasi (reformation), has given the Indonesian media institutions freedom to report any issues without fear of being prosecuted or banned by the government. Nonetheless, the Indonesian news media are influenced by cultural, political, and organisational factors when reporting potentially divisive issues like
terrorism and religion. Within news media institutions, the interplay of these various factors contributes to the way news media represents the issue of terrorism.

This study employed a broadly defined Cultural Studies framework to examine how media institutions and their professional journalists represent the issue of terrorism. The approach emphasizes the interplay between lived experience, discourses and texts. Various methods were used to generate 'data'—that is, material that is generated through systematic and empirical methods, including textual analysis and in-depth interviews. Data were gathered from news items in three national publications. Data analysis techniques included contextualism and textual analysis. The techniques were used to analyse how these specific media outlets represent terrorism, specifically as it is linked to recent militant attacks in Indonesia. The analysis especially emphasized the cultural, political and organisational factors that contribute to the formation of the texts, their discourses and meanings.

Research analyses indicate that the three news publications under study contributed to public knowledge and understanding about terrorism in Indonesia, including its association with Islam, local and Western conceptions of Islam, the government's role in managing political violence, and the need for public vigilance. The research identified a number of similarities in the reporting, particularly as they are associated with concepts of public interest and the civil role of the news media. These similarities were generally focused on concerns for public and national harmony, as well as for the dignity and role of Islam in Indonesian public life. The research also identified significant differences and similarities between the three news publications, some of which are grounded in ideological differences, and others which are more clearly related to organisational and professional factors. News values—that are processes around news selection and emphasis—were also constituted around the respective background, ideological grounding and organisational-editorial focus of the news outlets.

The research concludes that Indonesian news publications are vitally engaged in potentially divisive issues like terrorism. The news outlets are playing a vital role in the process of public information and public debate. The differences and similarities that are engendered through the representation of recent terrorist attacks in Indonesia are a part of the nation's transition to civil society and democracy. While terrorism is abjured by these news outlets, there is healthy debate about the ways in which Islam and broader social
forces—including issues of social harmony, family and faith—are implicated in political violence in Indonesia.
PART 1: INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Background

Media representation of an event is generated through complex cultural and institutional processes. The media, in fact, is best understood as a set of relationships through which meanings are generated and shared through a given social formation. Thus, meanings are generated through producers and institutions and their interactions with audiences and their cultural and governmental contexts. As Jeff Lewis notes—

... The media is not just a conduit for the transfer of meanings from the central corporation to audiences; the media are part of a generalized context and interplay of meaning-making. The media do not exist ‘out there’, but are immersed in the everyday practices and meaning-making of individuals and communities across the globe: they are a significant resource in the formation and construction of contemporary culture(s) (2008, p. 4).

The news media, more specifically, produces its meanings in terms of a pre-existing corpus of knowledge, knowledge that is always positioned and bound to particular contexts and modes of cultural politics. While aspiring to present a version of 'the truth' and valuable information, the news media is nevertheless captive to the same cultural, intuitional and political process that affect all mediation.

To this extent, the news media institutions and the news, information and entertainment they generate is strongly influenced by factors from inside and outside an organisation's own institutional framework. While these ideas are now well understood (Lewis, 2005; Turner & Cunningham, 2002), it is particularly important for a reading of volatile areas of human experience and reporting, particularly in conflict and terrorism.

This research looks at the representation of recent terrorist attacks in three Indonesian news media publications within a context of cultural and social transition. It is based on an
understanding that modern terrorism is formed in relation to the media and global networked media systems. Terrorism can be considered to be a stage upon which political ‘drama’ is performed for specific audiences (national or international publics, particular groups or individuals, or political elites). In this context, the news media play a crucial role in distributing the message to the audience. As Schmid and de Graaf (1982) argue, ‘Without media there can be no terrorism’. At the same time, the way the news media represent the issue is influenced by the cultural, political, economic and social conditions in which the political violence is being played out.

The representation of terrorism, particularly by the Indonesian news media, is very much influenced by the rise of civil society in which citizens are given the opportunity to express their interests, needs and ideas, and hence achieve mutual goals in order to consolidate a sense of collective destiny and the formation of a truly ‘civil’ society. The condition has created opportunities for the emergence of new political parties and social groups like Muslim political and community organisations. It has also driven the new idea of freedom of the press in Indonesia. Through the Reformasi and the emergence of new civil processes, the media has emerged as a principal agent for social criticism and the progress of the reform agenda. In this context, government policies on news and reporting underwent significant changes. Principally, Reformasi is the post-1998 period after the fall of the Suharto Administration, which is notorious as an authoritarian regime. The regime was toppled by people power consisting of the Indonesian middle class and university student movement activists (see Seasite Indonesia, 2010). Under the New Order authoritarian press system, the government and the military controlled the media and editorial policies. However, under the post-New Order conditions, and in a more libertarian press system under the Reformasi, the owners and professional editors became free to determine their own policies in accordance with a democratically formed regulatory regime. Government communication policy only regulates the press in order to ensure they obey codes of ethics and the law.

To this extent, controversial and highly significant events like the recent terrorist attacks and the international ‘war on terror’ are managed and represented according to the internal policies of the news media organisations, rather than the directives of government. My focus, in particular, is on three very different news media outlets: The Jakarta Post daily, Tempo weekly news magazine, and Sabili bi-weekly news magazine. Each news
publication has particular characteristics that differentiate one from another which then affect the way the news media portray an event.

_tempo_ was first established in the form of magazine in 1971 and has become a respectable news weekly magazine ever since. Its critical and libertarian reportage has resulted in the banning of the magazine twice in the Suharto’s New Order (1982 and 1994). At the end of Suharto’s regime, the magazine made its return and gained its popularity. On 21 April 2001, the editorial board of _tempo_ published _Koran Tempo_ (_tempo_ Newspaper) with its general objective to report news critically and in the 'liberal' tradition, which informs the western democratic Fourth Estate model.

As Indonesia has become more integrated into the global economy, a strong expatriate community has been established in Jakarta. The English-based _Jakarta Post_ is the preferred newspaper for many in the expatriate community. It filters a 'western' perception of Indonesian news through a distinctly Indonesian context. The newspaper is also read by well-educated Indonesians, who are seeking a more cosmopolitan and globalist outlook.

In contrast to _The Jakarta Post_, _Sabili_ news magazine grows rapidly as an alternative news outlet among the Islamic community in Indonesia. Published as an instrument for resisting the suppression of the New Order regime, _Sabili_ has turned into a news outlet that is critical of the government and at the same time defends the interest of Muslims. With its strong Islamic perspective, _Sabili_ has become a news magazine among the Islamic community, particularly university students as well as mosque and pesantren activists.

The _tempo_ weekly news magazine undoubtedly has become a phenomenon in Indonesia news media industries. Being banned twice in the New Order era, the outlet regained its popularity among its readers since it made its comeback in 1998. _Tempo’s_ critical, independent, professional, and libertarian reportage has made it the most widely read magazine in Indonesia. With most of its readers coming from high educational background and professionals, _Tempo_ is regarded to be a credible news source.

Within each of these news publications, the cultural, political economic and social conditions are treated differently in constructing news. It is assumed that each news publication will report the issue of terrorism and the specific events under review differently.
I have not included some major dailies such as *Kompas, Republika, Jawa Pos,* and *Media Indonesia* in the study because their more consolidated approach overrides many of the cultural nuances I am seeking to expose. Across these three news publications, the research anticipated some significant differences on militancy and Islam.

Even within this more liberal context, however, news organisations must still consider a range of contextual matters in producing their stories, including the sensitivities of government and a public which is only recently been exposed to the conditions of civil society and a free press. The most recent and publicly extant examples of terrorism in Indonesia have been associated with the more militant components of radical Islam. Some well publicized terrorist attacks have taken place since the fall of President Suharto's New Order regime in 1998. The terrorist attacks on Indonesia’s paradise island, Bali on 12 October 2002, the bombings of the J. W. Marriott Hotel on 5 August 2003 and the Australian Embassy on 9 September 2004 precipitated both domestic and global concerns and attention. The condemnations of these acts of terror came from foreign governments, analysts and news media from all over the world. These attacks had also shifted attention that terrorists have turned Southeast Asia as their ‘haven’ to organize and launch their acts of terror.

The three events contributed to various social, economic and political responses in Indonesia, including—

- the introduction of new anti-terrorism laws,
- the emergence of new tensions between the army and police services over internal security and intelligence issues,
- the weakened support to Megawati’s leadership, particularly in relation to the rise of radical Islamic groups.

These events have also been significant for Indonesia's relationship with Australia and the international community more broadly (Barton, 2004; Lewis and Lewis, 2009). Due to these events, some Western countries like America and Australia issued a travel warning for their citizens, warning them not to come to Indonesia. The bombings had forced the
Indonesian government to seriously respond to the issue of terrorism which had been slowly managed due to political turbulence.

Assisted by the Australian Federal Police and some specialists from Scotland Yard and the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Indonesian investigation team led by Major General I Made Mangku Pastika concluded that Jemaah Islamiyah was behind the attacks. Besides the Bali bombing, Jemaah Islamiyah was also accused of organising the bombings of the J.W. Marriott Hotel and the Australian Embassy in Jakarta.

Each of these terrorist events has invited global media coverage and concerns. For several days, television stations reported the event live from the scenes. The visualizations of the destroyed Paddy’s bar and Sari nightclub, the dead and injured victims and the desperate faces of rescuers who were looking for survivors and families who expected to see their loved ones alive have created a drama to all audiences who watched the events on television. At the same time, the print media, newspapers and news magazines, conducted close, analytical reportage that tried to explain the causes and the impact of these acts of terror. As news events, the terrorist attacks in Indonesia were received with profound horror. The attacks resonated with the horror of 9/11, when 'terrorism'—Islamic terrorism in particular—became a new media tag that seemed to epitomize a lurking and invisible threat to the modern way of living— to civil life.

...the mediated visions of a chaotic and terrible death, of burning and shattered bodies, and of destruction of our towering symbols of progress and social order have become etched into a new consciousness, a new fear that is both pessimistic and strangely ennobled by the imperatives of a heroic defence. 'Terrorism' becomes the rubric for an insidious and darkly imagined power - the risk conditions of an annihilation which randomly assaults the integrity of our history, institutions, community and being (Lewis, 2005, p.21).

This thesis, therefore, is interested in the ways in which the concept and cultural politics of 'terrorism' has been deployed and represented in the Indonesian news media. The study is particularly interested in the contested nature of the concept and the ways in which quite different news media have engaged with these three major terrorist events in Indonesia.
As Walter Laqueuer (1987, 1993) has noted, terrorism in this sense is fundamentally a communication event. The ways in which the media represent the issue, then, play a significant role in shaping how people think about the issue (Chomsky, 2001; Lewis, 2005). At the same time, the news media has to consider various factors in reporting the issue as terrorism is a sensitive and potentially divisive issue. It is then interesting to analyse how different Indonesian news media represent issues of terrorism within an Indonesian context.

While the issue of terrorism and politically motivated violence is significant for Indonesia, the region and indeed the globe, the recent attacks in Indonesia (including the 2009 attacks in Jakarta) have taken place at a time of significant social and cultural change in Indonesia. As noted above, the spearhead of many of these changes is the emergence of a free press and its implications for an emergent civil society in Indonesia.

**Research Questions**

Based on the above understanding, my research describes and analyses how specific news media in Indonesia represent 'terrorism' and specific terrorist events in Indonesia. The euphoria that has emerged around the *Reformasi* and the era of reform has given the Indonesian media institutions freedom to report any issues without fear of being banned by the government. Nonetheless, the Indonesian news media are influenced by their cultural, political, and organisational factors when reporting potentially divisive issues like terrorism and religion. Within news media institutions, the interplay of these various factors contributes to the way news media represents issue of terrorism.

My research is, therefore, based upon the following questions:

*Primary Question*

1. How has the concept of 'terrorism' been shaped, generated and represented in three significant print news publications in Indonesia, particularly within a context of social cultural and political transition?
Ancillary Questions

2. In particular, how has the meaning of terrorism been generated by three major Islamist militant attacks in Indonesia—the 2002 Bali bombings, the 2003 attack on the Marriott Hotel, and the 2004 attack on the Australian Embassy?

3. In what ways has Islam, in particular, been implicated in the shaping of Indonesian terrorism and its representation through these key news publications?

My focus, in particular, is on three very different news outlets and the ways in which each of these news groups approaches and engages in these militant events in order to inform their respective audiences and represent 'terrorism'.

In an attempt to answer the above questions, my particular interest is to explore to what extent, and how cultural, political and organisational-professional factors are taken into account in the way the Indonesian media represent the issue of terrorism. I argue that the ways the media represent issue of terrorism are related to cultural, political and organisational conditions.

Scope of Study

This research examines the historical, cultural and political contexts in which terrorism emerges in Indonesia. In order to have a clear sense in which the three major news outlets represent terrorism and the terrorist-militant attacks, the research outlines the conditions of 'transition' in post-New Order Indonesia. The research does not attempt an epistemological investigation of the relationship between the actual experiences of terrorist attacks and the ways in which it is represented (see Lewis, 2005; James and Nairn, 2005). Rather, the research contextualizes the process of representation, arguing that terrorism is a corporeal event that is generated in relation to discourses and texts. These discourses and texts are clearly driven through ideological processes and complex relationships of meaning and power (Lewis, 2005; Lewis, 2008).

The research focuses on three major terrorist events. As the research was completed before 2009, it will not focus on the 2009 events in Jakarta. The research focuses on three major news publications, which in essence form three critical case studies. The research specifically chose these three publications in order to illuminate contrasting perspectives
on terrorism in Indonesia. While each of these publications has its own ideological grounding and audience, they are considered to be 'serious' news media—as opposed to the more 'entertainment' based, tabloid style news publications. The decision to focus on the serious end of the news market was based on the informing objective of this research—that is, the desire to link the perspective on a very serious issue like Islamic militancy with more considered issues of Indonesia's cultural and political transition. The research, that is, seeks to link the very difficult issues of terrorism and Islam with conditions of improving civil order and the emergence of the media as the 'fourth estate'. The research uses the concept of fourth estate in the sense that the media has a social duty to inform the public and articulate public debate. In terms of Thomas Carlyle, who first coined the phrase, this fourth estate function and the operation of a free press is a critical part of Indonesian civil life, democracy and public knowledge. The serious newspapers and magazines were selected for study, therefore, as they best reflected these public and civil transitions in terms of a very dangerous act of public threat and violence.

**Rationale**

Indonesia, a nation with the world's largest Muslim population, is a country with a complex political environment. The fall of the Suharto regime has brought Indonesia into rapid transition. With an extremely intricate historical background, Indonesia is moving towards a democratic civil society. It is a country with considerable economic and political challenges. This research will provide important knowledge about Indonesia and its regional neighbours, as well as for broader international (especially 'Western') understanding of Indonesia. This research will provide important insights into the ways in which Indonesia's political situation is affecting national and regional security.

As well as providing valuable information about Indonesia's 'reading' of terrorism, the research will provide important insights into the way the media functions in Indonesia, particularly in the context of rapid social and civil transition. It will contribute to a broad understanding of the news media in Indonesia, particularly through the country's enormous cultural and political diversity. The Cultural Studies framework sensitizes this research to the complexities and nuances of power and cultural diversity, and the ways in which meanings and representations are contested. This is particularly important for the analysis of complex and sensitive areas issues of terrorism and political transition. These insights
will be extremely valuable not only for Indonesia itself, but also for Indonesia's regional neighbours—particularly Australia. Indeed, this research will, I believe, make a significant contribution to the relationship between Australia and Indonesia, as it will provide insights into significant areas of knowledge production and Indonesian security.

While this study will be important for the discipline within an academic context, it will also provide valuable information and knowledge for the Indonesian media itself. It will provide professional journalists with guidance on how their reporting is contributing to public discussions on this important issue; it may also provide insights into how the journalists might improve social knowledge and thus contribute more effectively to a better understanding of the issue.

The research will also be valuable for its analysis of government policy and the ways in which politics is implicated in the current agonisms and debates over international terrorism, particularly as it is manifest in Indonesia. In this sense, the research will contribute to policy discussions about the media, press freedom and the reporting of controversial or sensitive issues such as terrorism and religion.

**Literature Review**

This research is critical for our understanding of the relationship between the media and terrorism in Indonesia. While there have been some very good accounts of media representation of terrorism, to date no detailed analysis has been conducted on Indonesian news reporting of terrorism and terrorist attacks within Indonesia. Current literature is highly specific and lacking in theoretical substance. There are some research reports and books that deal more generally with the issue of media representation and terrorism, though most of these texts are focused on American and British experiences of terrorism. Nacos (2002) and Tuman (2003), for instance, look at media representation of terrorist attacks in the United States of America. Norris, Kern and Just (2003) edited a range of articles from various scholars who look at the variety of media representation and terrorist attacks all over the world. Brian V. Kloeke, in his PhD dissertation of the University of Colorado (2004), analysed how United States elites ideologically framed events of September 11, 2001 and media discourse of the War on Terrorism through a sampling of major speeches of George W. Bush in *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal*. His
important finding was that the media were found to not only translate and circulate elite ideologies of the War on Terrorism but they helped to amplify the framing of them as well. Meanwhile, Chongkittavorn (in Ramakhrisna & Tan, 2003), de Masi (2005), and Lewis (2005) have included the 2002 Bali bombing in their analysis of media and terrorism within the global context. Nevertheless, none of these scholars is looking at Indonesian news media representation and terrorism within the context of Indonesian culture, politics and the local media industry.

My survey of research reports on media and terrorism in Indonesia, however, has led to my discovery of two Indonesian scholars who analysed the issue. Dewi Novianti analysed the reportage of the 2002 Bali bombing in two Indonesian news media, *Kompas* and *Republika*, in 2004. She focused on two aspects that relate to the bombing event. The first was the investigation of the kind of bomb used; the second was the investigation and arrest of the perpetrators. In doing so, she employed critical discourse and framing analysis as her research methods. Novianti’s research focuses on the two aspects above, and so her research is quite limited. For instance, Novianti did not examine the cultural dimensions of the bombings or the political affiliations of the perpetrators who had links with the Southeast Asian terrorist network, *Jemaah Islamiyah*. She did not conduct any interview with either journalists or editors of the news media to provide a strong sense of the professional and organisational context in which the journalists are working. While providing a sound analysis of the investigation, she resisted an analysis of the news media institutions’ ideological framework and how these ideologies have affected the way news media institutions reported terrorism issues. To support her claim, she analysed the dailies' editorials as evidence of the newspapers' values and attitudes; however, she did not conduct more probing analyses of journalists' approach and attitude toward their representations and reporting. The aim of my own research is to investigate these issues in a more probing and thorough manner; this multi-layered methodology will provide a more thorough understanding of the bombings and the different ways in which contrasting news outlets represent terrorism in Indonesia.

Another research project was conducted by Muhammad Khairil (2001). He analysed the impact of the reportage of terrorism in news media on the Islamic organisation movements in Makassar city. The research methods used were qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques. Based on his research findings, Khairil concluded that to some mass-based
Islamic organisations such as *Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)* and *Muhammadiyah*, the changes of organisations’ activities appeared in the form of their statements about terrorism events; whereas to other Islamic organisations the changes appeared through the dispersal of Jundullah military division, a demonstration to free Agus Dwikarna and the implementation of Shariah law. Khairil focused more on the 'reception' of the media texts and how texts affected the attitude of some Islamic movements. While this is valuable and instructive work, the research satisfies itself with reception, neglecting the complex processes that contribute to the *production* of textual meaning. My own study will focus on the ways in which texts are shaped through professional and cultural forces within a more generalised context of governmental, civil and cultural transition. The reception issue, while important, tends to overlook the dimensions of input by which a text is formed.

Given the contexts above, my research looks at how specific areas of the print news media in Indonesia have engaged with a variety of cultural, political, and social conditions to shape and generate their respective representations of terrorism and particular terrorist events. The research analyses the construction of media representation through the deployment of various levels of analysis: historical, textual and empirical.

**Outline of the Study**

This thesis is divided into three parts. Part I includes Chapters 1 through 3. Chapter 1 of this study includes background, research questions, scope of study, and the rationale underlying the research. In this context, a brief summary of the relationship between media and issue of terrorism and how the media institutions represent particular events in particular ways are given. Chapter 2 reviews the theoretical framework and research methodology used in this research. Chapter 3 examines the concepts that are relevant to this study. They include terrorism, media, Islam, *jihad* and radical Islamism. This chapter provides a broad conceptual framework on the relationship between terrorism, Islam and news media.

Part II (Chapter 4-6) outlines the historical and cultural contexts for the mediated representation of terrorism in Indonesia. Chapter 4 discusses the role of Islam in the evolution of civil society and democracy in Indonesia. In particular, this chapter examines
the dynamic turbulence of political Islam in relation to the development of Indonesian politics. This chapter also describes the rise of civil society at the end of the New Order authoritarian regime and in the era of reform. The discussion of civil society is crucial as it contributes to the re-emergence of political Islam which has taken various forms in its implementation. Chapter 5 examines the cultural and political contexts of radical Islamism in Indonesia and how this phenomenon has contributed to the development of Islam as well as a range of politically violent events, particularly those associated with radical militancy and terrorism. Chapter 6 examines the development of the press during and after the end of Suharto’s New Order. In particular, the chapter attempts to explore the development of the press in the era of ‘reform’. The examination of the development of the press is pertinent to understand whether the press has changed and how these changes have affected the way the press report news, especially in reporting potentially divisive and sensitive issues such as terrorism and radical Islamism.

Part III outlines the textual and empirical research conducted for this thesis. This textual and empirical research focuses on three news publications: The Jakarta Post daily, Sabili and Tempo news magazines. The empirical research, as outlined in the Methods section of this thesis, is constituted largely around in-depth interviews with editorial staff and journalists. While also examining formal and publicly disseminated editorial information mostly published on the Internet, the research seeks primarily to identify the ways in which the professional news staff describe their publication, editorial policy and ideological framework. This empirical work is designed to supplement my analysis of the specific textual representation of recent terrorist attacks in Indonesia. It is designed to provide a more complete understanding of the publication's approach to terrorism and the ways in which terrorism is constructed through the news reports.

The news items and news features were analysed within the contexts of cultural and political transition in Indonesia. Finally, the conclusions are drawn in Chapter 10.
CHAPTER II
APPROACHING THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework and research methodology that are employed in this study. In order to elucidate the meanings that are generated through media representations of terrorism in Indonesia, we must begin with a clear theoretical rendering of the media and its relationship to culture and cultural politics (Lewis, 2008; Barker, 2002; Cottle, 2006).

News media coverage of an issue is principally a journalistic practice that cannot be separated from various influences such as the state, culture, ideology, editorial policy and the mission of media institutions. The interplay of these various factors is clearly implicated in the ways in which journalists and editors conduct their work—it clearly contributes to the selection of news issues and the ways in which the news is presented. While issues of 'intentionality' (what meanings are intended by a news practitioner) lie outside the scope of the current research, it is evident that texts are generated through the professional practices, priorities and cultural grounding of a news organisation and its practising professional staff. These priorities and practices are particularly pertinent for a study of terrorism (a highly problematic act of political violence) within an equally volatile social and political context—Indonesia in a state of transition. While seeking to contribute to the formation of a specifically Indonesian civil society, the news media under study are also subject to their own cultural-ideological priorities and predispositions. In this sense, these priorities problematise broader issues of news balance and objective reporting—critical elements of the news publications' fourth estate role.

Cultural Studies provides a valuable theoretical framework for investigating the interplay of these various factors and the complex relationship between a news organisation's aspirations for objectivity and the inevitability of political positioning (Lewis, 2005, pp. 12-32).
This chapter applies a Cultural Studies framework to the study of the media and in particular the ways in which meanings are generated about terrorism in Indonesia. Cultural Studies, with its focus on issues of representation, power and cultural diversity provides an ideal framework for this study. Cultural Studies and its range of transdisciplinary methodological options is sensitive to the political positioning and ideological framing of meaning, as well as the specific attributes of a given cultural context.

**Theoretical Framework**

This thesis employs a Cultural Studies framework to the study of media representation of terrorism in Indonesia. Cultural Studies has three distinct advantages—first, it allows researchers to apply a range of methodologies; secondly, it provides an expansive framework to an understanding of 'representation'; thirdly, it is sensitive to the processes of meaning making and mediation, particularly in relation to the ways in which cultural politics contribute to the formation of social knowledge. As a theoretical and methodological framework, therefore, Cultural Studies provides the most effective conceptual framework to identify and analyse the ways in which specific media producers and texts have generated meaning about Indonesian terrorism. Cultural Studies allows researchers to focus on—'language' and text; the production and organisational processes that form around journalism and the media industry; and the cultural-political context in which these texts are generated.

While Cultural Studies also acknowledges the role of audiences in meaning-making (Barker, 2002; Lewis, 2008), the focus of this thesis is on production and representation in the formation of textual meaning. This section provides a brief overview of Cultural Studies and its value for this study. The section focuses on the cultural, linguistic, political and organisational factors that contribute to the representational process. It is worth noting in this discussion that the thesis includes organisational, professional processes of journalism, and media-making within the broad rubric of Cultural Studies. While some scholars may overlook the importance of these factors in their studies of media, this thesis is applying an inclusive model of Cultural Studies as outlined by Turner (1996), Lewis (2008), Cunningham (2008) and Durham & Kellner (2001). Very clearly, different theoretical and methodological approaches to the media produce different frames of knowledge and understanding. In an attempt to accommodate various theories that help an
understanding of media representation, Newbold, Boyd-Barret and Van Den Bulck (2002) have identified three of the most significant movements of media study. They include effects studies, political economy and Cultural Studies. Other media sociologists like Curran et al. (1987), Schudson (in Curran & Gurevitch, 1991), Strinati (1995), Stevenson (1995), Shoemaker and Reese (1996), McNair (1999a), Barker (2000), Durham and Kellner (2001), identify three broad theoretical frameworks to understanding the meaning generated from media text. They are the political economy approach, which explains the meaning represented in the media text as a result of economic and political factors outside media organisations; the organisational approach, which emphasizes the influence of media organisations in manufacturing output; and the cultural approach, which defines the meaning of the text as being the result of a complex interaction between political economy, organisational and cultural factors.

A 'sociology' of the media emerged through an attempt to give a more critical perspective to media analysis. According to media sociologists, early mass communication research had been characterized by a preoccupation with the effects of the media on their audiences, rather than the political and social conditions which created the conditions of media production and reception (Newbold et al., 2002; Schudson, 2005). The development of media sociology emerged from several key areas of academic inquiry. First, developments in the sociological study of large scale, formal organisations yielded theories of organisational structure and behaviour, as well as analytic tools, which were seen to be applicable to the study of media organisations and of their work practices and production processes. Secondly, the increasing influence of Marxist theorizing prompted a reappraisal of the role of the media in society, and focused attention on the structure and the organisation of the media. Thirdly, increasing attention to the study of the role of the news media in politics demonstrated the importance of examining the relationship between media institutions and the political institutions of society. This increasing recognition of the importance of politics and the role of the media alerted scholars to the ways in which political communication emerged as a subtly composite product of the interaction between these two sets of institutions (Curran et al., 1987).

While the organisational approach focuses on how news is socially constructed among news-making players within news organisation, the cultural approach focuses on the cultural givens within which everyday interaction happens in the first place. Marshall
Sahlins has written in a different context that ‘an event is not just happening in the world; it is a relation between a certain happening and a given symbolic’ (1985, p. 153). These cultural givens, while they may be uncovered by detailed historical analysis, cannot be extrapolated from features of social organisation at the moment of study. They are a part of culture – a given symbolic system, within which and in relation to which reporters and officials go about their duties. Journalism can and does produce noteworthy events – in press conferences, interviews and so forth (Schudson, 2005). Thus, while journalists do not create events, they shape them through their discourses; and there are economic, political, social and cultural factors that help explain why journalists report events in such a way. A cultural account of news, therefore, helps explain generalized images and stereotypes in the news media that transcend structures of ownership or patterns of work relations. It means that the news media organisations operate within a particular culture that affects the way the media construct news. A cultural account of news is also relevant to understanding journalists’ vague renderings of how they know ‘news’ when they see it.

The current approach to understanding of news construction is different from the previous study of news. In the past study of news, as noted by Schudson (2005), media researchers understood news in terms of how journalists ‘construct news’, ‘make news’ or ‘socially construct reality’. ‘News is what newspapermen make it’, accords to one study (Siebert, 1934, p.173). ‘News is the result of the methods news workers employ’, accords to another (Fishman, 1980, p.14). News is ‘manufactured by journalists’ (Cohen, 1963, p.97) in the words of a third.

Following Lewis (2008), this thesis focuses on the cultural, organisational, economic and political conditions that contribute to the formation of news. Lewis explains the news media—indeed the media in general—in terms of a set of dynamic relationships. News producers, texts and audiences interact in order to generate meaning. This set of relationships works through a further interaction with the cultural, historical and governmental-legal contexts in which the media is generating its texts. This Cultural Studies approach is, therefore, encompassing, and recognizes the critical interdependence of media producers and the range of organisational and cultural-governmental inputs that contribute to the production of a text. This Cultural Studies approach enables a researcher to focus on specific zones of the media process. The current study, in fact, focuses on the production of texts and the ways in which different news outlets generates different
meanings according to its particular ideological, political, cultural and organisational-professional disposition.

In relation to my research, this cultural approach is used to analyse how the meaning of terrorism is represented in specific media texts generated by specific media organisations. As noted, this Cultural Studies approach enables researchers to distinguish between these different organisational mechanisms and its particular framework of cultural politics and ideology. Indeed, while it is common for researchers of media and terrorism to speak generically of 'the media', the current studies has attempted to distinguish particular zones of representation based on the cultural disposition of the specific news outlet.

Cultural Studies' focus on meaning and meaning-making enables a researcher to consider the range of mechanisms and processes that shape a text and which distinguish the ways in which media and culture interact with one another. As Storey notes—

To understand the meaning(s) of a cultural text or practice, we must analyse it in its social and historical conditions of production and consumption…culture is not studied as a reflection of this structure and history. History and culture are not separate entities. It is never a question of reading a text or practice to illustrate an already formulated account of an historical moment – history and text/practice are inscribed in each other and are embedded together as part of the same process’ (1996, p.3).

Turner and Cunningham say that, ‘Meaning is not produced in isolation from the reader’s social experience; rather, they inscribe those experiences into the text…The connection is produced, meaning is made. To understand the process, we need to consider how the text refer to, invoke, or inscribe into themselves already existing social meanings-connnotations or associations which are ‘called up’ by the signifier or myths which are already culturally encoded into the signified’ (1997, p.313). Grossberg also gives a similar opinion, 'Studying the media is not an additive process, as if we can first understand the media and then add their effects on politics and economics. But at the same time, we cannot study some real political and economic events and then hope to understand the role of the media in representing them…The media are constantly being made by the very same relationships that they themselves are making' (2006, p.7). Grossberg calls this process mediamaking. Mediamaking is an attempt to understand the reality and the media at the same time by
Culture is inextricably connected with the role of meanings in society. It is what enables us to ‘make sense’ of things. But how does this ‘meaning making’ work? Partly, we give things meaning by the way we represent them. Representation refers to the construction in any medium (especially the news media) of aspects of ‘reality’ such as people, places, objects, events, cultural identities and other abstract concepts. The term refers to the processes involved as well as to its products (Chandler, 2004). The principal means of representation in culture is language. Language, in this context, should not be seen merely in the strict sense of written or spoken words. Language in this sense is any system of representation – photography, painting, speech, writing, imaging through technology, and drawing – which allows us to use signs and symbols to represent or re-present whatever exists in the world in terms of a meaningful concept, image or idea. Language is the use of a set of signs or a signifying system to represent things and exchange meaning about them (du Gay, 2001).

To understand culture is to explore how meaning is produced through representation and mediation. Meaning refers to the end point of these processes, the 'ordering' by which individuals make sense of the world and contribute to social knowledge—it is the aggregate of meanings, therefore, which constitute a social knowledge. Culture refers to the ways in which these meanings are formed, processed and constituted in relation to social knowledge and puts specific historical and spatial context. For the purposes of this study, the concept of 'representation' refers to the ways in which the world of phenomena and knowledge are represented in text. This thesis will use concepts like 'discourse' and 'language' to refer to those representational processes and systems that constitute cultural texts. As pre-presentation, these texts are not simply the accurate reproduction of an event of phenomenon; rather, all representations are regarded as formed in relation to context, perspective, pre-existing social knowledge and the contexts that are bound to cultural politics.

Cultural Studies, therefore, provides a valuable theoretical and analytical framework for
the research this thesis presents. As a discipline model, Cultural Studies is a meeting point in media research, between traditions of study that have grown out of literary analysis and film studies, and traditions of study that have come from the social sciences (principally politics, economics, sociology, anthropology and psychology). Loosely, it may be said that the literary tradition in Cultural Studies has tended to focus attention on how texts are constructed to make them capable of rendering meaning. The social science tradition has focused more on the significance of texts within specific contexts and the ways in which culture influences the strategies that consumers, audiences or readers employ in order to make meaning of texts (Newbold et al., 2002).

Within the context of my research, Cultural Studies is used to understand and analyse how meanings are constructed within news media institutions. The analysis focuses on the issue of terrorism represented in the media, specifically the 2002 Bali bombings, the 2003 JW Marriot Hotel bombing, and the 2004 Australian Embassy bombing. By using Cultural Studies of media, I analysed the cultural or historical, political and organisational factors that contribute to the construction of the meaning of terrorism represented in Indonesian news media. The cultural or historical factor relates to the concept of *Jihad* in Islam and how some militant groups in Islam have used the concept to legitimize their acts of terror. I also analysed the development of Islam in Indonesia, especially after the fall of Suharto’s New Order regime followed by the rise of civil society which later inspires the formation of some social movements within society, including some radical Islamic groups such as *Front Pembela Islam* (Islamic Defenders Front), *Laskar Jihad* (Jihad Fighters) and *Forum Komunikasi Ahlussunah wal Jamaah* (Ahlussunah wal Jemaah Communication Forum). The analysis then focuses on the relation between militant Islamic groups in Indonesia and three terrorist events that occurred in Indonesia and how this relation is represented in Indonesian news media.

The analysis of political factors pays attention to the issue of how the political condition in Indonesia has affected the way the government deals with the issue of terrorism, religion and some militant groups within society. At the same time, I also look at how the changes brought about by democracy have affected the way the news media institutions report sensitive issue like terrorism and religion. The press becomes more critical to what is generally called the Fourth Estate—that is, the role of scrutinizing the state and providing information to citizens. It also orient its reportage toward public interests rather than state
interests. Nevertheless, even though the press has developed this significant civic role in Indonesia in the post-Suharto period, pressures sometimes come from some social groups that threaten the existence of the press.

The organisational approach to the study of journalism, professional cultures and organisational structures underpinning the process of media production focuses issues such as the objectivity ethic, limitations imposed by the news form, deadline pressures, and other elements of routine journalistic practice. The organisational approach also looks at how these issues have affected media practitioners. Journalists play an important role in writing news about an event, as they have to consider and integrate various factors from within the media organisation. To be objective, Tuchman argues, the journalist must present both sides of a story or, in the case of a more complex debate, all credible sides; supporting evidence for any assertions made in the story must be provided; authoritative sources, such as politicians must be quoted (in this way the journalist is seen to distance himself or herself from the views reported, by establishing that they are someone else’s opinions); ‘fact’ must be structured pyramidically, with the most important issues coming first, at the ‘top’ of the story (McNair, 1999a).

Under the New Order regime, the strong domination of the state was the principal influence on the journalistic practice of the Indonesian press. Government figures dominated news sources (see Steel, 2005). What was considered as fact tended to follow what was considered the best by the government, otherwise media institutions would get into trouble with some government agencies that monitored the news. Media institutions were required to set strict self-control to avoid criticism directed toward the state. Also, large and influential media institutions only employed journalists if they became members of journalist associations organised by the government (Prayudi, 2004). All these policies forced the press to become only an appendage of the state. Further, the press was unable to fulfil the public’s right to know. The condition of the Indonesian press is quite different in the post-New Order era when news media institutions do not need a publishing permit to print and publish news publications. Journalists are free to form more than one journalist association. Free market competition has also motivated media institutions to become more professional in reporting news to their readers. All these issues are examined in order to build the context of media representation of the issue of terrorism.
Besides the above factors, Paul Rock has also emphasized the importance of space, layout and time as constraints for media organisations which force them to create a system of priorities that will be allocated to the description of events, to decide the proportion of the total presentation occupied by these reports, and to limit the entire volume of events which can evoke a journalistic reaction (in McNair, 1999a). Based on this approach, I would like to examine how news media institutions set their editorial policies in determining what news is published, how it will be written, and how these organisational factors become influential in reporting news of terrorism.

In short, Cultural Studies helps to analyse how news media professionals have to deal with cultural or historical, political and organisational issues in the process of constructing meaning through the processes of representation and mediation. Cultural Studies is informed by political economy and organisational approaches and it is acknowledged that all three approaches complement one another to provide a thorough theoretical framework for understanding the media.

**Research Methodology**

As noted, the essential aim of this research is to examine the interplay of various factors—historical, cultural, and political—in the representation of terrorism and specific terrorist events in Indonesia. As an expansive and transdisciplinary framework, Cultural Studies encourages such examinations as it seeks to explore the complexity of textual meaning making. The significant advantage of a Cultural Studies approach for this study is that it provides a range of heuristic options. Thus, this research employs historical, in-depth interview and textual analysis stratagem for this research in order to expose the complex lineage of factors that contribute to the representation and meaning of terrorism as generated through these three news publications.

**Specific Methods**

As noted, there are three principal methods or strategies of research.

1. Historical analysis

While it may be characterized in various ways, this historical survey examines the processes of civil, social and political transition in Indonesia, particularly since the collapse
of the New Order regime. As already noted, this period of change is critical to both the emergence of a 'free press' and also the release of latent Islamic militancy that had been suppressed during the New Order period (OCG, 2006; Lewis and Lewis, 2009; Hitchcock and Putra, 2007). This historical survey provides a critical insight into the ways in which Indonesia's transition informs the formation of the respective news publications and their approach to the problematic relationship of ideology, religion and terror based militancy.

2. Empirically based In-depth Interviews

As Cultural Studies scholars like Chris Barker (2002, 2003) explain, a text can only have meaning in terms of its context of meaning production and consumption. While the current study does not focus specifically on reception or audience research, it applies a model of textual analysis which assumes reception factors through the identification of textual context. That is, it situates texts within the context of their production, including the community and audience constituency that are identified by the text producers—and in this case by the researcher.

Thus, besides situating the research within its historical, cultural and political context, this research links the researcher's reading of the texts with the organisational and professional frameworks of the respective news publications. In this way, the research identifies the assumption that informs the news publication. While accepting that there is a 'fallacy of intentionality' issue here, the research nevertheless seeks to link the professional context of the research with the historical context, and specific textual products. Combined, these three stratagems give a strong sense of how the representation of terrorist events is linked to the specific information and knowledge that is imparted in a given text.

Therefore, as well as examining the broader historical and cultural context in which these media texts are produced, the thesis examines the political and cultural contexts which are generated around and by the media organisation. This means that each of these different media serves a particular community and constituency. The research looks carefully at this constituency in order to reveal the underlying cultural and community issues that inform the text, its modes of representation, and its meanings.

Textual analysis, therefore, situates a text and its meanings within an historical, cultural and political context. While such analyses must rely on a series of what Fredric Jameson
(in Kellner & Homer, 2004) calls 'secondary texts'—that is the literature that surrounds and describes these contexts—researchers also have an opportunity to conduct primary research with media professionals. This form of empirical research enables researchers to correlate their readings against the organisational and professional contexts in which the news is generated. This approach enabled the research to explore in greater detail the ways in which professional journalists and editors engaged with prevailing cultural and political conditions, as well as their internal editorial and organisational processes.

It is noteworthy that the aim in deploying this research strategy was not to locate the 'final word' or 'real meaning' of a given news text. It was rather to present another dimension to the process of representation—to ask further breadth and depth to the cultural meanings I have sought to expose. Thus, this research is not constrained by what is generally called 'the intentionality paradox' by which meanings are attributed to the author's intentions rather than in the text itself. Indeed, the current research follows the template of Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault, among many others, in treating text' as an open system whereby meanings are connected to context, rather than authorial intent. The empirical research, therefore, is to be understood as a strategy for linking text authors and organisational conditions to the broader historical and cultural context through which human groups, including producers and audiences, construct their sense of 'the real' and 'the meaningful'.

Interviews with editors and journalists of the three news media institutions that were undertaken in Jakarta give ‘empirical’ evidence of how the news media played their role in representing terrorism and specific terrorist organisations and events. A range of values, politics and regulation strategies was examined; the findings were synthesised to provide an in-depth picture of the politics and practices of the news media in the post-New Order era and how these news media institutions incorporate various factors in representing the issue of terrorism. For instance, the new Press Act No. 40/1999 automatically replaced the Press Act No. 21/1982. The Decree of the Minister of Information No 1/1984 that gave the New Order government authority to withdraw SIUPP (Letter of Permit for Press Publishing Enterprise) was revoked and superseded by the Decree of the Minister of Information No.01/1998. In this decree, the authority of the Minister of Information was limited to administrative sanctions such as written warnings. When the Department of
Information was abolished during Abdurrahman Wahid’s presidency, the government was only able to prosecute the editor whilst the newspaper was allowed to continue publishing.

3. Textual analysis

According to Allan McKee, “When we perform textual analysis on a text, we make an educated guess of the most likely interpretations that might be made of that text” (2001, p. 138). What is implied in McKee’s statement is that texts draw their meanings from producers and their interactions with culture: the exercise of analysis does exactly the same thing though with the benefit of our expert systems and strategies—our 'education'.

In relation to media, the text of the media and all media complexities are actively producing the world, but at the same time the world is producing the media. For someone to understand the media text, he or she must study the active relationships of media complexities with other factors within and outside the media organisation that influence the media organisation in constructing text.

Textual analysis enables us to discuss the texts in relation to their contextual background. This approach is based on the notion that the text produced cannot be separated from the news media institutions (organisational factor) and social and cultural environments within which news is produced and interpreted. Text is always socially constructed to have certain meanings and to achieve certain outcomes (Thwaites et al., 2002). Loizeaux and Fraistat say, ‘To talk about texts and textuality, then, is ultimately to talk about culture, the ground on which we and our texts inhabit the textual condition’ (2002, p. 8). Principally, media text analysis is aimed at enhancing our understanding of the role media representations play within the wider construction of meanings within the culture. Media text analysis is always moving from the text to the wider culture or from the text to the audience (Cunningham & Turner, 1997).

Rather than consider meaning to be something immanent in the text or as something which elevates art over all other aspects of life, Cultural Studies has treated texts as cultural documents. These documents cannot be separated from the circumstances and conditions of their production and consumption. Thus, cultural texts are fundamentally and inescapably embedded in social practices, institutional processes, politics and economy. It means that the text produced can’t be separated from the existence of news media
institution within its political and social environments. The relationship between the text and context is largely constituted by ‘representation’ (Lewis, 2005).

For the analysis of texts—news texts in particular—what is absent from the text (not said) is as important as what is actually included in the text. Knowing what a text says is not straightforward. We need to look carefully at what texts actually say and what they do not say, to identify the points where there is vagueness, ambiguity, lack of obvious coherence (Bell; Bell and Garrett, 2000). Thus, to understand the news, we need to see why the media report the event through a particular perspective and what social, political, and other factors affect news media policy in reporting the event. In relation to my research, the politics of representation is used to analyse why the media represented the issue of terrorist attacks in Indonesia with a particular orientation. The analysis emphasizes the political context of the representation. According to Bernstein (in Newbold et al., 2002), representation refers to the process by which signs and symbols are created to convey certain meanings.

Using this system of textual analysis of news items, I analysed how the Indonesian news media represented the issue of terrorist attacks and to what extent the Indonesian news media had the willingness to portray the seriousness of the government in managing the event as part of the ‘fourth estate’ role of the press through the interplay of cultural, political and organisational factors. Emphasis was given to headlines and text of news items that were considered important. Though only some part of the news items analysed were presented, principally the analysis covered the whole texts of the news items to extract stronger evidence.

Thus, both the historical and interview research contributes to our understanding of the various factors that contribute to the formation of texts and textual meanings. Context helps to build a better understanding of the text. Contextualism refers to how to locate the phenomenon it is studying within the wider social, political and even global context (Saukko, 2003). There are two conditions that help to capture the context of phenomenon analysed. The first is sensitivity to the social context. This refers to the duty of scholarship to carefully analyse, for example, historical events, statistics and developments, social structures, using and comparing different resources and views. Thus within the context of my research, since the perpetrators of most of the recent terrorist attacks in Indonesia have
adopted Islamic values to legitimize their action, understanding the root of Islam and the concept of Jihad in Islam to better understand radicalism in Islam that may relate to terrorism becomes crucial. The second is awareness of historicity. This condition refers to the ability of research to understand its own historicity. This means that social science and its object, historical society, cannot be separated, and analysing the social context also enables research to become aware of, and be able to critically evaluate, its role in it. The detail for how to do textual analysis, for instance, was developed by Utah Valley State College Writing Centre (online).

**Specific Publications and Texts**

This research does not attempt to achieve a broad and representative sample of terrorist based news texts in Indonesia. As noted in the previous chapter, the research focuses on three 'serious' news publications which provide a critical insight into what is broadly called 'opinion leadership' in social debates. This research does not attempt to explain 'what the media are thinking'. It is a more precise account of these serious debates. As previously outlined, this approach is justified as the news publications that have been selected are focused on the fourth estate function, particularly of the serious news media in Indonesia in a context of rapid cultural and political transitions.

Thus, the texts that have been chosen for specific analysis (Ch. VII-IX) have two distinct qualities—first, they are part of the news publications’ overall pattern of reporting and representation of terrorism in Indonesia; and secondly, they provide significant points of comparison with the other news publication and their texts. In other words, the texts that have been chosen for study are clearly implicated in an Indonesian knowledge system about terrorism and hence the nation's transition to civil debate and political-democratic transformation.

The objective of this research is principally to investigate the representation of the issue of terrorism in three Indonesian news media. Each news publication (one newspaper and two news magazines) has particular characteristics that differentiate one from another; these differentials then affect the way the news media portray an event. I need to emphasize here that I do not intend to compare the representation of terrorism issue between the respective print genres, newspapers and news magazines. The focus of this thesis, rather, is more on the different perspectives, ideologies and news approaches of these three news media,
particularly in terms of cultural, political and organisational factors. The research is focused on the 2002, 2003 and 2004 bombings that occurred in two night clubs in Bali, JW Marriott Hotel and the Australian Embassy in Jakarta.

The Indonesian news media to be analysed includes three national news publications with three different perspectives: *Tempo*, *The Jakarta Post* and *Sabili*. The profile of each news publication is discussed in detail in the textual analysis chapters (chapters 7-9). The rationale concerning the selection of these three news media is based on the following arguments:

1. *The Jakarta Post* newspaper, *Tempo* and *Sabili* news magazines are main Indonesian news media with a wide readership. This indicates that the three news media play a significant role in disseminating information to the public. They have become major and reliable references as indicated by the middle to upper levels of education of their readers.
2. All news media are national news publications with strong influence on society. Given their scale of distribution, it is assumed that all news media have maintained a high standard of journalistic practices.
3. The three news media reported the events of the 2002 Bali bombing, the 2003 JW Marriott Hotel and the 2004 Australian Embassy bombing in Indonesia intensively. Despite their different approaches to the issue of terrorism, their intensiveness in reporting the issue was assumed to have been able to describe the representation of the issue.

It is expected that these three national news media provide a broad perspective and a representative sample of the Indonesian print news media, if not the broad spectrum of views that constitute the Indonesian politics. The impact of the September 11 attack on the United States in 2001 has affected the way global non-Muslims across the world look at Islam and Muslims. Negative attitudes, in particular, worsened the Bali bombing that notably attacked foreign citizens classified as coming from ‘western’ countries. The situation has brought to the surface the issue of radicalism in Islam. These issues have become even more difficult for the media in Indonesia, a country with the world's largest Muslim population. The press has to be careful in reporting the issue for fear of linking the terrorists with Islam. This is because in most of the recent cases of terrorism, the actors
have been Muslims. Most of the time these terrorists use Islamic values and teachings as their legitimate basis to commit the act of terror. At the same time, although the government no longer suppresses the press, there are religion-based social interest groups within society that are critical of news media representation of the issue of terrorism with a tendency to oppress Islam or Muslims. There were times where these groups use violence as a means to pressurize the press. Therefore, there is a dilemma in the Indonesian press. On the one hand, it has an obligation to inform news to the public; but on the other hand, at the same time it also has to face the possibility of pressure from some particular interest groups within society.

A key aim of analysis in this research was to examine the extent to which the Indonesian press plays its role in reporting sensitive issues such as terrorism and radicalism in religion and to what extent the rise of Islamic radicalism has contributed to the acts of terrorism in Indonesia. Further, the analysis also looks at the cultural, political and organisational context of Indonesian media representation of issue of terrorism.

Thus, to understand the representation of the issue of terrorism in the Indonesian news media, I looked at why and how the issue of terrorism came to the surface and its relation to radical Islamism in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, how it affected the Indonesian social and political conditions and how the Indonesian government policy dealt with the issue. At the same time, I also looked at how all these conditions affected the way the Indonesian news media, each with its own organisational background, reported this sensitive issue.
CHAPTER III
TERRORISM, MEDIA AND ISLAM

Introduction

The representation of terrorism, terrorists and terrorist events in the Indonesian news media is a result of complex process. As authors such as Laqueur (1987), Tuman (2003) and Lewis (2005) have noted, contemporary terrorism is necessarily shaped in terms of media and communications systems. This chapter examines the concepts that are relevant to this study. They include terrorism, media, Islam, jihad and radical Islamists. In particular the chapter outlines the debate over the definition of terrorism. It is important to examine this concept, as different scholars, organisations and governments tend to interpret terrorism in terms of their own perspectives and interests. It is particularly important to distinguish terrorism from other forms of militancy, political violence and criminal activities. Similarly, the attachment of 'terrorism' to particular ethnic, religious or national groups needs to be problematised in order to unpick the adage—one person's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter. The concept is linked directly to issues of news reporting and representation in terms of the specific interest of the current study.

The terrorist attacks on Indonesia's tourist island, Bali on 12 October 2002, the bombings of the J. W. Marriott Hotel on 5 August 2003 and the Australian Embassy on 9 September 2004 have aroused both domestic and global concerns and attention. The condemnations of these acts of terror came from foreign governments, analysts and news media from all over the world. These attacks have led to suggestions that that terrorists have turned Southeast Asia into a 'haven' to organize and launch their acts of terror.

National as well as global media networks continuously reported the events. The global community's perception of the events then has been influenced by the way the media represent the issue in their reportage. At a particular point, these terrorist events as well as other similar events that have occurred in other parts of the world have triggered the
discussion of the meaning of terrorism. There has been a discourse among political analysts that meanings or definitions of terrorism and terrorists are determined by Western (American) governments who seek to introduce the values of western democracy. Thus, the process of labelling militant groups 'terrorists' depends on the interpretation of the West. At the same time, the relationship between terrorism and media is important to be contested as there has been a growing understanding that the media contributes to the escalation impact of terrorism. Thus, terrorism can be regarded as a communication process and that the media can be regarded as part of this process.

This chapter also outlines the definition of Islam, *jihad* and radical Islamism. Discussion on these concepts is relevant as there seems to be a generalisation that has been shaped by political analysts and the global media network as if Islam should always be associated with violence. The acts of terrorism done by some radical groups in the name of Islam have worsened the condition. Clearly, the September 11 (9/11) attack and the Bali bombing have raised the issue of Islam and the concept of *jihad* in Islam to the surface.

**Terrorism: Definition and Context**

There have been varying attempts to define the concept of terrorism, both in public and scholarly discourse. Different analysts, institutions and even governments have their own way and context of giving meaning to the concept. As Tuman notes, ‘academicians and theorists have fared no better at defining the word than governments and the experts they employ. This has led to a multiplicity of possibilities and has created its own kind of chaos about the word’(2003, p.4). On one level, the definitional difficulty is rooted in the evaluation of one and the same terrorist act as either a despicable or a justifiable means to political ends, as either the evil deed of ruthless terrorists or the justifiable act of freedom fighters and/or warriors of god. On another level, controversies over the definition of terrorism are rooted in the disagreement about how to classify the use of force by politically motivated groups or individuals on the one hand and by governments on the other (Nacos, 2002). It is argued that basically the definition of the meaning of terrorism is culturally constructed. Nevertheless, some common characteristics from various definitions are identifiable. If so, what constructs terrorism? What makes terrorism different from warfare?
Politically, most of the acts of terrorism are meant to reach political goals. It is clear, for instance, in the case of Bali bombing in 2002, perpetrated by radical group called Jemaah Islamiyah, that this group had used Islamic values like Jihad to justify its act of terror. For the international community, the attack on the tourists resort symbolizes for many westerners the object 'terror' of an organisation which claims that the ‘West' had oppressed Islam or Muslims. More generally, JI claims that globalization and capitalism are new forms of western colonization designed to control and exploit developing and especially Islamic countries (ICG. Asia Report No. 43, 2002). At the same time, for the Indonesian government, the attack represented an attempt by this group to politically pressure the government to replace the secular governmental system with an Islamic governmental system, based on al-Quran (the holy book of Muslims) and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. Under an Islamic governmental system, the law would be based on Shari’ a or Islamic Law (Lewis & Lewis, 2009; Barton, 2004).

The political objective of the act of terrorism is an essential characteristic of the concept. David J. Whittaker, in an attempt to present some criteria of terrorism, says that—

Terrorism is a premeditated, politically motivated use of violence or its threat to intimidate or coerce a government or the general public; it is a strategy of violence designed to achieve desired outcomes by instilling fear and insecurity; there is an unlawful use or threat of force through sustained campaigning or sporadic incidents; there is calculated use of violence against civilian, non-combatant targets; power is intrinsically at the root of political violence - its acquisition, its manipulation and its employment to effect changes; goals may be understood generally as political, social, ideological, or religious, otherwise terrorists would be thought of as delinquent criminals (2004, pp.1-2).

Horgan (2005, p.1) also states that terrorism involves the use or threat of use of violence as a means of attempting to achieve some sort of effect within a political context. Many terrorist groups like Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA), Red Army Faction (RAF) are formed to achieve political goals. ETA, for instance, invokes Marxist principles in their terror-based fight against the Spanish government. ETA sabotages the government in the Basque province by creating an economic crisis and terror in the province. Thus, politically the act of terrorism is deployed to suppress or attack a particular government.
The perpetrators of terrorist acts can be individual as in the case of Timothy McVeigh who bombed a federal building at the Oklahoma City, groups like *Jemaah Islamiyah* which is responsible for several bombings in Bali and Jakarta, and possibly a state such as Libya which sponsored the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine which was accused of the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 in 1988.

The meaning of terrorism is also socially constructed. In this sense, terrorism is different and distinct from murder, assault, arson, destruction of property, or the threat of the same, primarily because of the impact of terrorist violence and destruction reaches more than the immediate targeted victims (Tuman, 2003). In most cases, the immediate victims of a terrorist act are incidental to the more important objective of promoting the terrorists’ cause through the media. Thus, while the victims of an attack may have a symbolic value—as for *western* tourists in Bali or the global capitalism represented in the twin towers of New York—they are really a means to an end. For most contemporary acts of terror, this end is media publicity which then works to promote the interests of the terrorist organisation. Terrorism, as Walter Lacqueur noted (1987), is fundamentally a communicational event.

In short, the definition of terrorism develops in a cultural process where symbolic interaction between terrorists, acts of violence, victims as immediate targets and government agencies as a state form are taking place. The dynamic relationship between each element which occurs in a different time and place has contributed to the variety of definitions and meanings of terrorism.

Since there have been many attempts to define the meaning of terrorism, some terrorism analysts have tried to synthesize the meaning by observing and analysing terrorist events. Brian Jenkins, who has been working as a consultant on terrorism and counter-terrorism security, gives the most basic and simple definition of terrorism. He suggested that *terrorism is the use or the threatened use of force designed to bring about a political change* (in Tuman, 2003, p. 11). Some prefer Jenkins' definition because they find comfort and comprehensiveness in its simplicity - for terrorism here is political violence- regardless of other motives, and irrespective of the nature of the target of the violence (civilian, law enforcement, or military personnel) or the perpetrator of the terror act (whether an individual, group, criminal enterprise, or state) (Tuman, 2003). Despite its simplicity, the
definition gives a broad interpretation to those who are interested in using the concept, for instance by not limiting and clearly identifying acts of terrorism. Jenkins' definition can include acts of politically motivated violence that are perpetrated by a state—this is what Nacos (2002) and Tuman (2003) call terrorism from above. Compare the definition to that of Martha Crenshaw who says, ‘Terrorism is a conspirational style of violence calculated to alter the attitudes and behaviour of multitude audiences. It targets the few in a way that claims the attention of the many. Terrorism is not mass or collective violence but rather the direct activity of small groups’ (in Tuman, 2003, p.5). Crenshaw’s definition denies the possibility of the involvement of a state or a person that can perform the act of terror as shown by Libya that supported the bombing of Pan Am Flight 105 and Tymothy McVeigh who bombed the federal building in Oklahoma City. It also excludes the acts of violence that a powerful democratic state like the US might perpetrate against the non-combatants of enemy countries. This definition, therefore, challenges the idea that the US led invasion of Afghanistan and its use of personnel-based artillery like scatter bombs could ever be defined as 'terrorism'—even though nearly 100,000 non-combatant citizens died during the invasion (Lewis, 2005). Nonetheless, the simplicity of Jenkin’s definition also becomes the weakness as it invites debate over what constitutes political in this concept. Another issue is also how to classify violence that involve act of terrorisms.

In this context, the Indonesian government, following the Bali bombing event, issued the Terrorism Elimination Act No. 15/2003. Chapter 6 of this act defines the definition of an act of terrorism as follows—

Setiap orang yang dengan sengaja menggunakan kekerasan atau ancaman kekerasan menimbulkan suasana teror atau rasa takut terhadap orang secara meluas atau menimbulkan korban yang bersifat massal, dengan cara merampas kemerdekaan atau hilangnya nyawa dan harta benda orang lain, atau mengakibatkan kerusakan atau kehancuran terhadap obyek-obyek vital yang strategis atau lingkungan hidup atau fasilitas publik atau fasilitas internasional...

[Everyone who purposively uses violence or threat of violence and creates a significant fear within the wider public or causes widespread injury or death, denies public freedom, or causes damage or the destruction of vital and strategic infrastructure or the environment or international facilities…]
Another synthesized meaning of terrorism has been given by A. P. Schmid, who identifies several definitions and defines specific attributes that form the concept. Schmid offers the following comprehensive definition of terrorism—

Terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi) clandestine individual, group, or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal, or political reasons, whereby – in contrast to assassination – the direct targets of violence are not the main target. The immediate human targets of violence are generally chosen randomly (targets of opportunity) or selectively (representative or symbolic targets) from a target population, and serve as message generators. Threat – and violence-based communication process between terrorist (organisation), (imperilled) victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target (audience(s)), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought (Cited in Horgan, 2005, p.13-14)

With regard to the cause of terrorism, Schmidt’s definition is similar to Whitaker (2004) and Hogan (2005) who suggest that a terrorist act may be perpetrated for more than just political reasons. A terrorist act may be motivated by a combination of reasons—political, ideological, social or religious. The definition also acknowledges the variety of terrorist actors, which include the state and single actors. In terms of terrorism actors, Walter Laqueur also argues that terrorism can be perpetrated by the state and state agencies (1987). He classifies terrorism into top-down and bottom up terrorism. In this context, it is possible that state intelligence and quasi-military agencies like the CIA and their paramilitary activities, including their involvement in the political processes of Nicaragua, the Sudan and various parts of the Middle East, are not entirely dissimilar to the activities of national and international terrorist organisations that have been sponsored by specific states such as Libya, Taliban Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia (Lewis, 2005).

Schmid also emphasizes how the victims, who are usually not the main target, become the instrument to increase the fear of the act of terror for the main target—which is usually a government or a state or group. As Laqueur and others note, terrorism can also be seen as a communication process where the terrorists send their messages through the act of violence they deploy.
Compared with Jenkins' relatively simple definition of terrorism, Schmid’s definition is comprehensive and more complex. In this definition of terrorism, Schmid very clearly states exactly what he means by terrorism, allowing for objectives including terror, demands, and attention as well as examining the means by which objectives are accomplished in intimidation, coercion, or propaganda (Tuman, 2003). This thesis will apply Schmid's definition as a starting point for analysing the different approaches to terrorism of our focused news outlets. Schmid's comprehensive approach, in particular, provides a solid foundation for understanding the relationship between the media and terrorism—the focus of the next section.

**Media and Terrorism**

Terrorism has become a much more prominent and broadly discussed global issue since the attacks on the World Trade Centre twin towers in New York and Pentagon building in Washington D.C. on 11 September 2001, famously known as '9/11'. Several significant terrorist acts have occurred since then, including the Bali bombing (12 October 2002), the bombing of a harbour by MILF in Davao, Philippines (2 April 2003), the bombing of some housing complexes where many international citizens live in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (12 May 2003), the bombing of the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia (9 September 2004), the bombing of a public place and bus in London, England (7 July 2005). Most recently, there were attacks on the Marriot and Ritz-Carlton Hotels in Jakarta, Indonesia (17 July 2009).

What follows these events is a globalized coverage of the event by a variety of news media institutions. For example, for several days, television stations reported the 9.11 events live from the scene in New York (dubbed Ground Zero), the Pentagon and the wreckage of the plane in Pennsylvania. The global media presented continuous feeds of the plane that crashed into one of the twin tower buildings, which symbolized American economic global primacy, the collapse of the twin tower building, the dead and injured victims, the desperate faces of rescuers who were looking for survivors, and the desperate families of the victims. At the same time, the print media, like newspapers and news magazines, provided analytical reportage that tried to explain the causes and the impact of these acts of terror. In Lewis' words, ‘the mediated visions of a chaotic and terrible death, of burning and shattered bodies, and of destruction of our towering symbols of progress and social
order have become etched into a new consciousness, a new fear that is both pessimistic and strangely ennobled by the imperatives of a heroic defence. 'Terrorism' becomes the rubric for an insidious and darkly imagined power - the risk conditions of an annihilation which randomly assaults the integrity of our history, institutions, community and being’ (2005, p. 21).

Within this context of a knowledge system that is based on the global media, an act of terror and its relation with news media raises some interesting questions. Principally, the question to be asked is: how is terrorism to be understood as a communication process? To be more expansive, we might return to the claim made by British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, who famously argued in the 1980s that publicity is the 'oxygen' of terrorism. There is no doubt that communication is the central element of contemporary acts of terrorism as Nacos (2002) claims. In order to convey their message to the main target, which is usually a government or a state, terrorists create a situation through the use of violence to symbolic or random victims. The selection of these immediate victims is to broaden the impact of their action and to get the attention of the existing government. As Schmid and de Graf (1982, p. 14) have pointed out, for the terrorist, the 'immediate victim is merely instrumental, the skin of a drum beaten to achieve a calculated impact on a wider audience. As such, an act of terrorism is in reality an act of communication. For the terrorist, the message matters, not the victim.’

There is a strong theatrical element in most terrorism (Hoffman, 1995, p.132). It can be said that terrorism is a stage upon which political 'drama' is performed for specific audiences, (national or international publics, particular groups or individuals, or political elites) to achieve particular goals. Adopting the media triangle proposed by Lewis (2005), it is understood that the theatrical impact is created through the pressing crowd of reporters, camera crew and technicians sent to bring an event on to the screen. Media institutions have to compete with each other to give the best coverage of the event. At the same time, the media institutions have to consider various policies that come from the owner of the media, editorial board and government. They may also need to pay attention to an unwritten policy that comes from society or interest groups. In some developing countries like Indonesia, interest groups can force their perspectives onto the media which affect the way the media report an issue. Media institutions also need to consider their readers who later determine how the media convey their message. These inputs and
interests may distort reporting in such a way as to make the representation more like propaganda than reporting (Herman & Chomsky, 2001).

It is sometimes remarked that the intentions of terrorists and of the media are similar. Both deal with publicity and will do their best to keep the story alive and exciting. Both try to personalize the drama of the incident by describing the terrorist-actors briefly and making more of the emotions of victims and onlookers— their anguish, fear and anger.

This situation has invited a controversy as to whether the news media is part of terrorism itself. Norris et al. (2003) identify a significant debate over media coverage. This debate centres upon two interrelated questions. First, does media coverage err on the side of group terrorists, leading them legitimacy and credibility, as well as unintentionally encouraging further incidents through a ‘contagion’ effect? Alternatively, do journalistic conventions err instead on the side of governments, due to an over-reliance upon the framework of interpretation offered by public officials, security experts, and military commentators, with news functioning ultimately to reinforce support for political leaders and the security policies they implement? (Norris et al., 2003, p.3). I would actually introduce this issue through the authors.

What is presented in the media contributes to how the audience form their opinion of the event. Media texts, along with information from past history of similar events, have become the context of how the audience respond to a terrorist event. At the same time, the media’s responsibility to inform the public has given the terrorist a way to gain publicity. The rapid growth of the telecommunication industries has resulted in events in one part of the world being seen by the audience at exactly the same time in the other part. The Gulf War in the 1990s is a good example of this and CNN Television Network defines itself as the global key player in media industries as the news television station. Through the media, terrorists can increase the level of threat which later creates a wider state of fear among both the population and the government. They can exploit far-reaching, instant, and global media networks and information highways to carry the news of their violence along with what has been called "propaganda of the deed" (Nacos, 2002, p. 8). Thus, when terrorists launch a rocket into Great Britain's foreign spy headquarters, bomb the hull of the USS Cole, hold hostages in a remote part of the Philippines, or hijack an Indian airliner— they
do not simply commit violence, they execute premeditated terrorism that virtually assures a great deal of news coverage (Nacos, 2002).

The government also needs the media to inform society about what sorts of policies and strategies are needed to overcome terrorism, violence and insecurity. There are times when governments and media work together to deal with the terrorism issue. When the most wanted terrorist in Indonesia, Dr Azahari, was killed in Batu, Malang in November 2005, the Indonesian Police Headquarters used news media to announce the result. To the government, the coverage signifies the crucial social and political significance of terrorism and the need for governments to provide a secure social and cultural environment for its citizens. On the other hand, as part of its role as the watchdog of the state, the news media plays its role in scrutinizing the policies and actions of government. As a critical agent of civil society and protector of public interest, the media is also a social and cultural pillar—it is, in the terms of Thomas Calryse the Fourth Estate. While many social reformers and critics, like Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky (2002) and Henry Giroux (1998) believe that this function of the media has atrophied over time, it is still a critically important component of the media's social role.

In mass society in which direct or interpersonal contact and communication between the governors and the governed is no longer possible, the media provide the critical conduit that links public officials and the polity. While this connection is meant to be part of an information and feedback loop, governments and the media sometimes are intensely aligned in the ways in which events are reported. In crisis times, in particular, there is often an alignment of the media and the interests of specific governments (Cottle, 2008). The American news media, for instance, became substantially aligned with the Administration of George W. Bush when he first declared 'war on terrorism' following the horrors of 9/11. It is exemplified in the research result by Todd M. Schaefer when he analysed the framing of the US Embassy bombings and September 11 attacks in African and US Newspapers (Norris et al., 2003). Schaefer discovered that US Newspapers tended to cover the effect of, and retaliation for, the September 11 attacks, and more coverage was devoted to public officials, politics, and international relations. It means that the news media has taken position along with the government in dealing with the issue of terrorism.
In sum, terrorism is principally communicational. The relationship between the media and terrorism is strong as terrorism uses the global media networks to convey its message and create a state of fear among the wider audience for various purposes through the use of methods of violence. The media, on the other hand, reports terrorism extensively and continuously as this issue has high news values. In reporting the issue, media institutions take into account historical or cultural, political and social factors. The media audience actively ‘read’ the news based on their previous references of the event to make sense of the meaning presented in the media text. More generally, the style and political orientation of reporting is affected by its social role and its relationship to government and public interests. The notion of ‘balanced reporting’ is highly precarious and dynamic: reporting and representation of terrorism is subject to a multiplicity of interests and social interpretations.

**Islam and Islamism**

The Arabic word 'Islam' simply means 'submission', and derives from a word meaning 'peace'. In a religious context, it means complete submission to the will of God. This religion was spread by the Prophet Muhammad, who at the age of 40 received his first revelation from God through the Angel Gabriel. The revelations which took 23 years in the process, is known as the Quran. The Quran becomes the primary guiding source for every Muslim’s faith and practice. The Sunna or also known as Hadith, the practice and example of the Prophet, is the second source of sacred knowledge for Muslims. For people of the Muslim faith, the Sunna is a reliably transmitted report of what the Prophet said, did, or approved. Belief in the Sunna is part of the Islamic faith. Some Western analysts name Islam as ‘Muhammadanism’ because it was spread by Muhammad. In some respects, term is inaccurate and misleading as it suggests that Muslims worship Muhammad rather than God. 'Allah' is the Arabic name for God, which is used by Arab Muslims and Christians alike.

Islamism, which many scholars regard as synonymous with “Islamic activism”, is defined as the active assertion and promotion of beliefs, prescriptions, laws, or policies that are held to be Islamic in character (ICG Report No. 37, 2005). In comparison with other terms like “Islamic fundamentalist” and “Radical Islamist”, this term seems more reasonable and acceptable. Islamism covers a broad spectrum of political and social convictions. At one
extreme are those who would merely like to see Islam accorded proper recognition in national life in terms of national symbols. At the other extreme are those who want to see the radical transformation of society and politics, by whatever means, into an absolute theocracy (Barton, 2004).

The discourse, which developed in the minds of analysts as well as policy makers in Western countries, has tended to represent Islamic activism into two main characteristics. Firstly, Islamic activism is seen as an intensely personal faith and doesn’t relate to any political commitment. It is usually labelled as “Islam”. Secondly, Islamic activism represents both faith and politics, which is labelled as “Islamism” or “political Islam”. “Political Islam” is used to describe how some Islamic minority groups exploit the religion for political ends, which is considered as problems for some Western and Muslim countries. According to Barton (2004, p.29), Islamism is a response to modernity that has transformed the religion of Islam into a political ideology. Islamism is concerned with changing society and political institutions in order to bring both the state and society into conformity with understanding of Islam. Among other things, this involves formalising the state’s constitutional and legislative recognition of Islam and, for radical Islamists, introducing the Shari’a or Islamic law.

The concept of “political Islam” has been used by Western political analysts and governments, especially American, to describe movements that tend to be reactive and use Islam as the main vehicle for attacking Western interests. It is adapted to the situation where Islam is against Western policies and therefore is considered a threat. Say for instance, Huntington’s thesis which was first published in Foreign Affairs Journal in 1993 and later published as a book in 1996 entitled The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order.

In his thesis, Huntington mentions that since the matters of ideology, politics and economics are controlled by Western countries, it is important to focus on civilizations that are not from the west as common enemies. These common enemies are built not through the interests of Western civilization, but for the purpose of economic and political interests. These enemies are not countries, rather the civilizations themselves. In relation to this issue, Huntington sees Islam and Confucianism as civilizations that have emerged to challenge Western interests, values, and power. Islam as civilization is a political force that
threatens global political interests of Western governments. Conflicts that occurred in the Middle East between Iraq and Kuwait, some ex-Soviet Union countries and ex-Yugoslavia country are evidences to justify Huntington’s thesis of the clash of civilizations (Bustamam-Ahmad, 2003). After the fall of Soviet Union country, Western (American) governments’ foreign policies identify Islam as a new threat to Western democracy. In Lewis' paraphrase of Huntington's ideas, he notes ‘Foreign policy, including aid, development and security policy, should be focused around self-preservation and civilizational goals. The primacy of the west is not to be taken for granted, but needs to be seen as a precarious and historically legitimate condition which must be protected at all cost against those who might seek to destroy it’ (2005, p. 59).

It has to admit that the 9/11 event does not only bring the issue of the change of ‘national security and threat’ paradigm to the surface, especially to the Bush government and its allies; this event has also created two phenomena that colour the international political situation since 2001 (Sihbudi, 2006). Firstly, the declaration of ‘war on terrorism’ by the Bush government after the 9/11 event has increased the tension of relationship between the United States (the Bush Government) and Muslim countries. This tension is triggered by the fact that two countries (Afghanistan and Iraq) that become the victims of Bush government retaliation are Muslim countries. Moreover, the Bush government tended to generalize ‘fundamentalism’-- Islamic groups are identical with terrorists. Through various foreign policies, the Bush government undoubtedly pressure leaders of other countries to extinguish these Islamic groups under the general label of 'terrorism' and the war on terror. As a result, significant tensions have arisen between secular leaders and Islamic activists, as in the case of Indonesia and Pakistan.

Secondly, the force of the United States unilateralism that becomes stronger especially after the occupation of Iraq. This event has weakened the credibility of the United Nations in the eyes of the international community. Further, American unilateralism and the willingness of the US to act so forcefully in terms of national self-interest has become increasingly threatening for weaker nations whose policies are seen by the US administration as a 'problem'. Within this context, scholars like Chomsky and Girouz argue that the Bush government has neglected the principles of human rights – an issue that Western countries and community always hold strongly - in the pursuit, capture and processing of people they regards as 'terrorists (see Grenfell & James, 2008). According to
Jeff Lewis (2005; Agamben, 2004) Bush government policies, especially after the 9/11, have legitimised Huntington’s thesis on the clash of civilization.

Thus, there are numerous scholars, including many western scholars, who disagree with Huntington’s analysis and the premise upon which it is based. Among these political analysts are Noam Chomsky (2001), Donald K. Emmerson (1993), Jeane J. Kirkpatrick (n.d.), Tariq Ali (2002) and Edward Said (2001). Emmerson (1993), for instance, criticises the way Huntington has misused the term ‘civilization’ to describe location, teaching, ethnicity, country, religion and continent.

According to these critics of the Huntington thesis, terrorism and terrorist violence is not a characteristic of Muslim people or Islam more generally (Ali, 2002). Policies based on the idea of an imagined east-west divide simply impute a disposition to violence that is actually restricted to a very small minority of people who are often recent converts to Islamic extremist views (Kellerhals, 2007).

These policymakers tend to ignore the reasons why this radical minority groups use violence method to achieve their goals. What matters to them is how to uphold Western values and democracy and how this concept of democracy and values are accepted by other civilizations.

Huntington's dichotomy between the east and the west is faulty, therefore, not only because it misreads the diversity and complex interchange between the two 'civilizations', but because these civilizations cannot be so easily reduced to a monadic and integrated structure. The Muslim world is extremely diverse and comprises many different people with many different approaches to their religion, religious practices and religious culture. Moreover, the idea of caricaturing a culture because of its radical, militant or extremist elements will always be fallible. It would be the same as suggesting that Hinduism is characterized by its most violent elements, or Christianity and 'western' cultures by the viciousness of its own history of aggression and terror.

In this context, it is also wrong to caricature Islamic fundamentalism or political Islam as an inevitably violent religious disposition. Such a caricature ignores the diversity of outlook, purpose and method which is actually to be found in Islamic activism. Instead, it postulates a simple dichotomy within an otherwise monolithic category between “radicals”
and “moderates” (ICG Report No 37, 2005). This dichotomy is used to describe those with whom Western governments can and can’t work. “Moderate” Islamists are those who hold Islam as their personal faith and believe that Islam must be adapted in every aspect of life, but at the same time they are open to and respectful of other belief systems and cultures. This is the kind of Islamic group that Western governments would like to work with. “Radical” Islamists are those who take their belief in earnest and cannot be bought off, and the implementation of the Shari’a or Islamic law is intolerable as a panacea for society’s ills.

Within the context of Indonesia, there are Islamic groups that are radical merely in terms of ideas and allegiance to Shari'a. However, these groups are not necessarily violent (Barton, 2004; Lewis and Lewis, 2009); these groups may be regarded as purist, but they are not necessarily violent nor do they support terrorist acts. Indeed, many scholars recognise that these purist groups are totally opposed to violence, even though they may be deemed radical in their religious disposition. Lewis and Lewis argue, in fact, that many Indonesian Salafy groups regard violence as an anathema to the strict readings of the Quran, particularly when it involves harm to Muslims or a government that represents people of the Muslim faith (Lewis and Lewis, 2009).

**Jihad and Radical Islamism**

The misperception of Islam as a religion of violence is related to the concept of *jihad*—which literally means 'struggle'. It is another term that is sometimes misinterpreted by western public officials and scholars. This term has become prominent in scholarly and public discourse following Osama bin Laden's exhortation for Muslims to engage in a particular kind of *jihad*. In 1998, specifically, bin Laden called for an armed struggle against America, Israel and their allies. Imam Samudra, one of the Bali bombers said at his trials that he and his brothers were obliged to wage *jihad* against infidels who oppress Muslims as stated in the Quran. To these radical Islamists, *jihad* is an obligation for Muslims to defend Islam as religion and its believers. To the extreme level, *jihad* is understood as war against those who are considered to have insulted Islam and oppressed Muslims. At their trials, the Bali bombers had confidently admitted to having conducted this extreme form of *jihad* and said that the terror they had spread was legal and justified. The same case is also found in the recording of the confession of the 2005 Bali II suicide
bombers who believed what they did was *jihad*. All these current events have formed an understanding as if the concept of *jihad* exclusively relates to the use of violence against groups or governments that are considered to have insulted and oppressed Islam. In western media, in particular, *jihad* has come to mean violent attacks against the enemies of Islam (Karim, 2002).

Understanding of *jihad* as simply and solely the use of force or method of violence for defensive purposes has led to “radical Islamism”. According to Barton (2004, p. 30), radical Islamism seeks to impose a “tyranny” of minority over majority and is concerned about trespassing of the rights of others. Radical Islamists see themselves as being involved in a benevolent struggle to force society to take the only medicine that can cure it of its ills. It is noteworthy to make clear the distinction between radical Islamism and terrorism. Not all radical Islamists are terrorists, but there are radical Islamists that use terror for political ends.

In a variety of sources, *jihad* is identified as both ideology and catalyst indicating its many applications. Patricia A. Martinez notes that over the last century, *jihad* is the term that has been used the most in misrepresentations and misunderstandings of Muslims and their cultures so as to depict Islam as a religion of violence (in Ramakrishna and Tan, 2003:60). Some analysts that are opposed to this concept believe that there should be no *jihad* in religion at all: that religion should contain no law of war: that since war is a bad thing, religion must oppose it and not itself establish war as a law. They claim that the principle of *jihad* in Islam is against one of the basic rights of man: freedom of belief. This argument is also used to explain why Islam has always spread up to now.

On the other hand, to others who oppose the above argument, *jihad* is seen as the way to protect Islam. Mutahhari (1985) notes that one must regard the conditions and motives of war, and consider for what motive and aim war is fought. If *jihad* is a war of defence undertaken in the face of aggression, it is then acceptable; otherwise it would not be peace, it would be surrender. Despite all the debate over the concept, understanding the evolution of the concept within its historical context is worthwhile.

The semantic meaning of the Arabic word of *jihad* means to fight or to struggle or to exert. The object of exerting one’s utmost effort is often categorized as against a visible enemy, the devil, and/or aspects of one’s self. *Jihad* is never used to mean warfare in the Quran,
but its connotation with *qital* (which means “fighting”) in early Muslim history and in the Quran – where it appears in 167 verses – was to legitimate warfare (Martinez in Ramakrishna & Tan, 2003). In the Quran, Surah Al-Hajj (38-41) describes the accepted view of all the commentators that describe about *jihad*,

> Truly God defends those who have faith. Truly God loves not the treacherous rejecter (kafir). Permission (for warfare) is given to those who are attacked and definitely wronged. And truly God is capable of helping without justice, for no reason except their saying: “Our Nourisher is God” and if God did not prevent people, some with some (others) then truly cloisters, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the Name of God is oft brought to mind, would have been destroyed. And God will help whoever helps Him - for truly, God is Powerful, Prevailing - those who, if we settle them in the earth, establish prayer, pay the zakat and command to what is recognized and prohibit what is rejected. And with God is the result of all affairs.

The permission of *jihad* as the concept of fighting or war is subject to some conditions. What are the conditions? One is that the opposing side is in a state of aggression. Those belonging this side are attacking Muslims, and because they are fighting against Muslims, then Muslims must fight them back. It is possible that the other side does not propose to fight Muslims, but is guilty of a gross injustice towards another group of human beings, and the Muslims have it in their power to save those human beings from the clutches of that aggressor. If the Muslims do not save them, what they are doing in effect is helping that oppressor’s oppression against the oppressed. In another case, it is possible that barriers have been established by those who are against the call of Islam, meaning that these people negate the freedom of that call and become the obstacle to its diffusion, while Islam says that those barriers are to be removed. The Muslims may be in a situation whereby a party has not transgressed against them but has committed some type of injustice against a group from another people, who may be Muslims, or who may be non-Muslims. If they are Muslims -- like today’s plight of the Palestinians who have been exiled from their homes, whose wealth has been seized, who have been subjected to all kinds of transgression -- according to Mutahhari (1985), *jihad* is even obligatory.

It is important to understand *jihad* as “defensive” in a sense that waging *jihad* is never an aggression as principally war is not allowed in Islam except for two reasons: self-defence
and the proliferation of the Islamic faith. It is to argue that principally the concept of *jihad* relates to an attempt to protect Islam and Muslims and those who are oppressed.

After the end of the first century and the end of the Muslim empire, the concept of *jihad* evolved and was no longer solely concerned with “to struggle”, “to fight” or self defence against those who threaten Islam and Muslims (Blankinship, 1994). *Jihad* has also been understood as the struggle with one’s own heart and emotion, the attempt to bring oneself into accord with the will of God. The implementation of this concept can take various forms. In daily life activities, working, studying, praying and any forms of inner-worldly asceticism are classified as *jihad*. The logic is that it makes little sense to claim status as a *mujahid*, struggling to bring guidance to the world, if there is no corresponding growth in one’s own awareness of God.

According to Hadith, waging *jihad* in God’s path is specifically defined as a duty incumbent upon every able-bodied Muslim. It is further explained by the trusted storytellers of Hadith which strengthen the fact that the concept of *jihad* may take some forms. One of the trusted storytellers, Imam al-Bukhari, says that performing the pilgrimage to Mecca is equated with performing the war *jihad* and that women’s *jihad* is the pilgrimage, although women may also go out to war with men in non-combatant roles. Being housewives is also another form of *jihad* for women. Qurtubi says that building a mosque to transmit the knowledge and religion of Islam is called the best practice of *jihad*. Finally, in a tradition which spiritualises and dematerialises the concept, Ibn Mubarak says that the true fighter in God’s path (*mujahid*) is described as he who struggles against himself by himself. Thus the whole enterprise of *jihad*, especially in its later personifications, is within a context of sanctity, of the struggle to a fidelity to Islam. This is far different from the common understanding that *jihad* is merely a call to violence and a declaration of war (Martinez in Ramakrishna & Tan, 2003). Even if *jihad* is said to merely relate to a call to violence or war, there are conditions that have to be fulfilled before Muslims are encouraged to go to war. “However the overwhelming majority of hadith refer to the military struggle when they use the term *jihad*,” says Khalid Blankinship (1994).

If the fact that the concept of *jihad* relates to the struggle with one’s own heart, self defence, and the proliferation of Islamic faith, how do we explain radicalism that is shown by Osama bin Laden and the confessed Bali bombers? From the “Letter to America”
written by Osama bin Laden and the confession video compact disc of the Bali II suicide bombers, these radical Islamists wage *jihad* because they believe that Western governments have oppressed Muslims through various ways: ideological, economic and political. In his letter, Osama bin Laden wrote, “Why are we fighting you?” he shortly answers, “Because you attacked us and continue to attack us, because you attacked us in Palestine”. His next question, “What are we calling you to, and what do we want from you?”, and he answers, “the first thing we are calling you to is Islam” and then “the second thing we call you to is to stop your oppression…”

Meanwhile, the Bali II suicide bombers’ confession that were recorded in the video compact disc and globally broadcasted claimed that Western countries had attacked Islamic countries and spread bad influence on human beings. One of the suicide bombers believed that what he did was *jihad* to defend Islam and the use of violence was allowed to achieve the goal. In their extreme understanding, *jihad* was a noble action and those who waged *jihad* in the name of God and died because of it would go to heaven directly and lived by God’s side (the Quran, Surah Ali Imran: 169-170). If so, why did the suicide bombers choose Bali as their place to wage *jihad*? Bali was chosen as the mediated target as it becomes the most popular Western tourist destination in Indonesia. It was seen as the representation of a region that is contaminated with Western values, despite the fact that Bali is part of Indonesia as the biggest Muslim country in the world. It is the people that become the target, not the place. In this context, to these radical Islamists, the use of methods of violence is legitimated in relation to the defence of Islam and as retaliation to those who are considered to have oppressed human beings, especially other Muslims.

Radical Islamists like Osama bin Laden and the late Imam Samudra, for instance, believed that Western governments, especially America, have politically, economically and culturally oppressed Muslims countries and therefore must be fought. According to them, Western governments’ foreign policies toward Palestine, Afghanistan, and some other Muslim countries are considered to have implemented a double standard which tends to benefit Western interests in the region. In the case of war in Iraq, it is clear that America’s invasion of the country was motivated by economic and political interests rather than upholding peace in the region by claiming that Iraq had developed mass destruction weapons, an allegation which was never verifiable. America’s dependency on oil from Middle East countries has become the primary reason of its existence in the region and
consequently affects its foreign policy. This condition is regarded by radical Islamists as modern colonization and threat to the existence of Muslims. Within this context, to some radical Islamists, waging *jihad* is inevitable.

In the eyes of these people, what they do is part of *jihad* and they claim to be *mujahid* who fight in God’s path. In his book *Aku Melawan Teroris* (I Fight the Terrorists), which was written during his years in jail and published in 2004, Imam Samudra historically described how the role of Western government had resulted in the fall of the Caliphate of Ustmaniyah, the latest Islamic caliphate, in Turkey in 1924. Since then, there has been no peace and justice for Muslims. At the same time, *Ulama* (Islamic leaders) have been busy with the Quran and books of Hadith, but tend to ignore the fact that their holy land and *umma* (community of Islamic believers) have been threatened and oppressed. In response to this situation, he then supports those who wage *jihad* (Samudra 2004, pp.89-96).

Looking at the impact of Bali bombing which also killed Muslims and the fact that Imam Samudra and Amrozi showed no feeling of guilt, it is argued that these radical Islamists have reinterpreted the meaning of *jihad*. They take the meaning of *jihad* to its original roots in the proliferation of Islam and Muslim empire, but refuse to accept the strict rules it enjoined (such as no women, children and civilians could be harmed in war) and negating the fact that *jihad* has evolved into its peaceful etymology and usage. In his book, Imam Samudra said, “To fight civilians of colonial states is legal for the sake of balance and justice. Blood for blood, lives for lives and … civilians for civilians! That’s balance.” He further explained,”…the fighting against civilians of colonial states, which was formerly not allowed, is allowed because of excessive actions toward civilians by governments of colonial states” (2004, p.116). Thus, *jihad* is invoked and filled with new meaning, but the new context to be legitimized is expressed in classical Islamic terms. *Jihad* has been manipulated and reinterpreted to fit with the interests of these radical Islamists. According to Ba’abduh, who wrote a book *Mereka Adalah Teroris* (They are the Terrorists), Samudra had twisted the truth and misled the fact. According to Ba’abduh , Samudra's propaganda re-created terrorism as *jihad*, terrorists as *mujahid*, liars as honest men, criminals as the defenders of the oppressed (2004, p. 250). He had ignored some conditions required for a Muslims to declare the state of *jihad*, such as that the other side is in the state of aggression and that women and children are to be protected or not to be killed in war.
Radical Islam and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Indonesia

Radical Islam has made tremendous inroads into the hearts and minds of Arabic-speaking Muslims. In the socio-cultural realm, militant Islamic discourse maintains hegemony in the public debate among Arabs, replacing Pan-Arabism and Marxism. Emmanuel Sivan (1998) notes that radical Islamism has a profound impact on gender roles, fertility, consumption habits, as well as on the marginalization of local Christians (especially in Middle Eastern countries) and the censorship of movies, plays and books. Hyper-rigorous religious practice has spread, leading to a growing social pressure towards conformity, the best example of which is the donning of the veil by women. Voluntary Islamic organisations proliferate; the popularity of Islamist media (notably audio- and videotapes) grows; and religious activism resurges as the major avenue for venting both protest and the craving for change.

The cultural success of radical Islam resides, above all, in the strength of voluntary Islamic associations. These associations remain the backbone of radical Islam. They carry out the work of da’wa, spreading the word and establishing a counter-society to propagate the movement's ideas, create support networks for members, and show that Islamic values can be fully implemented in the contemporary world.

The pressure of government on Islamic movements for so long also contributes to the resistance of radical Islamic groups. Secular leaders never gave political space to religious elites and religious-based political parties, even when they relied on them in their own ascension to power. Religious elites and parties felt they had been, at best, ignored and marginalized, and at worst, repressed by governments who feared the Islamization of politics. Abuza (2003), for instance, notes that the jailed former Malaysian deputy prime minister, Anwar Ibrahim, contends that the lack of democracy and civil society is the root cause of Islamic fundamentalism in Malaysia. Without a free press and a truly democratic system where people can blow off steam, radical Islamist provides one the only viable alternatives to the ruling condition.

At the same time, secular governments have used Islam to legitimise their political positions in the eyes of the community. Although Islamic leaders were marginalised in the involvement of government bureaucracy, they were allowed to run social activities, like da’wa or disseminating the teachings of Quran and Hadith, through existing Muslim
organisations like *Nahdhatul Ulama* and *Muhammadiyah* in Indonesia. Nevertheless, these social activities are monitored to assure that the content of *da’wa* doesn’t insult the government or jeopardise national security. The facilitation of the *hajj*, the pilgrimage to Mecca is another way of obtaining legitimacy from the Muslim community. In Indonesia, during 1990s more than 100,000 people went to Mecca with the support from the New Order government (Abuza, 2003). The high expense of the program, however, had raised suspicion that the government had marked up the expense and took advantage of people who would never dare to defy the government, which was backed up by the military.

All these issues above have contributed to the emergence of radical Islamic groups. Nevertheless, there is no evidence to suggest that radical Islamic groups have successfully taken over government. They may be socially and culturally implementing Islamic values in daily life, but politically they fail in taking over government. Radical Islamic movements in Arab countries have shown a persistent inability to become the major political player. In Algeria especially, a violent insurgency has led to many deaths but not to a takeover of the government, and the same holds to a lesser extent in Egypt, and Tunisia. In Yemen and Jordan, they had a share in governments as junior partners for brief periods, but exerted barely any influence on public policy. Only in Sudan did the radicals, in alliance with the army, manage to wrest power and hold it (Sivan, 1998).

Since their failed attempt to take over government either through violence, *da’wa* or parliament, radical Islamic groups then find ways of voicing their ideas through the acts of terror. They reinterpret *jihad* with the same definition as the early period of the emerging of the concept but with a new context in which killing women, civilians and even other Muslims is legitimised. Radical Islam is spreading very quickly across nations. The attack on Muslim countries such as Afghanistan by Western (American) governments has unified Muslims from all over the world, including radical Islamists. They have found the right moment to wage *jihad*. If they can’t win the war, they tend to create a way to pressure Western governments or governments of Muslim countries which are affiliated with the west. There are moderate Muslims, who are the majority of the population, that embrace tolerance and cohabitation with ethnic and religious minorities. Nevertheless, they are being overshadowed by radical Islamists who have strong desire to implement the *Shari’a* law and to establish Islamic states.
Conclusion

The definition of terrorism principally evolves through time and place. It is constructed socially, culturally and politically. Of some definitions proposed by analysts, Schmid’s definition of terrorism can be categorised as the most comprehensive. This definition recommends us to define the meaning in terms of methods used which is meant for more than just ‘political’ reason. It can be political, ideological, social or religious through the use of method of violence. The definition also acknowledges the variety of terrorism actors, which include states (state agencies), groups and single actors. These terrorist acts use immediate human targets to generate message. Threat and violence-based communication process between terrorist (organisation), (imperilled) victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target (audience(s)), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought.

It is clear that communication is the central element of acts of terrorism. This statement is based on an understanding that to convey their message to the main target which is usually a government or a state, terrorists create a situation through the use of violence toward immediate victims. On the other hand, media institutions have to compete with each other to give the best reporting of an event. It is sometimes inevitable that both the terrorists and the media have similar intentions. Both deal with publicity and will do their best to keep the story alive and exciting. News media reports terrorism extensively and continuously as this issue has high news values. In reporting the issue, media institutions must take into account historical or cultural, political and social factors.

In relation to the concept of Islam, there has been misleading understanding. The dichotomy between Islam and Islamism is weak. The argument is not strong as when we discuss either Islam or Islamism, both concepts contain political dimension. It also signifies that the concept is adopted by Western governments for political interests. Instead, there is a growing opinion to classify Islam as “moderate” and “radical”. “Moderate” Islamists are those who hold Islam as their personal faith and believe that Islam must be adapted in every aspect of life, but at the same time also open and respect to other belief and civilization. This is the kind of Islamic group that Western governments would like to work with. “Radical” Islamists are those who take their belief in earnest and cannot be bought off and the implementation of the Shari’a or Islamic law is intolerable as
a panacea for society’s ills. Nevertheless, it doesn’t mean that all radical Islamists are terrorists.

The misperception of Islam as a religion of violence is related to the concept of *jihad*, besides radicalism. Although the literal meaning of *jihad* is to fight or to struggle or to exert, *jihad* is never used to mean warfare in the Quran. It is perpetual to understand *jihad* within the context of “defensive” in a sense that waging *jihad* is never an aggression as principally war is not allowed in Islam except for two reasons: self defence and the proliferation of the Islamic faith. Principally the concept of *jihad* relates to an attempt to protect Islam and Muslims and those who are oppressed. The concept, however, has been misused by some radical Islamic groups to justify their acts of terror. In their literal understanding of *jihad*, it is a noble action and those who wage *jihad* in the name of God and die because of it would go straight to heaven.

The emergence of radical Islamic groups that have adopted Islamic values to legitimize their acts of terror must be put within the cultural, political and social contexts. Their attempts to establish Islamic states and the implementation of *Shari’a* law in some countries, as in the case of Indonesia, have resulted in the conflict with secular government. Hard-line and literal interpretation of Islam has made these radical groups to be considered as threat to some governments. This condition has insisted the government to pressure the groups and give less political role. In return, some radical Islamists find their ways to express their political behaviour through the adoption of violence acts.

Within the context of my research, the relation between terrorism, Islam and media and how the concepts of terrorism and Islam have become a crucial issue within Indonesian news media institutions within the context of social, political and cultural transition are interesting to look at. It is based on the fact that there had been a debate among government officials of the existence of terrorist network in Indonesia. Also, the fact that some bombing perpetrators who claimed their acts of terror in the name of Islam had affected the way the media represent the terrorism issue in their news.
PART 2: THE CONTEXT
CHAPTER IV
ISLAM, CULTURE AND POLITICS IN INDONESIA

Introduction

The relationship between Islam and cultural politics in Indonesia is extremely complex. This chapter examines the role of Islam in the evolution of civil society and democracy in Indonesia. The following chapter examines radical Islam and its role in Indonesia’s political development.

Political Islam has played a significant role in shaping the modern Indonesian political state. Its influence can be seen in the period of pre-independence, through to the Sukarno government, Suharto's New Order and the reform era. This chapter employs a chronological framework of analysis to examine the development of political Islam and its impact on the evolution of civil society and democracy in Indonesia.

As stated by William & Worden (1993)—

From the very outset of independence, Islam and the Indonesian state had a tense political relationship. The Pancasila's promotion of monotheism is a religiously neutral and tolerant statement that equates Islam with the other religious systems: Christianity, Buddhism, and Hindu-Balinese beliefs. Nonetheless, Muslim political groups had felt betrayed since signing the 1949 Jakarta Charter, under which they accepted a pluralist republic in return for agreement that the state would be based upon belief in one God with Muslims obligated to follow the Shari’a or Islamic law. The failure of the Sukarno government to follow through constitutionally and legally on this commitment set the agenda for future Islamic politics. At the extreme was the Darul Islam rebellion in 1948, which sought to establish an Islamic state.

President Suharto's New Order government undertook a major effort to subsume all of Indonesia's political cultures, with their different and often incompatible criteria for
legitimacy, into a national political culture based on the values set out in the *Pancasila*. As the consequence of this policy, some groups were marginalised in the name of national stability and development. The suppression of political Islam is characteristic of this period.

This chapter also describes the rise of civil society in the closing phase of the New Order regime and in the reform era. A discussion on civil society is crucial as the movement contributes to the re-emergence of political Islam in Indonesia. It is generally recognized that the existence of an active civil society in a country is linked to the vitality of political democracy. The aim of civil society is not to transform the state but rather to democratise society; in fact, civil society is a pre-condition for the existence of any democratic state. Freedom of speech and expression, including the freedom to criticize government without the prospect of being captured by the state's military apparatus has become characteristics of Indonesia today. It is during this reform era that many organisations were finally able to express their political interests, including some Islamic groups. An important point further examined in the following chapter, is the argument that the rise of civil society has contributed to the emergence of radical Islamism in Indonesia.

This chapter will contribute to the understanding of Islam within the context of Indonesian politics. As a country comprising almost 87 percent Muslims, the development of Indonesia as a modern political state strongly relates to the development of the religion in the country. The themes discussed in this chapter are central in gaining an understanding of the cultural as well as political contexts which may have affected the way Indonesian news media institutions represent the issue of Islamic terrorism. As further argued in the analytical chapter, news media editors indicate how they must carefully consider this issue as part of their editorial policy. Thus, analysing the development of political Islam in Indonesia is relevant to this study as Indonesian news media have to take into account of this issue if their reporting is to represent Indonesian terrorist events accurately.
Foundations of Political Islam: the Modern State of Indonesia

Early Development

The birth of political Islam in modern Indonesian history is signified by the formation of a number of key Islamic organisations; the Sarekat Dagang Islam (the Islamic Merchant League) (1905), Muhammadiyah (the Followers of Muhammad) (1912), and later Nahdlatul Ulama (the Revival of Religious Scholars) (1926). At first, the main goals of these Islamic organisations were to teach Islamic values to their members and to accommodate the interests of Islamic merchants in facing the dominant role of Chinese merchants. As they developed, these organisations became actively involved in fighting against the Dutch colonization of Indonesia and in doing so gave character to political Islam through their activities to form an independent nation.

Sarekat Dagang Islam (SDI) was founded in Surakarta by Haji Samanhudi as an Indonesian Muslim self-help organisation based on the model of the Jammyat Chair, an Arab-immigrant organisation formed in 1905 to advance the dual agenda of propagating modernist Islam and protecting Muslim merchants from their Chinese competitors. SDI’s principal purpose was to fend off increased foreign competition in batik production, and in this regard, Islam was simply a means to differentiate native Indonesians from non-indigenous Chinese merchants (Van Niel, 1980, p.124).

The SDI’s later adoption of a stridently Pan-Islamic agenda, combined with its increasingly hard-line position regarding the incompatibility of Islam not only with secular-nationalism, but with all forms of nationalism, would serve to keep it on the margins of mainstream political legitimacy throughout the waning years of the colonial era. SDI’s Pan-Islamic aspirations became linked with the Ottoman Caliphate until the latter’s collapse in 1924, depriving its agenda of international political leverage. In 1923, SDI created the Partij Sarekat Islam (PSI), which after 1926 would be known as the Partij Sarekat Islam Indonesia (PSII). However by the late 1920s the movement for change in Indonesia was becoming increasingly defined by the western-educated native elites who had begun to take up the cause of secular nationalism. In 1938, remnants of the SDI created the Partai Islam Indonesia (Islamic Party of Indonesia), the first overt political party organized with an Islamic agenda. According to Benda, its founding signalled the final demise of the
artificial division between religion and politics and ushered in a new era of political Islam (1958; Lucius 2003).

To some Islamic nationalists, it is the establishment of SDI that marks the national awakening, rather than Budi Oetomo, which was founded in 1908 (Rask in Santosa, 2007). SDI became a strong political force in its time. It had 181 branches all over Indonesia in 1916, with more than 700 thousands members, whereas Budi Utomo, in its golden time, had only 10,000 members (Santosa, 2007). To some political analysts, such as M. Natsir in Indonesich Nationalist, the denial of SDI as the pioneer of national awakening marks the first denial of the role of Islam in politics (as cited in Rask; Santosa, 2007).

The Muhammadiyah (Followers of Muhammad) was founded on November 18, 1912 by Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan, a devout Muslim scholar who had studied in Mecca for several years and had subsequently been inspired by the writings of the Egyptian reformist Muhammad ‘Abduh. In its early development, Muhammadiyah aimed to strengthen the bond among Muslims. Muhammadiyah’s initial efforts reflected its founder’s belief that the struggle to reform Indonesian Islam must follow a systematic and goal-oriented evolutionary program. Consequently, initial goals were limited to the spheres of religious proselytization, social work, and education, with the organisation’s overall aim being “to improve and strengthen the work of Allah and man’s fate in the afterlife” (Peacock, 1978; Lucius, 2003). In relation to the issue of Islamic education developed by Muhammadiyah, Lucius (2003, p.38) notes—

Muhammadiyah’s most important innovation in the field of Islamic education in Indonesia was to establish schools based on the madrasah (Islamic School) model rather than the traditional pesantren model. The most significant difference between these two models was that secular subjects, including specifically western subjects, were added to the madrasah curriculum to supplement traditional Arabic and religious studies. The rationale behind this adaptation lies in the modernist assumption that for Indonesian Muslims to succeed to their rightful place in society, they must not only seek to be pious, but they must also seek to be educated in modern ways.
By 1939, *Muhammadiyah* had 1,744 schools in operation, about half of which were strictly secular, while the other half operated on the *madrasah* model (Peacock as cited by Lucius 2003). In addition, it ran 834 mosques, 31 libraries, and oversaw the activities of nearly eight thousand *muballigh* (missionaries) involved in *dakwah* (propagation of Islam). After independence, it would further expand its educational activities to also include religious-teacher schools, technical schools, and a college. For the time being, however, *Muhammadiyah's* rapid organisational successes not only in the field of education, but in proselytization and social work as well, met with stiff resistance from conservative *santri* who resented the implication that their own understanding of Islam was somehow imperfect and needed to be rectified (Ricklefs, 1993, p. 171).

The rapid development of *Muhammadiyah* unsettled the colonial government and it eventually imposed restrictions on its activities. Nonetheless, Islamic scholars of *Muhammadiyah* consistently promoted their political thoughts through writings in news media. Although not explicitly stated, they emphasized the importance of being an independent nation. The political activities of the *Muhammadiyah* intensified in 1937 with the formation by its chairman, K. H. Mas Mansyur, of the *Majelis Islam A’la Indonesia* or *MIAI* (Great Islamic Council of Indonesia) along with *Nahdlatul Ulama* leaders. *MIAI* coordinated various activities and united Muslims to fight the Dutch policies, such as by refusing the marriage law and military training requirement (Persyarikatan *Muhammadiyah*, 2008).

Another important Islamic organisation is *Nahdlatul Ulama* or *NU* (the Revival of Religious Scholars) which was founded in 1926 as a reaction towards more modernist Islamic organisations (*SDI* and *Muhammadiyah*) that were considered to have decreased the legitimacy of *Ulama*, the Islamic leaders or scholars. The aim of this organisation was to promulgate Islamic teachings according to the Ahlussunnah Waljama'ah doctrines. *NU’s* activities primarily concerned the support of traditional Islamic *pesantren*, social work, and the facilitation of economic development for Muslims.

The increasing radicalization of *SDI’s* Pan-Islamic aspirations, following the ejection of Marxist elements from its ranks in the early 1920s, led *NU* leaders to forge an uneasy working relationship with the *Muhammadiyah*. The growing tension between *SDI* and *Muhammadiyah* in 1929 over the issue of cooperation with the Dutch colonial government
drove $NU$ and $Muhammadiyah$ even closer together. This closeness was represented by the establishment of $MIAI$ in 1937, as discussed above. $NU$ became involved in nationalist political activities including working together with $Gabungan Politik Indonesia$ or $GAPI$ (Indonesian Politics Association) to demand the Dutch colonial government form an Indonesian parliament.

Although $NU$ as an Islamic organisation was established later than $SDI$ and $Muhammadiyah$ it showed remarkable growth. By 1942 it had expanded to 120 branches in both Java and Kalimantan. Its $dakwah$ activities continued to gain ground throughout many of the outer islands, although East Java would continue to remain $NU$'s heartland throughout much of its history. Its ability to capitalize on existing $pesantren$ networks, as well as the resonance of its conservative message among many rural Javanese, gave it an organisational edge that enabled it to compete with other more well-established movements. By the time the Japanese had arrived, $NU$ had achieved peer status with $Muhammadiyah$.

Although all these three organisations were first founded as Islamic-based mass educational and social organisations and avoided direct participation in politics, the journey of Indonesia’s history shows how these Islamic organisations played a significant role in the process of nation building. $Muhammadiyah$ and $Nahdlatul Ulama$ now represent a major portion of all Indonesian Muslims and the great majority of all $santri$ Muslims, the observant Muslims who pray and fast regularly and observe orthodox practices. The establishment of some political parties in the reform era which have affiliations with these two Islamic organisations is clear evidence of the strong role these two Islamic-based mass organisations now have in the Indonesian political life. This issue is developed later in the chapter.

*The Jakarta Charter and the Depoliticization of Islam*

The idea of Islamic statehood spread rapidly throughout the archipelago in the 1940s and 1950s, ushering in a strengthened political Islamic movement and an era of $Masyumi$. Nonetheless, the desire of secular-nationalists to establish a secular state triggered conflict between secular-nationalists and Islamic leaders on the issue of determining the foundation for Independent Indonesia.
The debate over the state ideology for an independent Indonesia indicates how the secular nationalist groups had ignored the dominant role of Islam in the political struggle against the colonizers. At the same time, secular-nationalists had taken advantage of the Japanese shift of favour from Islamic organisation and Muslim leaders to secular-nationalists. This shift had given more political power to secular-nationalists over Islamic leaders.

The idea of Islamic leaders to form an Islamic state had been rejected by secular-nationalists on the argument that predominately Christian areas in the eastern archipelago such as Maluku and Papua would not join the Republic. Nonetheless, the ideas of Islamic leaders held widespread support and had to be accommodated by the BPUPKI (Committee for the preparation of Indonesia’s independence) in order to make a fair agreement. Eventually, on June 1 1945, Sukarno gave a speech subsequently called the Lahirnya Pancasila (Birth of Pancasila) in which he detailed his personal vision for a state ideology that could accommodate all groups. Pancasila is a Sankrit terminology to impose a bit of gravitas and imply deep historical roots. Pancasila simply means the “five principles”.

Many Islamic leaders were upset at Sukarno’s ideology of Pancasila, which falls short of either making Islam the state religion or turning Indonesia into an Islamic state. The first sila of this “five principles” which spoke vaguely of “belief in God” had provoked consternation among Islamic leaders. As a compromise, they proposed the addition of seven words so that the first sila became: “belief in God with the obligation for adherents of Islam to carry out the Shari’a.” This formulation became known as the Jakarta Charter and from the very beginning met with fierce resistance from many within the secular nationalist movement (Barton, 2004, p. 68).

Sukarno, on the other hand, wanted to establish a secular state and assuage the ethnic minorities who dominated the outer islands and so he dropped the demands enshrined in the Jakarta Charter. He argued that Indonesia would never be a ‘unitary’ state if Islam was to be the basis. In the wake of the Japanese Surrender, independence was formally declared on 17 August 1945. By way of a compromise brokered by Wahid Hasyim and other NU leaders, the first sila was changed to read: “belief in God Who is one,” in accordance with the Islamic (and Christian) doctrine of tauhid, or the one-ness of God (Barton, 2004, p. 68). The debate over the Jakarta Charter was analysed by Robert E. Lucius in his unpublished thesis ‘A House Divided: the Decline and Fall of Masyumi (1950-1956)’ (2003).
Conflict between secular-nationalists and Islamic leaders did not stop after the national ideology had been established and the independence of Indonesia declared. On the day following the *Proklamasi Kemerdekaan* (independence declaration) the twenty-one members of the *Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia* or *PPKI* (Preparatory Committee for Indonesian Independence) met to discuss the draft constitution. Unlike that of the *BPUKI*, the *PPKI*'s representatives were intended to reflect regional diversity rather than ideological diversity, thus they were of a very different character to those who had debated the draft constitution (Van Dijk, 1981, p.60). With Sukarno and Hatta as the chairman and vice-chairman and a *PPKI* membership comprised of mostly secular-nationalists, the debate over the Indonesian draft constitution was high. In the eyes of secular-nationalists the constitution draft was too much of a religious colour. Again, Islamic leaders were forced to accept the new draft for the sake of the nascent state’s survival. Consequently, as noted by Lucius (2003), most of the Muslim leaders agreed to Sukarno and Hatta’s demands that references to the Jakarta Charter be removed from the preamble, that the related clause in the section on religion be excised, and that the stipulation that the president be a Muslim is dropped. These changes were accepted by the *PPKI* and Sukarno and Hatta were elected as President and Vice-President respectively.

Sukarno’s vision of a secular state was re-emphasized later in his speech in Amuntai, South Kalimantan, on 27 January 1953—

> What we want is a national country that includes Indonesia as a whole. If we found an Islamic state, there will be many regions where non-Muslims are main occupants separate themselves from Indonesia (Abuza, 2003, p.62).

To ensure Indonesia did not become an Islamic state, Sukarno denied the participation of Muslims, especially radical Islamists, in the political arena.

Sukarno’s marginalization policies toward Muslims resulted in several setbacks to the Islamic political movement. The 1955 general election is empirical proof of the effect of Sukarno's secular policies, in which the majority of Muslims voted for secular parties. Nevertheless, Islamic leaders who felt threatened by Sukarno’s guided democracy and proximity to *Partai Komunis Indonesia* or *PKI* (Indonesian Communist Party) later supported anti-communist generals such as Major General Suharto.
Meanwhile *Masyumi*, as the main Islamic political party, had been an inherently unstable organisation. The different views of Islamic values between traditionalists (*Nahdlatul Ulama*) and modernists (*Muhammadiyah*) were of little importance when compared to disputes of a political or economic nature that had been entrenched by fundamentally different cultural perceptions. This conflict culminated in *NU*’s defection from Masyumi. As noted by Barton, “in 1952 the rusticated traditionalists, fed up with being considered inferior to their urban modernist coreligionists, split from Masyumi and *NU* formed their own political party” (2004, p.68).

Sukarno's secular and religious marginalisation policies, combined with deep divisions within the Islamic political groups themselves resulted in the decline of political Islam which came to characterise Sukarno’s Old Order. The different and often competing views of Islamic political leaders and debate among Islamic elites over the issue of the role of Islam in the new nation had decreased the power of political Islam.

Although the role of political Islam had been suppressed there were some ex members of *Masyumi* and *Hisbullah* soldiers who saw the refusal of the Jakarta Charter by the secular nationalists and the acceptance of the revision of the constitution draft by Islamic leaders as a betrayal of the goal to establish an Islamic state. This betrayal, combined with Sukarno’s policies of marginalising Islamic leaders and his closeness to the Indonesian Communist Party helped instigate some radical Islamic figures to take up armed resistance against the newly formed secular government. The *Darul Islam*’s rebellion in 1948, as later discussed in the next chapter, is an example of how the rejection of the Jakarta Charter and the failure to establish an Islamic state had motivated some radical Islamists to employ violent methods in order to achieve their political ends.

It is also important to take into account the bloody transition from Old Order era to New Order era. There was considerable tension between *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (Indonesian National Army) and *PKI* who both claimed to have their own power and identity. Led by Lieutenant Colonel Untung, *PKI* launched a *coup d’état* on 30 September 1965 by kidnapping and killing seven military officers. During the months from October 1965 to March 1966, the main political transformation occurred, signalled by the erosion of Sukarno’s authority, hyper-inflation and the dominance of military. The conflict reached its peak when on 11 March 1966 at a meeting in Bogor with three senior generals, Sukarno
finally signed a letter of order instructing Suharto ‘to take all measures considered necessary to guarantee security, order and stability of the government. Suharto brought in the military as the main actor in the Indonesian political scene. The military had created bodies throughout all levels of government structure that legalized the use of coercive forces to deal with political and social movements within society. This condition had created obstacles to the development of Islam in Indonesia as discussed in the next section.

Islam under New Order

The Cooptation and Depoliticization of Islam

One lesson that Suharto learned from the Old Order was that in order to create a stabilised government system the protection of his government from both internal and external threats was of paramount importance. In order to achieve this stability the military became one of the main actors on the political stage. Suharto understood that to enable the development of the country, political stability was required. Thus, he introduced Komando Operasi Pemulihan Keamanan dan Ketertiban or KOPKAMTIB (the Operation Command for Security and Order Restoration) which was responsible for creating and maintaining security and an orderly society. KOPKAMTIB was established on 10 October 1965 with Suharto as the first commander. At first this operation was intended as an instrument to ‘clean up’ PKI members from government and state institutions. In practice, it turned into the front guard of the New Order to protect government interests and maintain Suharto’s rule. This institution was allowed to sidestep legal processes and take any necessary actions, including prohibition, searching, execution and arrest without warrant (Prayudi, 2004).

Suharto initiated a number of additional policies in order to achieve stability, including the Ancaman, Tantangan, Hambatan and Gangguan or ATHG (Threat, Challenge, Obstacle and Disturbance) and the policy of Suku, Agama, Ras dan Antar-golongan or SARA, which aimed to diminish the significance of issues surrounding ethnicity, religion and race. In this context, society was required to show their support and loyalty to the state by accepting the development process and suppressing ethnic differences and concerns. Any activities that were considered as part of ATHG or SARA would be taken care of by the military which was responsible for the security of the New Order regime. These policies were effective in suppressing the development of political Islam in Indonesia.
Suharto further limited the role of political Muslims by denying them a seat at the political table. Like his predecessor, Suharto refused to change the *Pancasila* and continued to pursue a secular course. Both the pursuit and avowal of an Islamic state were illegal acts under the New Order regime. Suharto’s regime tried to steer a middle course between the far left, the *PKI*, and the far right, the Islamists (Abuza, 2003). Sukarno’s strategies of depoliticising Islam were well adopted by Suharto after he came to power in 1966. His military approach to running the government stifled the activity of political Islamic movements and resulted in the imprisonment of a number of Islamic leaders considered by the regime as dangerous.

Suharto understood the power of political Islam and ruthlessly manipulated the Muslim community, controlling them and ensuring they served his political purposes. Suharto restricted Islamic political activities and the Muslim community remained relatively quiescent for several decades. The state ideology of *Pancasila* did not make Islam the state religion but guaranteed religious freedom in general. All religious organisations had to support *Pancasila*, namely secular rule, in their charters or they would be banned: Islam was no exception.

Suharto allowed two large Islamic organisations, *NU* and *Muhammadiyah*, to remain functional but their activities were limited and political activities were prohibited. Suharto realised the power which these two Islamic organisations had and their significant role played during the independence movement era under the Mayumi organisation. Thus, it was impossible for him to close down these organisations without encountering resistance from the followers of these organisations. However, he refused to acknowledge the rehabilitation of Masyumi as proposed by M. Natsir, Prawoto and M. Roem.

Suharto continued the suppression of Muslims by limiting the number of Muslim political parties in the general election. Acknowledging political stability as the prerequisite for economic development, Suharto's government issued a policy on party system restructuring. He coerced four Muslim parties (Indonesia Muslim Party [*Parmusi*], Revival of Religious Scholars [*Nahdlatul Ulama*], Indonesia Islamic League Party [*PSII*] and *Perti*) to merge into one party, known as *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* or PPP (Indonesian Development Party) with *NU* as the largest component of the party. *NU* had demonstrated its ability to win nearly one-fifth of both general elections in 1955 and in 1971. Along with
another merged secular party, *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia* or *PDI* (Indonesian Democratic Party), Suharto controlled these two parties through funding and screening to sustain loyalty. Meanwhile, *Golkar* was formed as Suharto’s political vehicle in the political arena. Muslim parties were only given a limited number of seats in the Consultative Assembly and House of Representatives. The unification of Islamic parties symbolizes the significant decline of political Islam in the New Order era.

The marginalization process toward political Islam by Suharto’s New Order continued, bolstered by new laws requiring the acceptance of the *Pancasila* by all political parties. None of the political parties was allowed to adopt another ideology but *Pancasila*. Consequently the only Islamic political party, the United Development Party was forced to replace Islam as the ideology of their party with the *Pancasila*. Further, the Islamic symbol of this party, Ka’bah, which represents the house of God in Mecca was replaced with ‘Star’ which represents the first principle of *Pancasila*. *Pancasila* is comprised of five principles, in official order: “Belief in the One and Only God”, ”Just and Civilized Humanity”, “the Unity of Indonesia”, ”Democracy Guided by the Inner Wisdom in the Unanimity Arising out of Deliberation amongst Representatives”, and “Social Justice for the Whole of the People of Indonesia” (Liddle, 1999, p. 40).

The New Order employed tactics of stigmatization and media control which effectively frightened society and religious groups. *Kompas* daily, in its 3 February 1977 edition, wrote a report that the government had exposed an Islamic group, the “*Komando Jihad*” (the *Jihad* Command), who wanted to establish an Islamic state. This group had been associated with some of former members and leaders of *Darul Islam* movement. Some political analysts like Ikrar Nusa Bhakti and Cahyono (2001) argue that *Komando Jihad* was engineered by the New Order’s government, through *Badan Koordinasi Intelejen Negara* or *BAKIN* (the State Intelligence Coordinating Agency), to discredit Islam. The issue of *Komando Jihad* is discussed further in the next chapter. Another group that the military considered extreme was “*Dewan Revolusi Islam Indonesia*” (the Islamic Revolution Council of Indonesia) which purportedly also wanted to establish the Indonesian Islamic state. Again, some political analysts argue that this group was merely being used as a political tool by the New Order to intimidate political Islamic groups. This argument is persuasive given that this group had adopted non Islamic ways in reaching their goals and were arguably not politically active at all (Bhakti et al., 2001, p. 111).
The power of political Islam during the New Order regime, especially in the 1970s and 1980s, had entered into another dark period in the history of modern Indonesia. It had experienced various tragedies, from the discrediting of Islam by anti-Islam generals like Ali Moertopo to the mass massacres by the military in Tanjung Priok and Aceh (Bhakti et al., 2001; Abuza, 2003). During this era thousands of Muslims had become victims of the New Order regime.

*Cultural Islam and the Emergence of Political Islam*

The emergence of cultural Islam was bolstered by Suharto’s more conciliatory attitude towards Islam and Muslims in the period following the enactment of laws requiring every organisation to adopt the *Pancasila* as its ideological basis after Muslim’s acceptance of *Pancasila* as the sole ideological basis of any organisation in 1989. Conflict, mutual suspicion and hostility between President Suharto and many Muslim groups had diminished significantly (Azra, 2006). Suharto’s open attitude toward Islam can be attributed in part to domestic and international pressure which insisted Suharto become more open. It was Paul Wolfowitz, the former American ambassador to Indonesia, who first suggested that Suharto must adopt a political policy of openness. It is noteworthy that the Suharto policy of ‘openness’ at the end of 1980s was very short-lived, as by 1994 Suharto had undermined the policy when he closed down three prominent media outlets, i.e. *Tempo, Editor* and *Detik*.

In addition to international pressure, Suharto’s openness policy was the consequence of internal conflict between Suharto and the army (*Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia* or *ABRI*) (Mackie & McIntyre in Hall Hill, 1994). The conflict rose due to Suharto’s anxiety toward some generals who demanded more dominant roles in the government and further asked him to resign the presidency. In this context, Vatikiotis notes,

> In the eyes of military officers, the army has saved the state from catastrophe on several occasion – something the army will not let Indonesians forget (1993, p. 64)... By the end of the 1980s, with Suharto’s popularity among the elite in slow but perceptible decline, senior military figures, both active and retired, had begun working quietly to seek his removal...On the other hand, three years after
Suharto’s re-election in 1988, there were no obvious signs they had come up with a workable political strategy (1994, p. 69).

The emergence of *Petition 50* by the senior and retired military officers in 1980 was a clear example of this situation. Suharto then built strong relationship with technocrats like Habibie and attempted to gain sympathy from Muslims. Suharto’s deteriorating relationship with the army and the introduction of an openness policy provided the conditions in which cultural Islam in Indonesia could develop.

As the consequence of the implementation of cultural Islam during 1990s, Islam was regarded and practised solely as a religious and cultural activity in Indonesia, rather than an activity to initiate political change. The establishment of mosques, *madrasah* (Islamic schools), and the increase in the number of Indonesian Muslims making the pilgrimage to Mecca were some indicators of the development of cultural Islam taking place. This growth was also facilitated by Suharto's policies intended to maintain support for his government by the Islamic community. Heffner, for instance, notes that to pay back the Islamic community for their support, Suharto passed a law mandating religious educations in schools, with state-certified teachers and texts, which was vigorously enforced (in Schwarz & Paris, 1999). The emergence of an Islamic cultural movement emphasising the dimensions of ritual and community become the characteristic of Islam in Indonesia during the New Order regime.

Between 1988 and 1993, Suharto made a number of concessions to the Muslim community including the founding of an Islamic bank, enhancing the authority of Islamic courts, lifting the ban on the veil worn by women in schools, and the founding of an Islamic newspaper, *Republika*, in 1993. Suharto also injected funding into Islamic schools and Islamic TV programming and formed *Ikatan Cendikiawan Muslim Indonesia* or *ICMI* (the *Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals*) in order to co-opt Muslim intellectuals and promote Islamic ideals (Abuza, 2003).

Nonetheless, Suharto’s attempts to gain support from the Muslim community seemingly failed. The establishment of *ICMI* in December 1990 precipitated the rise of political Islam that had been suppressed by Suharto for more than twenty-five years. Many *ICMI* members actively criticised Suharto's authoritarian regime and his economic development policy which only benefited a small number of elites within the administration, such as his
step brother Bob Hasan and his children. ICMI symbolizes the rise of Islamic politics that had been suppressed for more than twenty-five years. The establishment of ICMI could not be separated from its chairman, BJ Habibie, the then Indonesian President who revoked media licensing. This condition affected the development of the national press. Until the early 1990s, none of the Islamic press had played a strong role in Indonesian society despite the fact that more than eighty percent of the Indonesian population is Moslem (Prayudi, 2004, p.79). According to Hill (1994), the Islamic press was unable to create a commercial opportunity. One of the dilemmas was the difficulty in maintaining credibility with their readership while negotiating an accommodation of state interests.

Thus, based on a seminar sponsored by ICMI and attended by Moslem journalists and editors on Islamic press in 1991, Republika was finally launched in January 1993. PT Abdi Bangsa, a subsidiary of Abdi Bangsa Foundation, the main fund resource for ICMI, published Republika. Initially, about 40 million rupiah was invested (Loebis 1993). Habibie played a significant role in the fund raising process (Prayudi, 2004, p.79).

Undoubtedly Suharto had miscalculated and underestimated the power of “cultural Islam” as a political and social force. Not unlike Snouck Hurgronje, the most prominent Islamic advisor to the Dutch Netherlands Indies government, who advised the Dutch to allow “Islam as a cultural phenomenon” (Azra, 2006). Suharto too, failed to acknowledge the political implications and growing momentum of cultural Islam. Ultimately, the cultural force of Islam which Suharto had once supported slowly grew to contain the government and its policy decisions; cultural Islam had manifested itself into a powerful political force.

In sum, the development of political Islam under Suharto’s New Order arose in the context of government pressure, co-optation, and manipulation by the state in order to sustain the power of Suharto. Nevertheless, there were times when Islam played crucial roles in politics, especially in the latter stages of Suharto’s rule. Islamic intellectuals had become the locomotive of reform along with student movements, demanding Suharto to resign from his position. The growth of cultural Islam in Indonesia, which metamorphosed into a powerful political movement, is evidence of its dynamic development as both a movement responding to the policies of the government of the day as well as a driving force for political change.
It is now important to understand the development of Islam in the transition period. Of special importance is the relationship between the development of civil society, the role of Islam and politics within the context of Indonesia in transition. This is discussed in the following section.

**Islam and Politics in Transition**

The political events in many Asian countries during the last twenty years have shown that an understanding of civil society is crucial in tracking the changes in economy and polity. In a number of Asian countries civil society movements achieved various results. Some good examples are the people power movement in Philippines in the mid 1980s which toppled Marcos from his presidency, the fall of Suharto after massive demonstrations sponsored by student movements, and the recent case of Indian ethnic demonstrations in Malaysia demanding equal roles in all aspects of citizen life. These events have raised several interpretations of the concept and role of civil society and the democratization of political life. As Porio (2002) notes, civil society movements have utilized different political and cultural schemes to advance their claims for democratic space and share of societal resources. Emerging from the various nation-states in the region, these cultural schemas are shaped by their different political-economic contexts and level of integration to the global systems of capital and information and communication technology.

In some countries where Islam is dominant, the idea of civil society relates to the Islam-centric version of civil society, known as *masyarakat madani*. According to Anwar Ibrahim, former Malaysian deputy Prime Minister, *masyarakat madani* (civil society) is a social system which is founded on the moral principle which balances freedom with societal stability (Bajunid, 2001; Wolters, 2002). In Indonesia, the concept of *masyarakat madani* was introduced by Nurcholis Madjid. It was introduced in the late 1980s via articles in journals such as *Prisma, Jurnal Politik, Jurnal Sejarah*, newspaper columns, as well as forums among intellectuals who were concerned with practices of so-called *Pancasila* democratization in the country and a lack of public space. Nevertheless, during the New Order period very few civil society organisations implemented or proposed the ideas of civil society. Those who did attempt to implement the concept were likely to face a harsh military backlash.
Within the context of Indonesia, the development of civil society in the Reformasi period has encouraged social and political organisations to become pressure groups and upholders of political freedoms. The role of Islamic movements like Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam or HMI (Islamic Student Union), Korps Alumni Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam or KAHMI (Corps of Islamic Student Union Alumni), and some Islamic intellectuals as mentioned in the previous section, such as Amien Rais and Nurcholis Madjid were crucial in the early stage of the reform process. As Abuza (2003, p.65) notes, it was Islamic organisations that provided the bulk of the demonstrations that brought Suharto down. The united student and Islamic movements demanded the same goal: reform and succession of national leadership. The fall of Suharto's New Order also signifies the rise of the civil society movement in Indonesia. A number of important questions remain to be answered: how has the transition process to a civil society and democratic state in Indonesia been going? What are the indicators of this transition to democracy? How does it relate to the emergence of political Islam? All these issues are discussed in the next section.

Reformasi and Political Islam

The euphoria of reform, marked by the widening of political and civil rights, resulted in the emergence of new political parties. To some political analysts this situation reflects the rise of civil society. Their argument is based on the idea that political parties are the realisation of civil society. However it is arguable that some socio-political groups have attempted to appropriate the concept of civil society and invest it with their own political aspirations. In the case of transition in Indonesia, many political parties attempted to proclaim themselves as part of the reform movement, including those supported by retired military generals.

The reform era is also marked by the emergence of both liberal and radical Islamic movements. They have taken various forms to express their political interests. The development of Islamic radicalism, for instance, reaches its peak in the reform era. Political turbulence and lack of police control provided fertile ground for the rapid growth of these movements. However, not all radical Islamic movements adopted methods of violence. Some groups focused on a return to the teaching of Islamic values and the implementation of Shari‘a law. The analysis of the rise of Islamic radicalism and its relationship to political violence in Indonesia is discussed in detail in the next chapter.
Islamic movements in the reform era were characterised by a dynamic political condition. Some Islamic groups expressed their interests in the form of political parties, while others in the form of social movements. In general, the re-emergence of political Islam can be classified into two groups. Firstly, political Islam represented by Islamic movements such as the Islamic Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam or FPI) led by Habib Muhammad Rizieq Syihab, the Communication Forum of the Followers of the Prophet Path (Forum Komunikasi Ahlus Sunnah Wal-Jamaah or FKAWJ) which is famously known through its paramilitary wing “Laskar Jihad”, and others. Essentially, these Islamic groups are Islamic movements with strong political activities and motives. Nevertheless, they themselves refuse to be classified as political parties and they have no relationship with the existing Islamic political parties that flourished in the reform era. Thus, they are principally independent groups that refuse to channel their political aspirations through formal Islamic parties. Some of these Islamic movements are labelled as hard-line Islam. Leaders of organised Islamic political parties tended to keep a distance from these Islamic movements. The development of political Islam represented by formal Islamic political parties constitutes the second type of group. Islamic parties which were suppressed for nearly three decades grew rapidly in the reform era. Nevertheless, there is no political consensus among these groups. This lack of consensus relates to the different historical background of each party and their varying goals. According to Azra, 40 out of the 141 political parties that emerged after the deregulation of political Acts were Islamic parties (in Manning and van Diermen, 2000). Meanwhile according to Kompas’ record, a main leading newspaper in Indonesia, there were 184 political parties formed right after the fall of Suharto regime. About 148 political parties registered themselves at the Department of Justice and 141 parties were approved. Out of these 141 parties, 32 of them were Islamic political parties. In 1999, only 17 Islamic political parties were verified to join the general election. More than fifty percent of 48 political parties that were finally acknowledged by the Department of Justice in the lead up to the 1999 general election can be classified as Islamic parties (Barton, 2004).

There is widespread debate amongst academics concerning the category of “Islamic parties”. Azra (2006) proposes two major elements that identify a party as “Islamic”. Firstly, there are Islamic parties that still use Pancasila as their ideology while at the same time use Islamic symbols such as the crescent and star, Ka’bah or Arabic words that
associate these parties to Islam in order to attract voters’ attention. These parties are supported mostly by members of certain non-political Muslim organisations such as the NU and Muhammadiyah. Two of the parties included in this group are the National Awakening Party (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa or PKB) supported by the NU and the National Mandate Party (Partai Amanat Nasional or PAN) many of whose members have backgrounds in Muhammadiyah. According to Fealy, all of the parties included in this group can be classified as ‘pluralist Islamic parties’ (2000, p.4).

Secondly, there are Islamic parties that officially use Islam as their party ideology. Examples of these parties include the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan or PPP), the Crescent and Star Party (Partai Bulan Bintang or PBB), and Justice Party (Partai Keadilan or PK). This type of Islamic party, as proposed by Fealy (2000, p.3), might also be best categorized as a “formalist Islamic party” since those parties have formally adopted Islam or the Qur’an and the Sunnah as their sole ideological basis.

The rise of many Islamic political parties indicates that Islamic organisations were quick to capitalize on the liberal conditions and newfound freedoms of the press and organisations. As Robert Heffner argues Islam, rather than being a conservative and antidemocratic force, was the single most important force for political change and democracy.

Since the late-1980s, the largest audience for democratic and pluralists ideas in Indonesia has been, not secular-nationalists, but reform minded Muslim democrats. Nowhere in the Muslim world have Muslim intellectuals engaged the ideas of democracy, civil society, pluralism, and the rule of law with a vigour and confidence equal to that of Indonesian Muslims (Heffner as cited in Abuza, 2003, p.168).

Heffner’s statement highlights the significance of Islam in contributing to a more democratic Indonesia. The emergence of Islamic political parties in the reformation era contradicts the statement from some political analysts who claimed that the adoption of the ideology of Pancasila by the United Development Party (PPP) during the New Order regime marked the end of political Islam in Indonesia. On the contrary, the emergence of Islamic political parties in the reform era signifies the re-birth of political Islam.
The re-birth of political Islam has raised a number of salient questions for consideration. An important point of contention is whether the objective of these parties is to advance Islamic ideals or is merely to gain power in the name of Islam. Muslim intellectuals, such as Kuntowijoyo and Bachtiar Aly (in Azra, 2006), believe that the emergence of these Islamic parties in the post-Suharto era is merely an expression of the reform era's newly founded political freedoms and democratic ideals. Others argue that the foundation of these Islamic parties is based solely in the pursuit of greater power rather than the achievement of religious objectives. Muslim elites involved in the establishment of these parties have shown strong tendencies of self-interest, rather than a desire to achieve religious goals. The foundation of highly political parties by traditional Islamic become counterproductive to advancing Muslim interests in the political arena. The high number of Islamic parties has effectively spread votes in the general elections across a large number of parties, resulting in a small percentage of the overall votes being directed at any one Islamic party. Consequently, non-Islamic parties gained significant votes in the 1999 general elections. On the other hand, Golongan Karya, which had become the political vehicle of Suharto in the New Order era, still remained strong to defeat the new Islamic political parties. The Indonesia Democratic Party for Struggle, led by Megawati Sukarnoputri, gained 33.73 percent of votes to win the 1999 general election. Of the 17 Islamic political parties, only three parties gained more than 2% votes: the Unity Development Party or PPP (10.7%), Nation Awakening Party or PKB (12.60%), and National Mandate Party or PAN (7.11%).

The small share of the total vote in the 1999 general election concerned many Muslims involved in the political Islam cause. Certain external factors such as PDIP’s complacency and insensitivity to Islamic aspirations, however, provided the stimulus for the fragmented Islamic parties to forge a loose coalition, initially called “Fraksi Islam” (the Islamic Coalition) and later known as the “Poros Tengah” (Middle Axis). The growing unresolved conflict among supporters of Habibie and Megawati had created an unexpected opportunity for the Poros Tengah coalition to propose Abdurrahman Wahid as its presidential candidate in the MPR general session in October 1999 (Azra, 2006, pp.17-18). Megawati as the leader of PDIP, in the eyes of Islamic political parties, has been considered as the representation of secular-nationalists that is not friendly to Muslim groups. Also, there has been an understanding within Islamic teaching where men must become the leader instead of women. This condition can also be seen as the conflict
between Indonesian secular-nationalists and Islamists. The election of Abdurrahman Wahid as the fourth president came more as the result of trying to accommodate all parties after Nurcholis Madjid refused Poros Tengah’s proposition to become the president. Although President Wahid represented the power of the Islamic Coalition, he did not represent many of the aspirations of Islamic political parties. Soon, Wahid’s policies disappointed the Islamic Coalition which had previously supported him. For example, he made a number of changes to the composition of his cabinet, which consisted of the representatives from some Islamic parties, without consulting with the Islamic members. Ultimately, his inconsistent attitude and heretical management style, which led to the “Bulogate I” and “Bruneigate” scandals, and his declaration of martial law at the peak of his conflict with the MPR, resulted in his impeachment in the Special Session of MPR on 23 June 2001, to be replaced by Vice President Megawati Soekarnoputri as the fifth president.

The election of Megawati triggered heated discussion surrounding the issue of women leadership in Islam. To some radical Islamic groups, Megawati’s election signifies how Islamic political parties had prioritized their own political interests rather than the upholding of Islamic teaching within all aspects of human life. Meanwhile, according to some Islamic political party leaders, this issue relates to the idea of khilafiah; meaning, the implementation of an Islamic precept must consider certain conditions. In the context of Megawati’s election, although it was impermissible to appoint a woman as president according to Islamic precepts, an emergency situation arose due to Wahid’s incompetency as leader. In this context the election of Megawati became acceptable. It is this concept of khilafiah which makes political Islam malleable and open to change. An examination of the results of the 1999 and 2004 general elections, when secular nationalist parties again dominated the vote, it can be concluded that Islamic parties have failed to achieve popularity among Indonesian Muslims. The emergence of various Islamic political parties simply represents an expression of the reform era, which is generally understood by the Muslim elite to mean political freedom and democracy. As Azyumardi Azra’s states—

The explosion of the number of Islamic political parties is merely the expression of an almost uncontrollable political euphoria among the Muslim political elite, who had been suppressed or at least marginalised for most of the Suharto era. The existence of so many Islamic political parties could be counter-productive for the unity and welfare of Indonesian Muslim society at large (2006, p. 29).
Thus, the establishment of so many political parties in the reform era tends to be motivated by self or group interests rather than religious motives. This also indicates that for most Indonesian Muslims, they still tend to focus more on religious practices rather than involvement in political activities. This condition possibly relates to the suppression in the Suharto regime of Muslims and Islamic political activities as well as the successful implementation of cultural Islam during the New Order regime. The tendency among Muslims to become more devout, at least formally, has not been necessarily translated into more of an Islamic political orientation. Simply stated, the formation of Islamic political parties tends to represent the dynamic of Islamism at the level of Islamic elites, not at the level of citizenry.

On the other hand, the establishment of these Islamic political parties has worried other groups such as Christian and Catholic groups who see this phenomenon as an opportunity to implement the *Shari’a* Law and to establish an Islamic state. This anxiety is reasonable considering the fact that since early independence up until Suharto’s New Order and even in the reformation era, this issue has remained strong among some fundamentalist and radical Islamic groups.

Significant problems arise when those whose aspirations are not well represented through these political parties and when those who strongly refuse the idea of secular government take a more radical approach to political action. This situation has led to the emergence of radical Islamic groups, which were previously suppressed and marginalised socially and politically. The next chapter discusses the idea of the implementation of *Shari’a* Law and the formation of an Islamic state in Indonesia in relation to the history of Islamic radicalism and political violence through the act of terror in modern Indonesia.

**Conclusion**

The formation of Islamic organisations such as Sarekat *Dagang Islam* (the Islamic Merchant League), *Muhammadiyah* (the Followers of Muhammad) and *Nahdlatul Ulama* (the Religious of Revival Scholars) marks the development of political Islam in the modern history of Indonesia. These organisations, however, had their own goals and different understandings of Islamic values. Despite the difference, all these organisations were first founded as social organisations and grew into Islamic organisations that played significant
role in the pre-independence era. Through the formation of Islamic military groups, these Islamic organisations waged *jihad* toward the Dutch coloniser.

The debate that occurred among Islamic leaders and between secular nationalists over the issue of an Islamic state as well as the issue of whether the Jakarta charter should be state ideology resulted in a great deal of friction within Muslim community. Some leaders fully supported the idea, others wanted the secular government to implement religious practices among Muslims, whereas the rest preferred pluralism and liberal democracy. Concurrently, secular nationalists were effective in strengthening their power base to exclude Muslim political leaders *NU*.

This poor condition of political Islam continued under the New Order regime in which the Muslim community was further marginalised by President Suharto. Suharto implemented various policies to ensure Islam remained outside of the political arena. The introduction of a semi military body (*KOPKAMTIB*) to restore order and peace as well as the *ATHG* and *SARA* organisations which sought to limit the discussion of politically sensitive and divisive issues were effectively used by Suharto to quell political Islam.

Despite the depoliticization of political Islam, the New Order regime was more tolerant toward what was called “cultural Islam”, especially to Muslim organisations that principally accepted the pluralist principles of Pancasila. Suharto’s openness attitude was considered an advantage to the development of Islam. The establishment of the Indonesia Association of Muslim Intellectual (*ICMI*), among other concessions that Suharto had given to Muslim community, had been an instrument for Muslim intellectuals to criticize Suharto’s government and eventually for the cultural Islam movement to garner some political influence over Suharto. Thus, it can be concluded that Suharto had miscalculated the political implications of cultural Islam. The emergence of cultural Islam ultimately contributed to the re-emergence of political Islam in the 1990s. It can also be said that Muslim organisations contributed to the emergence of the idea of civil society through the analysis as well as writings of Muslim Intellectuals in news media and journals.

The development of Islam has become cultural, social as well as political contexts for the news media representing issue of terrorism. As can be seen further in the research finding chapters (Chapers VII-IX), the depoliticization and cooptation of Islam during the New Order government and the rise of the idea of civil society in the reformation era have
become the impetus for some radical Islamic groups, as discussed in the next chapter, to express themselves politically. The news media under study critically portrayed this situation.
CHAPTER V
RADICAL ISLAMISM AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE

Introduction

The rise of political violence (terrorism) in Indonesia cannot be separated from the emergence of radical Islamism in Indonesia. This chapter examines the cultural and political contexts of radical Islamism in Indonesia and how this phenomenon has contributed to the development of Islam and politically violent events, in particular terrorism.

This chapter outlines the emergence of radical Islamism in Indonesia. It discusses some conditions that have contributed to the radicalisation of the religion which includes internal and external as well as social, economic, and political factors. My contention is that Islamic radicalism is not merely the result of a fundamentalist understanding of the teachings of Islam; its causes are far broader and more complex.

As described in previous chapters, the development of Islam in Indonesia strongly relates to the development of the nation. Political Islam has played a dominant and significant role in the building process of the nation. Nonetheless, the history also shows how Islam has been co-opted and marginalised. The neglect of the role of Islam in the pre independence period and the co-optation of Islam by Sukarno in the early period of independence as well as by Suharto during the New Order era have contributed to the emergence of radical Islamism. Particular radical Islamic groups, such as the Darul Islam movement and Jemaah Islamiyah, both seek to implement Shari’a (Islamic law) and to establish an Islamic state using violent methods.

Darul Islam (DI) movement can be regarded as the first radical Islamic group in the modern history of Indonesia. Its origins reside in the Sukarno period where its commitment to an Islamic state and refusal to accept secularism distinguished it from other Islamic
groups. A thorough analysis of this group is crucial to understanding the acts of terror carried out by *Jemaah Islamiyah (JI)* operatives from 2000 to 2005. Many former members and leaders of *DI* later formed *JI*. Consequently, the examination of *JI* as a terrorist group that has radically interpreted the teachings of Islam is as important as understanding *DI* movement. These issues are analysed within the context of culture, politics and Islam in Indonesia.

This chapter will contribute to the understanding of radical Islamism within the context of Indonesian cultural politics and the emergence of Islamic radicalism and, ultimately, various forms of religious militancy. It is argued that the political dynamics that occur in Indonesia play a significant role in the emergence of radical Islamism. In relation to the research questions, this chapter is pertinent in an attempt to understand the cultural as well as political contexts that Indonesian news media institutions may have to consider in reporting on issues of terrorism. To news media institutions in Indonesia, the debate over whether the *JI* network really exists and whether this group has any relationship with the *DI* movement has become a sensitive and divisive issue. A number of essential questions require examination; how has radical Islamism developed in Indonesia? What are the goals of these radical movements? What are *Darul Islam* and *Jemaah Islamiyah* and how do they operate in disseminating politically violent messages? In this chapter I want to argue that there is a causal relationship between the emergence of radical Islamism and political and cultural conditions in Indonesia.

**Terrorism and Radical Islamic Groups: a background**

Before the year 1997, Indonesian people could only see bombing events through television. After that, they became not only the spectators but also the victims of terrorist bombing events. According to the research and development division of *Kompas* news media, from the year 1997 to 2002, there were 64 bombings in Indonesian cities such as Jakarta, Surabaya, Semarang, Makasar, Palu and Yogyakarta. Prior to the Bali bombing in 2002, the motivations of the bombings, appeared to have been revenge for the massacres of Muslims by Christians in Indonesia – Maluku, North Maluku and Poso (Central Sulawesi) where communal conflict erupted in 1999 and 2000. With a few exceptions, such as the attack on the residence of the Philippine ambassador in Jakarta in August 2000, the targets were mostly churches and priests. Since 2001, there has been a shift in the choices of
bombed and bombing target. The selection of places to attack which can be classified as having links to the interests of Western people increased markedly. Radical Islamic groups became more interested in waging jihad against the domination of Western governments either through globalization or modernization which they believe to have contaminated Muslims’ lives. On 22 August 2001, the Indonesian police found cardboard suspected to contain a bomb outside the Australian Embassy in Jakarta. Two and a half months later, on 6 November 2001, a bomb exploded nearby a swimming pool area of the Australian International School. From that time on three large-scale bombing events occurred in Bali and Jakarta and claimed hundreds of lives. Based on the police investigations, all these three bombings have been associated with the work of Jemaah Islamiyah.

In Indonesia, American president Bush’s campaign on terror and his famous statement “Either you with us or with the terrorists” triggered some radical Islamic groups to retaliate using political violence. These historical circumstances also mark the change in political ends of radical Islamic groups like Jemaah Islamiyah. According to a prominent ICG report—

The U.S.-led war on terror now appears to have replaced Maluku and Poso as the main object of JI’s wrath, especially as those conflicts have waned, and the targeting in Bali of Westerners, rather than Indonesian Christians, may be indicative of that shift (Asia Report No. 43, December 2002).

It is evident that there is a causal relationship between political turbulence and transition to democracy and the frequency of bombings in Indonesia. Within a wider context, the rapid political changes that have been taking place at the national, regional as well as international levels, in particular after the events of 11 September 2001, have contributed to the rise of radical Islamic movements in the region. The capture of radical Islamists and groups suspected of involvement in terrorist activities in neighbouring Southeast Asian countries, such as Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines is evidence of the widespread activities of radical Islamic groups in the region.

These circumstances have changed the way foreign observers look at Islam in Southeast Asia and Indonesia in particular. Before terrorist events occurred in Southeast Asian countries, Islam in Southeast Asia was generally recognised for its peaceful and moderate ideological position. Islam in Southeast Asia was treated as compatible with modernity,
democracy, human rights and other tendencies of the modern Western world (Azra, 2006). Even in the 1990s Southeast Asian Islam was dubbed by leading international media such as Newsweek magazine as “Islam with a smiling face” (Newsweek, 23 September 1996). Since the occurrence of terrorist events, especially the Bali bombing, Islam in the Southeast Asia has been associated with radical movements and the region where many Muslims live has been regarded as a “terrorist haven”. This changed perception can also be attributed to the amplification of the issue by both international political analysts and the global media. Ramakhrishna and Tan, for instance, question whether it is accurate to suggest that the region is a “terrorist haven” (2003, p. 2).

Nonetheless, media labelling clearly oversimplifies the issue. Whilst it is true that there is growing tension between radical Islamism and the governments of some Southeast Asian countries, the radical Islamists involved in terrorist activities are in a small minority compared to the total number of Muslims living in the region. Importantly, the role of media institutions in shaping the public perception of terrorism and facilitating a 'state of terror' cannot be underestimated. Given the influence of the media in this regard it is too early to firmly say whether the Southeast Asia region has become a “terrorist haven”.

Before the 2002 Bali bombing, the existence of the Jemaah Islamiyah network was denied by the Indonesian government. Even the former Indonesian vice president, Hamzah Haz, refused to accept the statements of foreign governments claiming Indonesia was a terrorist haven. These presidential assertions combined with the turbulent political conditions of the transition period to democracy meant that the police and intelligence bodies paid little attention to terrorism and radical Islamism until the Bali bombing. Although some terrorist acts such as the Christmas Eve bombings in 2000 alerted police to the problem, the restructuring process that occurred within the police institution itself after separation from the army in 1999 contributed to the inability of the police force to react to the emerging problem of radical Islamism. These bombing events signalise the rise of radical Islamism in Indonesia. Further attempt is necessary to understand the causes of radical Islamism and the reasons why some radical Islamic groups have employed a violent approach to express themselves politically. The next section examines the emergence of radical Islamism in Indonesia, with an analysis focussed particularly within the context of the modern history of Indonesia.
The Emergence of Radical Islamism: Past and Present

The causes of radical Islam are very complex. According to a research report from the Indonesian Institute of Science (Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia or LIPI) entitled ‘Islam and Radicalism in Indonesia’ (Islam dan Radikalisme di Indonesia) (Turmudi & Sihbudi [eds.], 2005), there are three significant points at which radicalism may emerge. The first point is at the level of the norms and teachings of Islam. These derive from the texts of the Quran and Hadith (and also the ijma or the agreement among Ulama) and affect Muslims’ behaviour and attitude. Since the teachings of the Quran and Hadith are of a very general nature, the emergence of various interpretations is unavoidable. The different interpretations are influenced by the various contexts in which the texts are read, including political, social, economic and cultural contexts. The second point of potential contention is the understanding of the implementation of Shari’a Law; the formation of an Indonesian Islamic State and Islamiyah Caliphate (Khilafah Islamiyah). The formation of this attitude is the continuation of the interpretation of the teachings of Islam. It is assumed that some attitudes are formed after the Muslim community interprets the teachings of Islam. The different understandings of the teachings of Islam have an impact on the formation of three different groups in Islam. These are known as the secular, substantialist and scriptural (Turmudi & Sihbudi [eds.], 2005, p. 11). The third is the attitude that appears as the result of a situation when the implementation of Shari’a law is faced with the real social and political conditions of society. Political hegemony by the government or repression over Muslims by a particular group will trigger a different response depending on the group. A secular group will not respond because they are indifferent. Although showing care to Islam in all aspects, substantialist groups tend to act in a more moderate way. For instance, they tend to be flexible on issues like the question of an Islamic state, Islamiyah Caliphate and the implementation of Shari’a Law. It is the scriptural group that is assumed to show a radical attitude (Turmudi & Sihbudi [eds.], 2005, p. 11).

There is a high potential for radicalism to emerge at any of the three above mentioned points at which interpretations of the central Islamic texts vary. In addition, there are differences between radical Islamic groups themselves in their attitudes as well as understanding of the Islamic texts. For example their radicalism can be on the level of discourse (radical only in thought) or can be on the level of action (radical in action) (Turmudi & Sihbudi [eds.], 2005, p. 12).
The 9/11 terrorist attacks as well as the 2002 Bali bombing have brought the issue of radical Islamism to the forefront. The ‘war on terror’ campaign led by the US government has been effectively used by other governments to fight Islamic movements. The Chinese government, for instance, has used this pretence to fight the ‘rebellion’ of Xinjiang and Uighur Muslims, whilst the Russia government has accused Chechen rebels of acts of terrorism.

The same phenomenon also occurs in countries where Muslims are a majority. The Malay government, for instance, has employed the politics of terrorist discourse to suppress and marginalise its political opponents that use religion as ideology. The same tendency also occurs in Indonesia. Although the government seemed to doubt the severity of Islamic terrorism at first, it has since taken the opportunity to prohibit Islamic groups that are classified as radical, such as the Islamic Defender Front (Front Pembela Islam or FPI), Indonesian Mujahidin Assembly (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia or MMI) and the Soldiers of Jihad (Laskar Jihad). The detainment of Habib Rizieq Shihab (chairman of FPI) and Jafar Umar Thalib (leader of Laskar Jihad) is further evidence of Indonesia's participation in the global 'war on terror'.

It is important to note that the issue of Islamic radicalism and terrorism in Indonesia has intensified due to the accusation by the Senior Minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew, who asserted that terrorist cells with international links were active in Indonesia. This statement was strengthened by the capture of a number of Indonesian radical Islamists in the Philippines, including Tamsil Linrung (member of the Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals or ICMI) and Agus Dwi Karna (Chair of Islamic Movement Jundullah).

Within the context of Indonesia, there are two types of radical Islamism that can be identified. Firstly, there is radical Islamism concerned with the implementation of Islamic law (Shari’a law) within social, political and cultural aspects of society. These radical Islamists believe Muslim life has diverged from what is written and required by the Quran and Hadith. One of the causes of this divergence is the impact of western modernity, in particular communication technology and globalization which contaminates the minds of Muslims. Technology and globalization which are dominated by Western countries have brought Western values to Indonesia and have contaminated the development process. This contamination of Muslim life is characterized by daily activities that do not represent
the identity of Muslims (Sivan, 1998). For these radical Islamists there is a strong need for Muslims to return to the teachings of the Quran and Prophet Muhammad. At the practical level, people are encouraged or persuaded through *da’ wa*, a forum where *Ulamma* preach on various issues from the perspective of Islam, to change their daily behaviour. It is noteworthy that this type of radical Islamic group does not implement methods of violence in reaching its goals. Examples of this group are *Jemaah Salafi* and *Hizbut Tahrir* Indonesia.

Another form of radical Islamism is focused on defending Islam from Western countries which they believe to have implemented a policy of double standards toward Muslims. To these radical Islamists, they are obliged to fight against the West in order to defend Islam. As a reaction to these conditions, some Muslims, especially radical Islamists, feel it is necessary to conduct *islah* (reform) or *tajdid* (renewal) not only through peaceful means, but also by force and other radical means they consider being more effective. They share the views of the first radical Islamism, but believe that it does not go far enough. As noted by Barton (2004, p.30)—

For them the world is divided, according to their narrow, literalistic reading of the Quran, between the realm of war and the realm of Islam, which is the realm of peace. Theirs is a Manichaean struggle between good and evil in which they justify pre-emptive acts of violence against those (non-Muslims or Muslims) that are said to be, collectively or individually, opposing Islam’s true cause.

This second form of radical Islamism is sometimes called “Jihadi Islamism”. Examples of these groups are *Laskar Jihad* (Soldiers of Jihad), *Front Pembela Islam* or *FPI* (Islamic Defender Front), *Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia* or *MMI* (Indonesian Mujahidin Council), and *Darul Islam* (Bamualim et al., 2001; Turmudi & Sihbudi, 2005).

Although there are two types of radical Islamism that can be identified, there is no conflict between the two groups. Their radicalism merely relates to their understanding of the Islamic values and how they perceive the world. It is the second radical Islamism that is noteworthy as they are willing to adopt violent means to reach their goals.

Of these radical Islamic groups, *DI* has a history of attempting to establish an Islamic state in West Java, Aceh and South Sulawesi. *DI* is also believed to have links with Al-Qaeda.
Many former followers of Darul Islam (DI) later become members of Jemaah Islamiyah, a terrorist network to be responsible for several bombings in Indonesia, including the Bali bombings and the J. W. Marriott Hotel and Australian Embassy bombings in Jakarta. The history of DI and its relation with Jemaah Islamiyah is further discussed in the next section.

Most scholars agree that radicalism, which is sometimes termed “fundamentalism”, is a reaction to modernity (Barton, 2004). Jihad can be regarded as a struggle to do good and especially to reform oneself, spiritually and personally. This form of Jihad is said to be the Greater Jihad and is much written about in the Sufi tradition. Jihad can also be seen as an exercise in physical self-defence along the lines of the just war theory; this is known as the Lesser Jihad. For Jihadi Islamists, Jihad is externalised and universalised as an essential component in a radical, romantically utopian, revolutionary ideology. The preceding discussion raises some important questions for consideration; what causal factors contribute to the emergence of radical Islamism in Indonesia? At what point did it begin to grow?

Before the modern history of Indonesia, radicalism appeared as a way to address the socio-moral decay that occurred among Muslims (Azra, 2003). This was caused by the misinterpretation of religious values and practices. As a result, some Muslims considered the need to adopt renewal as well reform movements to ensure all Muslims followed the Quran and the Hadith.

As discussed in the previous chapter, before the independence of Indonesia, radical Islamism appeared in various attempts to implement Shari’a law and to wage jihad against the Dutch colonisers. The attempts of some of Islamic leaders to propose the Jakarta Charter as the national ideology is some evidence of the strong level of Islamic radicalism active at that time.

A central Islamic dogma used by radical Islamic renewal and reform groups is the pure and pristine Islamic movement as practised by the Prophet Muhammad and his companions (the Salafs). The term ‘Salaf’ refers to the Prophet’s companions who understood and practised Islam as shown by the Prophet. The term ‘Salafi’ is the acknowledgement of those who have practised Islam as shown by the Prophet and his companions. This is the reason for most of the Islamic renewal movements being called “Salafiyah” (or Salafi, or
Salafism). Azra notes that there is a very wide spectrum of Islamic discourse and movements which can be included within the Salafiyyah (2003). A distinction can be made between “classic Salafiyyah” and “neo Salafiyyah”, or between “peaceful Salafiyyah” and “radical Salafiyyah”. The Wahhabi movements in the Arabian Peninsula that gained momentum in the late 18th century can be categorized as both classic and radical Salafiyyah. The same can be said of the Padri movement in West Sumatra, Indonesia. The Wahhabi-like movement can be conveniently categorised as “classic salafism”, in which the Muslim ummah were its driving force.

Salaf also includes tabi‘in which is those who follow the path of the Prophet’s companions and tabi‘it tabi‘in which is the followers of the tabi‘in. Thus, there are three forms that can be categorised as falling within the Salaf dogma. These forms are also called the ahli Sunnah wal Jamaah (those who commit themselves to following the Prophet Muhammad’s sunnah). Hadith is the Prophet Muhammad’s words, whereas Sunnah includes all of the Prophet’s attitude, behaviour and judgment. The Sunnah is usually used as the source of law besides the Qur’an and hadith.

The history of Islam shows that there have been many Islamic groups which claimed to be the followers of ahli Sunnah wal Jamaah. Mu’tazilah Kowarij, Syi’ah, Qodariyah and Jabbariyah are examples of Islamic groups that claim to have followed the Sunnah. In Indonesia, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) is the first Islamic group that claims to be the follower of ahli Sunnah wal Jemaah. The same label has also been used by Jafar Umar Thalib to form a radical Islamic group, Forum Komunikasi Ahli Sunnah Wal Jemaah (FKAWJ) which sent their members to fight the Christians in Maluku province in early 2000s. It is evident that the religious practices of the different followers of ahli Sunnah wal Jemaah vary greatly, with only some groups tending to be radical in their actions.

According to Asmani (2003), the term ‘radical salafiyah’ can best describe those who use methods of violence and terror to achieve their Islamic goals. Amrozi, Imam Samudra, Hambali, Ali Imron fall within this category. According to these radical Islamists any means are legal and necessary to uphold the teachings of Islam on earth. Those who oppose the implementation of Shari’a and the formation of a universal Islamic caliphate can be considered as kafir or non believers and therefore must be eliminated.
Based on the textual understanding of a Hadith, actions which violate God’s law (maksiat or ma’ashi), including all sins (dosa or zunub), denials (mungkar or munkar), meanness (keji or fakhsya), hypocrisy (munafik or nifaq) and anything that are considered haram, must be fought. Coincidentally, places like restaurants and night clubs are sites in which these sanctioned activities are practised and therefore they are highly susceptible to threats or terrorist attacks from radical Salafs.

Radical Islamic movements have consistently attempted to achieve a number of specific goals. Historically, the adoption and implementation of Islamic law (Shari’a) in all aspects of life has been a key objective of radical Islamic social organisations and political groups. This may be viewed as a consequence of the strong desire of radical Islamic groups to return to the pure teachings of Islam. The appeal for the implementation of Islamic law was given momentum during the Habibie Presidency with the adoption of Islamic law in the province of Aceh as an integral part of the proposed solution of the peace agreement in that region (Azra, 2000, p.375). Ultimately signed by President Megawati in early 2002, the implementation of Islamic law in the province of Aceh has triggered other Islamic groups and political parties to propose this concept at the national level; however, support for the idea has remained marginal. There have been a number of examples of attempts to reintroduce Islamic law, including the proposition of the idea by Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (United Development Party) in 2000 as well as by Muslims in the South Sulawesi province and in the districts of Cianjur and Tasikmalaya in the West Java province in late October 2000 (see Azra, 2006, p.23).

Another specific goal of radical Islamic groups has been the idea of the formation of an Indonesia Islamic state. This objective was championed by DI, a radical Islamic group with suspected links to Osama bin Laden’s Al-Qaeda. Support for this objective emerged following Sukarno’s rejection of the promise to adopt Islam as the state ideology. From the perspective of DI, Sukarno’s guerrillas were as much an enemy as the Dutch colonialists. Meanwhile, in the context of the development of contemporary radical Islamic groups, Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia or MMI (Indonesian Mujahidin Assembly) (established in 2000) and Hizbut al-Tahrir (established in 1980s and became more prominent in Indonesia since the fall of Soeharto) are radical Islamic groups who have supported the establishment of an Indonesian Islamic state (Azra, 2006, p.5). These groups claim this objective is an important part of religious duty and should therefore be strived for by all Muslims.
Moreover, the establishment of an Islamic state is central to understanding that the state not only facilitates the implementation of Islamic law but can also articulate the interests of Muslims on a national level. However, according to former chief leader of Muhammadiyah, Amien Rais, this concept has no precedent in Islamic history (Azra, 2006, p.19). Thus, there is no religious obligation for Muslims to establish an Islamic state.

The third specific goal of radical Islamic groups, according to Azra (2006, p.23), is the idea of establishing a classical Islamic caliphate (al-khilafah al Islamiyah) model, or, “Islamic political entity”. Some Muslim groups, regarded by many as radicals, such as the Hizb al Tahrir, Jama’ah Tafkir wa al-Hijrah and other splinter groups of the Ikhwan al-Muslimun, believe this kind of Islamic political entity led by a single caliph is necessary to resolve Muslim disunity and address the disparity in power between the Islamic world and the Western powers. This idea is nonetheless problematic; it grossly oversimplifies both the complex political and economic conditions which have led to the current state of power relations between Islam and the West as well as the complex causes of Muslim disenfranchisement and disunity. Azra (2006, p.9) stresses that the idea is mostly based on an historical and religious romanticism as well as a misconception not only of the true meaning of the caliphate but also of the historical development of the caliphate itself in the Post-Prophet Muhammad period. It is the idea of reinstating the Islamic caliphate that has provided the impetus for Imam Samudra, the radical Islamist and member of Jemaah Islamiyah, to wage jihad. In his book Aku Melawan Teroris (I fight the terrorists, 2004), he writes how the fall of the last Islamic monarchy (Turkey’s Ottoman Monarchy in 1924) occurred as the consequence of Western foreign policy. Samudra hypothesises that a return to the Caliphate model will strengthen Islam against the continuing impact of the imperialism of the West.

The desire by radical Islamic groups for khilafatism, one Islamic political entity and one united understanding of the teachings of Islam has resulted in the denial of other interpretations of Islam. To some of these radical groups, Muslims who cannot accept the idea of khilafatism and by implication that particular radical group's interpretation of the teachings of Islam, are considered non Muslim or kafir, musyrik, munafik and murtad (Arubusman in Kahfi, 2006). Some groups have even gone as far as denying the existence of key Muslim organisations such as NU and Muhammadiyah because khilafah is conspicuously absent from their discourse. Radical Islamic groups have been known to
employ methods of violence as an attempt to invoke their idea of *khilafatism* and impose it upon other Islamic groups.

Although the concepts of *Shari’a* law, Islamic state and universal caliphate lack widespread support, they remain persuasive within some Islamic groups in Indonesia. The Islamic groups which have remained interested in pursuing these concepts are generally those which survived the repressive period of the New Order and later gained momentum in the reform era. These groups are known to use both soft as well as radical approaches to propose their ideas and garner support. The *Hizb al-Tahrir* was a good example. After the fall of Suharto, this movement openly called for the establishment of the universal caliphate. Large-scale, militant and vocal demonstrations have become one of the ways to voice their demands. They once criticised the policy of former Indonesian president, Abdurrahman Wahid, to open trade agreements between Indonesia and Israel. Important social and economic external factors have contributed to the emergence of radical Islamism in Indonesia. However, it is noteworthy that both internal as well as external factors are in a causal relationship. We cannot understand the external factors of radicalism without understanding the internal ones.

During the early modern history of Indonesia, which is marked by the establishment of “Budi Utomo” organisation in 1908, Islamic radicalism appeared in the form of resistance toward the Dutch colonizers. During the colonization era, *pesantren* (Islamic Boarding Schools) played a crucial role in fighting the Dutch. Its significance can be witnessed in the appreciation given to it by Douwes Dekker, one of Indonesia's prominent national movement figures, at the 17 August 1945 Declaration, “If it was not for *pesantren*, our patriotist movement would never be like it is now” (Kurniawan in Santosa, 2007).

The seed of radicalism also appears in the process of formulating the state’s ideology. In March 1945, the Japanese allowed the secular-nationalists to begin formulating the political structure for an independent Indonesia. Sukarno, who was a secular nationalist and purported Communist, proposed a more secular ideology. Meanwhile, some Islamic leaders who claimed that Muslims had played an important role in the *jihad* (war) against the colonizers recommended adopting Islamic values as the state’s ideology. As a result tensions arose between secular-nationalists and Islamic leaders of mass-based Islamic organisations, which stood united behind the Islamic political party, *Masjumi*. In June 1945
due to this sharp disagreement Sukarno proposed the *Pancasila* (five principles) as the state ideology. It was a compromise that would recognise the role of religion without threatening non-santri (non-practising) Muslims and religious minorities.

Islamic leaders then suggested the addition of seven words into the first principle transforming it into a “belief in God with the obligation for adherents of Islam to carry out the *Shari’a*.” Later known as the Jakarta Charter, this proposal received resistance from secular-nationalists as well as non-Muslims. Their biggest anxiety was the implementation of *Shari’a* law and the establishment of Indonesian Islamic state. The next day, as Barton notes (2004), Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta relented in the face of robust protests and dropped the Jakarta Charter. By way of a compromise brokered by Wahid Hasyim and other *Nahdlatul Ulama* leaders, the first *sila* (principle) was changed to read: “belief in God Who is one,” in accordance with the Islamic (and Christian) doctrine of *tauhid*, or the one-ness of God.

The refusal to adopt the Jakarta Charter as the state ideology dismayed many Islamic leaders and created conflict between them and the secular government. This refusal also signified the denial of Muslims a role in the struggle for independence. Sukarno believed that by accepting Islam as the basis of state ideology, Indonesia could never be a “unitary” state. To assure this, Sukarno refused the dominant role of Islamic leaders in the government and tended to choose those who were Islamic but had secular-nationalist political tendencies.

The co-optation of Muslims for the benefit of the government continued under the New Order regime. The history shows how the Indonesian government's tendency to ignore and marginalize Islamic groups resulted in the emergence of Islamic radicalism. The idea put forward by the Indonesian state intelligence coordinating agency (*Badan Koordinasi Intelejen Negara* or *BAKIN*) of reuniting some of the radical Islamic leaders in 1971 for the purpose of gathering support for Golkar, Suharto’s political vehicle, and the later return to New Order marginalisation tactics indicates how the state successfully utilised Islamic groups for its own ends. This political tactic was principally responsible for the emergence of Islamic radicalism in Indonesia (*ICG Asia Report*, No. 92, 2005; Barton, 2004).

The Suharto New Order regime in the 1970s and 1980s was generally on poor terms with Muslim political forces. A great deal of mutual suspicion and hostility between the two
sides existed. Radical Islamic groups once again re-emerged in this period and attempted to challenge the hegemonic regime. These attempts, however, “did not stand a chance in the face of the state repression” (Hasan in Sukma, 2003, p.343). President Suharto took very harsh measures against any expression of Islamic extremism (radicalism). Indeed, in dealing with such challenges to its rule, the New Order government did not hesitate to resort to force, often causing the loss of hundreds of lives. The worst example of the heavy-handed approach adopted by the New Order government towards such challenges occurred in 1984, when hundreds of Muslim protesters were fired upon by the military in Tanjung Priok. Some findings, such as by Asia Watch and researchers from the Indonesian Institute of Science (LIPI), indicate the use of military forces toward young Muslims who protested the manners of some soldiers that they considered to have insulted Islam by coming into the mosque wearing shoes (Bhakti et al., 2001, p.77). As a result many Muslim activists were radicalised and went underground. At the same time certain military generals such as Ali Murtopo and Beny Moerdani recruited ex radical Islamic group supporters to form “Komando Jihad” (Jihad Command), conducting subversive activities in order to discredit Islam and Muslims (Ausop in Azra, 2006). For nearly two decades after the mid 1980s, the phenomenon of radical Islam never surfaced. Due to the strong repressive approach taken by the New Order regime toward Muslims and radical Islamists, many political analysts at the time believed that radicalism would never re-emerge in Indonesia.

In sum, it is palpably clear that the motives driving the radicalism of some Islamic groups are religious, social and political. These motives are inter-related and affected by the disruption of political and social systems as a whole which occurred during Indonesia's post-independence history.

One of the radical movements that emerged as the consequence of the religious, cultural, and socio-political conditions discussed above is Darul Islam (DI). The DI movement is strongly committed to the idea of establishing an Indonesian Islamic state, in fact they are also known as the Islamic State of Indonesia (Negara Islam Indonesia or NII). DI began as separate rebellions in Aceh, South Sulawesi and West Java provinces in the 1950s and has demonstrated its popularity by remaining in existence until now. These rebellions erupted due to the disappointment at Sukarno’s secular approach and marginalisation of political Muslims. Many political analysts believe that members of Jemaah Islamiyah are alumni of
this movement, although there are also alumni of DI who form non-violent groups. Further detail of DI and its relation to Jemaah Islamiyah and political violence in Indonesia and Southeast Asia in general is discussed in the next section.

The Darul Islam Movement

Any attempt to understand the emergence of radicalism in Indonesia cannot be separated from the DI movement and its mission to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia. For more than 55 years, the DI movement has produced splinters and offshoots that range from violent to non-violent groups. Their first rebellion in the early phase of independence which set a precedent on the use of violence has passed through to consecutive generations. Some of its alumni or members have adopted this violent approach and claim this is a central part of waging jihad. Their literalist understanding of Islamic values has resulted in their narrow interpretation of the meaning of jihad and the way they look at current socio-political conditions. Jemaah Islamiyah, the radical Islamic group, which launched terrorist attacks on two night clubs in Bali, the J. W. Marriott Hotel and the Australian Embassy bombing in Jakarta, had been formed by the former followers of DI organisation. Their radical understanding in both thought and action indicates how this radical movement, which claims their actions in the name of Islam, can be a threat to both domestic and international security. Thus, understanding the history of DI is vital in order to understand today’s Islamic radicalism and the terrorist events that have more recently occurred in Indonesia.

According to the ICG (Asia Report No. 92, 2005), DI is an organisation that has gone through cycles of decline and growth, or perhaps more aptly, senescence and rejuvenation. Every time the old leadership seems to have outlived its usefulness, younger, more militant members emerge to breathe new life into the organisation and reinterpret its mission. Every major period in DI’s history has relevance for an understanding of today's radical Islamic groups. DI strongholds in the 1950s in many cases are now strongholds of jihadist support, even though the Indonesian political context is now radically different.

DI, which has been translated into Negara Islam Indonesia or NII (Indonesia Islamic State), is a radical movement founded by Soekarjadji Maridjan Kartosuwiryo. Born on February 7, 1905, in East/Central Java, Kartosuwiryo was an excellent organizer and very
charismatic among his followers. He had had experience in national politics and was active in the nationalist movement before the Second World War. Kartosuwiryo was also one of the principal organisers of *Hizbullah*, an Islamic military force set up during the Japanese occupation by the peak Islamic organisation Masyumi and later marshalled to fight the Dutch. Unhappy with the moderate direction of Masyumi as well as disappointment with Sukarno’s rejection of the Jakarta Charter, he founded the *Tentara Islam Indonesia* (Indonesian Islamic Army) in West Java. Its main goal was to establish a state based on the *Shari’a* constitution. Compared to other Muslim groups, DI never compromised with the secular government on the issue of *Pancasila* and the constitution. DI leaders refused to submit their rebel army to the command of Sukarno’s republican army. This move brought him into direct conflict with the army.

*DI*’s first rebellion to establish an Islamic state occurred in West Java in 1948. As stated by Abuza (2003, p.62), Kartosuwiryo argued that Sukarno’s guerrillas were as much an enemy as the Dutch: “By rejecting Islam as the sole foundation of the state, [the government] had made itself as evil an enemy as the Dutch”. On August 7, 1949, Kartosuwiryo declared the founding of Negara Islam Indonesia in West Java. He also claimed that the districts controlled by his troops were to be governed by DI. This event was quickly followed by a similar outbreak in Central Java and later outbreaks in South Kalimantan (1950) and South Sulawesi (1952) under Kahar Muzakar, and Aceh (1953) under Daud Beureueh.

The south Sulawesi DI rebellion led by Kahar Muzakar, who was another former leader of *Hizbullah* and respected nationalist, was triggered by the refusal of the army officers to provide places for his militia in the army. The rebellion was also strongly inspired by the success of the DI movement’s proclamation of Islamic state in West Java. Muzakar refused orders to demobilise his army and instead issued statements that they would fight for the rights of the people of Sulawesi. On 7 August 1953, he proclaimed that Sulawesi was part of the *Negara Republik Islam Indonesia* (*NRII* – Islamic Republic of Indonesia). In his speech, Kahar Muzakar set forth the following principles:

*Menyatakan berdirinya Darul Islam di Sulawesi dengan ketentuan berlakunya ajaran Islam bagi seluruh umat Islam. Siapa yang tidak melaksanakan, tidak diakui Islamnya dan dianggap sebagai musuh.*
[...the declaration of Darul Islam in Sulawesi with the obligation to implement the teachings of Islam to Muslims. Those who disobey, their Islam will not be acknowledged and they will be considered enemies] (Hasan in Santosa, 2007).

Kahar Muzakar’s rebellion, which began as a regional rights dispute and only later became radicalised along Islamist lines, continued until his death at the hands of TNI in 1965 (Barton, 2004).

Kartosuwiryo’s West Java rebellion continued until 1962 when he was arrested along with other DI leaders in the Mount Geber Majalaya, West Java. He was later executed by the Sukarno government on 5 September 1962. After the capture of DI leaders, the Indonesian army persuaded 32 of Kartosuwiryo’s top lieutenants to pledge allegiance to the government in exchange for amnesty. In a statement known as Ikrar Bersama (Joint Pledge), they acknowledged that the DI/NII movement had been wrong and misguided, and they had sinned against the people of West Java. Effectively, the DI movement became leaderless for a decade. Many of the signatories to the admission received short term benefits to shore up their loyalty, such as cars, land, and in one case, a kerosene distribution business. As one of the DI leaders wrote, “Between 1962 and 1968 the Islamic State of Indonesia was buried by the worldly facilities that the enemy provided” (ICG Asia Report 92, 2005).

These circumstances created the problem of succession within DI after the execution of Kartosuwiryo. With no second-in command and no procedure of how to choose the all-Indonesia military commander, any of the top figures of DI could become the leader. Consequently, this created frictions within the movement. Adah Djaelani’s claim of becoming the leader of DI post Kartosuwiryo, for instance, was rejected as a fake claim by Raden Wirangganapati, the former proxy of the all-Indonesia military commander. Adah Djaelani was later sent to prison for his claim of becoming the next leader of DI. According to Colonel Herman Ibrahim, former Head of Military Information Unit (Kapendam or Kepala Penerangan Daerah Militer) III Siliwangi, Adah Djaelani was in actual fact the state intelligence coordinating agency’s (Badan Koordinasi Intelijen Negara or BAKIN) puppet ordered to infiltrate the DI movement and put pressure on its activities (Turmudi & Sihbudi, 2005, p. 228).
The role of BAKIN in defeating the DI movement through the stick and carrot strategy seemed effective, although the role of General Ali Murtopo, Suharto’s notorious “Special Operation” manager, cannot be underestimated. BAKIN engaged in an elaborate sting operation that lured hundreds of former DI fighters out of hiding. The issue of the emergence of communism in Southeast Asia and in Indonesia in particular had been a sensitive issue for the DI movement and was successfully used by Murtopo to co-opt the movement. Between the years 1965 to 1966, the links of many of the West Java DI leaders with the army were reinforced when they were offered weapons in exchange for help in attacking suspected communists (PKI) in West Java, Aceh and North Sumatra. To the DI leaders, they saw this as a way to avoid further arrest and maintain the existence of the movement in the face of the dual nationalist and communist threats.

The relationship between some of the DI leaders and BAKIN grew significantly in this period. BAKIN saw the possibility of drawing the ex members of DI into Golkar, Suharto’s political vehicle. Support for the army was shown through the presence of BAKIN officials at the reunion of some of the old DI leadership on 21 April 1971, in Situaksan, Bandung (ICG Asia Report No. 92, 2005, p. 4). These circumstances, whether realised or not by the army, had been used by DI leaders to consolidate themselves internally. At the same time, there had been a growing trust by some DI leaders toward BAKIN and Ali Murtopo in particular. Murtopo’s closeness with some DI leaders was due to a contiguous history when during the Japanese occupation, he had fought alongside some of the DI leaders in Hizbullah. They not only trusted him but reportedly assured he was committed to the establishment of an Islamic state.

These military-DI relationships later led to the reactivation of DI. Before the formation of the new DI movement, once again, BAKIN used the issue of the rise of communism in Indonesia to co-opt DI fighters to fight the communists. As Barton notes—

The fall of Saigon in 1975 heralded the danger of communist advances throughout Southeast Asia and formed a challenge that required the forces of the right to work together – and possibly also offering financial inducements – Murtopo’s men were able to persuade key former Darul Islam members to contact their colleagues and reactivate their movement (2004, p. 48).
As the consequence of this policy, some DI members establish *Jemaah Islamiyah* as a precursor to a new DI. The term *Jemaah Islamiyah* at that time simply means community of Islam. The impact of its formation, however, remains strong. In relation to this issue, the August 2002 ICG Asia report on the Ngruki network observes—

The operation set in motion by Ali Murtopo and the Indonesian intelligence in the 1970s had several unintended consequences. It renewed or forged bonds amongst Muslim radicals in South Sulawesi, Sumatra, and Java. It promoted the idea of an Islamic state in a way that the original *Darul Islam* leaders had perhaps not intended, and in doing so tapped an intellectual ferment that was particularly pronounced in university-based mosques. That ferment was only beginning when *Komando Jihad* was created, but through the late 1970s and early 1980s, it was fuelled by the Iranian revolution, the availability of Indonesian translations of writings on political Islam from the Middle East and Pakistan, and anger over Suharto government policies.

Thus, the Iranian revolution as well as writings on political Islam from the Middle East and Pakistan can also be viewed as a causative factor in the re-birth of Islamic radical movements, including DI in Indonesia. Moreover these movements adopted the ideas as well as methods of political Islam in the Middle East in their attempts to return to the pure teachings of Islam. Although they had been willing to fight the communists for the secular government, it was also cleverly used for the consolidation the group among DI members. The clear evidence of this was the formation of *Komando Jihad* in 1976, which ICG describes as a new violent phase of the DI movement. Thus, while Murtopo and some officials in BAKIN encouraged the formation of *Komando Jihad* and certainly used it for their ends, DI leaders were not simply the gullible victims of the New Order plot (Bhakti et al., 2001). They actively participated in *Komando Jihad*’s creation and saw it as the first real opportunity since the defeat of DI in the 1960s to mount a guerrilla war against the Indonesian government (ICG Asia Report 92, February 2005). Therefore, it can be asserted that Murtopo and BAKIN had miscalculated or underestimated the strong bonds among radical Islamists and the potential of the situation to work against the New Order regime. It can also be asserted that the New Order government had clearly contributed to the re-emergence of the DI movement and *Komando Jihad-Jemaah Islamiyah* which later became the embryo of the current terrorist network *Jemaah Islamiyah*.
The struggles of the DI movement during Suharto’s New Order occurred not only in Indonesia but elsewhere in South-East Asia. A number of DI members who went to Malaysia to avoid government arrest and also those who flew to Afghanistan to join the Mujahidin to fight the Russians in the early to mid 1980s brought with them DI’s vision and mission. The confession of an ex member of JI, Nasir Abbas, which has been published in a book entitled Membongkar Jemaah Islamiyah (Debunking Jemaah Islamiyah) shows how the spirit of DI grew and remained strong although its members were far away from Indonesia. Some DI leaders who illegally came to Malaysia such as Abu Bakar Ba’asyir, Hilmy Bakar Almascaty, Abu Jibril, Solihin and others, preached about the DI movement and the necessity of establishing an Islamic state, starting from Indonesia.

**Radical Islamism in Transition in Indonesia**

Although Indonesia has entered a reform era, the political dynamics indicate that this country is still searching for the best format to build a more democratic nation. This uncertainty is evidenced by the fact that during the first five years since Suharto's demise Indonesia has been governed by three presidents (B.J. Habibie, Abdurrahman Wahid and Megawati Sukarnoputri). On the other hand, members of Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (House of Representatives) and Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (People’s Advisory Assembly) have become increasingly influential over the executive government. Meanwhile, the reform period has provided new opportunities for many political interest groups to gain political influence for the benefit of their particular constituencies. This can be viewed as part of a broader reform era trend characterised by greater political freedoms. Importantly, this has allowed people to express themselves in a variety of ways, even to criticize the government, without the fear of being captured by the state military apparatus.

The opening of political freedoms in the transition period has also provided fertile ground for radical Islamic groups to further their political interests and goals of implementing Shari’a law and forming an Islamic state and universal Islamic entity. Ironically, the granting of greater political freedoms and the emergence of a new civil society in the reform era has coincided with an increasingly radical and violent approach taken by radical Islamic groups in order to achieve political aims. A stronger, more convincing and devastating “evidence” of the terrorist threat, which was later attributed to the radical
Islamic group *JI*, came with the Bali Bombing on October 12, 2002. The bombing came a mere ten months after a previous terrorist attempt to blow up American and other western targets in Singapore in December 2001 had been successfully defeated.

The confessions of the captured perpetrators of the Bali bombing that the bombing was part of a wider jihad and was an attempt to implement the pure teachings of Islam, have raised questions among political analysts of the growth of radical Islamic groups in Indonesia. Rizal Sukma (2003), for instance, posed a number of salient questions relevant to the discussion of the re-emergence of radical Islam in Indonesia’s transition period. These questions include to what extent does radical Islam pose a serious threat to the country and the region? Could Indonesia’s tolerant brand of Islam give way to radical Islamism following the Bali bombing? How vulnerable is Indonesia to the challenge of religious extremism? Who are the prominent contemporary radical Islamic groups?

The re-emergence of radical Islam, according to Khamami Zada as quoted by Sukma (in Ramakhrisna & Tan, 2003), is meant to achieve at least four objectives. Firstly, radical Islam serves as a vehicle to pressure the state to recognise and adopt the Jakarta Charter. The inclusion of the Jakarta Charter would provide a constitutional basis for Indonesian Muslims to observe the *Shari’a* law. Secondly, radical Islam strives to eradicate vices and social ills in Indonesian society. In that context, attacks on cafés, karaoke bars, gambling houses and brothels by the *Front Pembela Islam* (*FPI*) is meant to eradicate vices and social ills in society. These activities reflect the radical Islamic agenda of creating a society free from un-Islamic elements. Thirdly, radical Islam also emerges as a response to social and political injustice. It becomes a response to what radical Muslims perceive as ongoing oppression of Muslims by the state and other forces. Finally, forging a worldwide solidarity among the Islamic *umma* is also high on the agenda of radical Islam. This agenda is, among others, shown through a periodic display of support for the plight of the Palestinians and opposition to US foreign policy towards the Muslim world.

To Muslim community, including radical Islamists, the reform era should have been more accommodative to their agenda. However, the social and political conditions of the reform era still fell short of the expectations of radical Islamists. The reintroduction of the Jakarta Charter by the Islamic political party, the United Development Party (*PPP*) to be included in the 1945 Constitution in the MPR session, did not gain any support from secular parties.
nor from the more moderate Islamic political parties. Amien Rais contended that the Jakarta Charter’s inclusion in the constitution was not likely or even desired by most Indonesians—

The Islamic state has been put behind them by 95 percent of Muslim leaders and also the rank and file. I have not seen any significant pockets within the Islamic community in this country who are still aspiring to see the application of Shari’ā Islam in Indonesia. The concept of an Islamic state in Indonesia has not been an issue at all since Suharto’s downfall (in Forrester & May, 1998).

Meanwhile, the tendency of some Islamic political parties to focus solely on their own political interests rather than the interests of Muslim community as a whole has strengthened the emergence of radical Islamism whilst concurrently diminishing the potential for widespread support from the Muslim population.

Nevertheless, re-emphasize that radicalism exists in every religion and not all radical groups are terrorists is important at this point. Thus, although there are many radical Islamic groups in Indonesia whose ideas are to implement the Shari’ā law, to establish an Indonesia Islamic state and Islamic caliphate, only a small few implement methods of violence to achieve their goals or to voice their aspirations.

As stated earlier in this chapter there are some contemporary radical Islamic groups that need to be further discussed in this section. They are Laskar Jihad, Front Pembela Islam or FPI (Islamic Defender Front), Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (Indonesian Mujahidin Assembly), Jemaah Ikhwan al-Muslimin Indonesia (JAMI) and Hibz al-Tahrir Indonesia (Indonesian Party of Liberation).

_Laskar Jihad_ was established in January 2000 by Jafar Umar Thalib who served with Mujahidin Afghanistan between 1987 and 1989. In 1987 he met Osama bin Laden in Peshawar. He underestimated Osama bin Laden’s understanding of Islam and refused his activities to be related with Laden’s terrorist network, Al-Qaeda. Soon after he returned to Indonesia in 1989, along with other hard-line Islamic leaders, he formed the _Forum Komunikasi Ahlussunnah Wa al-Jamaah_ (FKAWJ).
This forum did not concede that the Pancasila was the state ideology and instead supported the establishment of a separate Indonesian Islamic state. In late 1999, after a fact finding team was sent to Maluku province to investigate conflict between Christians and Muslims, this forum declared that *jihad* must be waged in Maluku to protect Muslims. In order to do that, Thalib held the first gathering of *Laskar Jihad* in Yogyakarta in January 2000. In March, he established a training camp in Bogor, West Java. By May he sent around 3,000 fighters to the Maluku province to fight the Christians which were labelled *kafir harbi*, or, “belligerent infidels”. In an interview, he presented his argument for the establishment of *Laskar Jihad*—

> We founded this movement in order to support Muslims in eastern Indonesia. They were slaughtered by the thousands in Maluku province. The government did nothing to defend the Muslims. Subsequent governments did not defend them from Christian attacks. In light of this situation, we had no other choice but to found the *Laskar Jihad* organisation, to protect our Muslim brothers in eastern Indonesia (in Abuza, 2003, p.69).

The police and the military forces were helpless in addressing this issue. The demand for a strict division between the police and the army which resulted in confusion surrounding the division of responsibility, coupled with the different religious backgrounds of the police and army members contributed heavily to the inability of the government to reduce the conflict in the Maluku province. Some analysts have even suggested that the conflict in Maluku was allowed to happen so that either the police or the military officers could ask for a greater government budget to send their troops to Maluku. To some generals wars are a way of increasing their budget and represent a profitable business. Abuza (2003) has argued that the military allowed this to happen to discredit the civilian government that had tried to politically emasculate the military. In reality the failed response to the Maluku conflict points to a dangerous breakdown in law and order in Indonesia; a condition that only benefits the extremists who are prone to violence.

On October 16, 2002, four days after the Bali bombing, *Laskar Jihad* announced that it was disbanding and that Thalib would focus on his students and writing (Abuza, 20003, p.72). This announcement was questionable as its parent organisation, the *Forum Komunikasi Ahlussunnah Wa al-Jemaah*, still operates with offices in seventy cities around
the country. Thalib also denied the relationship between *Laskar Jihad* and *Jemaah Islamiyah* or Al-Qaeda networks, although there is evidence that his organisation only continues to exist because of covert aid from Islamists within the Indonesian military and, according to Abuza (2003), from the Al-Qaeda network. In its briefing paper twelve days after the Bali bombing 2002, ICG observes—

One source interviewed by ICG said that *Laskar Jihad* was driven by internal differences, short of funds, and infiltrated by intelligence (an odd assertion since the military was heavily involved in its training in the first place). The disbanding of *Laskar Jihad*, is almost certainly good news for Ambon and Poso, although a question remains as to what happens to the young men recruited locally, and what has happened to the weapons in *Laskar Jihad*’s possession. About 170 fighters had begun to leave Poso by 17 October; in Maluku, some 1,200 were expected to have departed by the end of the week. *Laskar Jihad* officials in Yogyakarta said they would return to their studies.

The *Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia* or *MMI* (Indonesian Mujahidin Assembly) is another radical Islamic group that is important to discuss. The first *MMI* congress was held on 5-7 August 2000 in Yogyakarta. Attended by more than 1,800 participants from a variety of Islamic groups such as *Laskar Santri*, *Laskar Jundullah*, *Kompi Bdr*, *Brigade Taliban*, *Komando Mujahidin* and *Partai Keadilan*, the congress had appointed Abu Bakar Ba’asyir, who was suspected as the leader of *Jemaah Islamiyah*, to be the chairman. *MMI*’s main goal is to implement *Shari’a* law through the state political process. From the perspective of *MMI*, Islam is an ideology that must be adopted in all aspects of human life.

At the end of the congress, *MMI* delegates from across Indonesia signed a declaration called the Yogyakarta Charter. The adoption of the terms was similar to the Madina Charter and the Jakarta Charter. The charter states the commitment of the *mujahidin* to: 1) apply *Shari’a* law, 2) reject false ideology and the tyrannical abuse of human rights, 3) build up a strong local, regional and international *mujahidin* force, 4) work towards the realisation of a national and global caliphate, and 5) call on all Muslims to engage in *jihad* and *dakwah* (Azra, 2006).
Its determined attempt to implement Shari’a law has resulted in the MMI being categorized as a radical Islamic group. Western intelligence attempt to link Abu Bakar Ba’asyir with Al-Qaeda as well as Jemaah Islamiyah has also contributed to the “radical” label of MMI. From MMI’s perspective, Singapore has a vested interest in proving that Ba’asyir is the leader of Jemaah Islamiyah. In fact, the Singaporean government was willing to hold a 450 thousand dollar teleconference to strengthen its accusation that Ba’asyir was behind the bombing events in Indonesia. Singapore was also the first country to explicitly claim that Indonesia was a “terrorist haven”. Singapore’s claim is debatable as based on some documents and analysis (Azra, 2006), including the confession of former Jemaah Islamiyah member, Nasir Abas, it was Hambali who organised radical JI members to launch the Indonesian terrorist attacks and not Ba’asyir.

It is worth noting that the establishment of MMI created conflict within the Jemaah Islamiyah network itself as some radical leaders such as Hambali (also known as Ridwan Isamudin) and Imam Samudra questioned whether the willingness of Abu Bakar Ba’asyir to be the chairman of MMI meant that he was deviating from the goal of JI. Hambali and Samudra have also accused Ba’asyir of being too soft on the current government and providing an obstacle to the achievement of JI.

Laskar Jihad and MMI are examples of the emergence of contemporary radical Islamic groups. Despite only a marginal following, when compared to the whole Muslim community in Indonesia, their attempts to achieve their political goals have dominated the national and international political agenda. Their narrow interpretation of jihad and consequent validation of the use of terrorist tactics in order to achieve their goals is largely responsible for their high domestic and international profile agenda. Jemaah Islamiyah, for instance, is a radical Islamic group which legalises acts of terror in reaching their goals. Their literal understanding of Islamic values has resulted in the narrow interpretation of jihad as merely a holy war.

In sum, the reform era has contributed to the rise of Islamic radicalism in Indonesia. Uncertain conditions due to religious, social as well as political dynamics as part of the democratic consolidation process have given impetus to radical Islamic groups to achieve their demands. Certain Islamic precepts which have historically been popular amongst radical Islamic groups such as the implementation of Shari’a law and the establishment of
an Indonesian Islamic state have come to the forefront during the reform period. Although not all radical Islamic groups have adopted a violent approach to achieve their political ends, a well publicised few have been involved in a number of large-scale terror acts in the name of Islam.

The most prominent of the radical Islamic groups to take advantage of Indonesia’s political turbulence is *Jemaah Islamiyah*. It has been able to extend its network throughout the South East Asia region. The adoption of violence and the legitimisation of armed struggle have classified this group as a terrorist network. The next section details the development of *Jemaah Islamiyah* and discusses its operation in contemporary Indonesia.

### Jemaah Islamiyah: Its Network and Operation

The new and more radicalised *Jemaah Islamiyah* cannot be separated from the emergence of radical Islamism in Indonesia after the fall of Suharto from the presidential chair. The political turbulence and unstable conditions of the post New Order regime become the impetus for radical Islamic groups, including *Jemaah Islamiyah*, to express themselves politically. Several key questions remain; how has radical Islamism developed in Indonesia during the transition period? What do contemporary radical Islamic groups look like?

One of the central documents to help gain an understanding of the *Jemaah Islamiyah* terrorist network is *Pedoman Umum Perjuangan Al-Jemaah Al-Islamiyah* (General Guide for the Struggle of Al-Jemaah Al-Islamiyah) – commonly known under the acronym *PUPJI*. This small guide book is issued by *Jemaah Islamiyah*’s *Qiyadah Markaziyah* (Central Executive Council). *PUPJI* outlines the authority structure, a broad framework of organisational and operational procedures based on Salafi-Jihadi religious principles, goals as well as rights and duties of its members. There are 15 chapters in addition to preambles, definition, conclusion and explanations. The existence of such a thorough and complex document is telling and it says a great deal about their patient and deliberative attempt to develop their network.

*Jemaah Islamiyah (JI)* can be described as a network of Islamic radicals extending across Southeast Asia, founded in 1993 in Malaysia and led by Indonesian nationals. Based on *PUPJI*’s explanations, *JI* is a highly centralized and well-structured organisation with a top-down chain of command and meticulously defined objectives and activities. At the
apex of JI’s command is an emir (Islamic group leader). Abdullah Sungkar (and after his
death in 1999, Abu Bakar Ba’asyir), appointed and directed a governing council for the
organisation. Hambali later became the chairman of JI’s five member shura (regional
advisory council). Other members included Abu Jibril, Agus Dwikarna, Abu Hanafiah and
Faiz bin Abu Bakar Bafana who served as JI’s treasurer. Beneath the shura were the
secretaries, the five functional sub shura (operations, communications, security, finance,
and missionary) and four mantiqis. These four mantiqis (territorial divisions) include
peninsular Malaysia and Singapore, Java, Mindanao, Sabah, and Sulawesi, as well as

Although the senior leadership of JI is almost entirely composed of Afghan alumni, it is
important to know that many of its foot soldiers are simple pesantren (Islamic boarding
school) graduates. Nevertheless, to generalise pesantren graduates as radicals is
misleading. As noted by Shuja (in TerrorismMonitor, 2005)—

> It must be stressed that the vast majority of Indonesia’s 14,000 plus pesantren teach
a moderate understanding of Islam. Only five pesantren are closely linked to JI and
 teach a fundamentalist interpretation of Islam. These are al-Mukmin in Ngruki,
Sukohardjo in Solo, al-Muttaquien in Jepara (Central Java), Dar us-Syahadah in
Boyolali (Central Java) and al-Islam in Lamongan (East Java).

*Pesantren* al-Mukmin in Ngruki, which was founded by Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar
Ba’asyir in 1972, is believed to have taught a radical and narrow understanding of Islamic
values (Turmudi & Sihbudi, 2005). Those who drive the cars, survey targets, deliver the
bombs, and most often risk arrest, physical injury, or death, are selected from pesantren by
the senior leaders of JI before the terrorist attacks is launched (Shuja, 2005). The recorded
confessions of perpetrators of Bali II suicide bombings in October 2005 indicate how
young men of pesantren, with their narrow understanding of the meaning of *jihad*,
believed that what they did was to wage *jihad* and that they would go straight to heaven
after death.

Thus, it is without a doubt that the alumni network of pesantren graduates is an important
element within the JI structure. It is also worth noting the bonds formed through marriage
alliances across Southeast Asia, particularly between Malaysian and Indonesian members
of JI. Sydney Jones, the director of ICG, in a lecture at Melbourne University in June 2007 argued how marriage has become one of the ways through which JI members build the network. Indeed, marriages to locals are how outsiders such as Mohammed Jamal Khalifa and Omar al-Faruq were able to penetrate and gain the acceptance of the local communities so well and quickly. Marriage to a local Indonesian was also done by Noordin Mohamad Top to disguise him from police surveillance. Familial relations in radical Islamic groups tend to transcend generations; many of the JI figures are the children of DI leaders (Abuza, 2003, p. 131). For example, Abdullah Sungkar, the founder of JI, is the older brother of Said Sungkar, who was arrested in December 2002 in Solo for his role in the Bali bombing. His son-in-law, Ustadz Yasin (Syawal), became the head of the laskar Jundullah, a JI paramilitary wing in 2002 (Abuza, 2003). Mukhlas had two brothers, Ali Imron and Amrozi who were involved in the Bali attacks.

To further understand JI it is necessary to look at the objectives of the establishment of JI and the methods it employs in achieving its objectives. JI’s principal goal is the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia, followed ultimately by the formation of a unified Islamic state in the Southeast Asia region with Shari’a law to govern the region as a whole. This Islamic Caliphate would stretch from southern Thailand, through the Malay Peninsula across the Indonesian Archipelago and into southern Philippines (Shuja in Terrorism Monitor, 2005). Some political analysts see this as a shift of JI’s vision from the old Darul Islam vision of establishing an Islamic state within Indonesia, or at least making the Indonesian state more Islamic through the implementation of Sharia law. Although this shift might have caused some disputes among JI members, it came to be accepted by the network as a whole (Barton, 2004; Pavlova, 2006). In relation to JI’s objectives, three precepts comprise its central ideology. As stated in PUPJI—

- The emphasis on Daulah Islamiyah (Islamic state) as a stepping stone towards the restoration of the global Islamic Caliphate (global Islamic governance);
- The process of preparing for the Daulah Islamiyah (Islamic state) through a persistent and patient “molding” of the individual, the family and the Jemaah (group) as Islamic entities;
- The prominence of military training and Jihad musallah (armed struggle) as the final outcome and the ultimate test of success for JI’s preparatory activities.
It is noteworthy to consider all three principles in tandem in order to fully understand the ideology of JI as it is these principles together which make JI different from other radical Islamic groups. As Pavlova notes—

While other movements might share some of JI’s objectives, PUPJI’s pre-eminent focus on armed struggle as its preferred modus operandi for establishing Daulah Islamiyah and restoring the global Islamic Caliphate places JI into a completely different category of groups. The organisation’s efforts to cultivate the individual, the family, and the environment can only be understood in the context of JI’s unwavering resolution to become a military outfit. It is this difference that accounts for JI’s descent into violence and its subsequent transformation into a clandestine terrorist network (IDSS, 2006, p. 11).

Although JI was founded in 1993, it did not commit any terrorist acts until the Christmas Eve bombing in 2000. The years 1993 to 2000 were spent by JI developing its network, recruiting, and training. With its extended network throughout Southeast Asia and the ‘Afghan training camp alumni’ of some of its leaders, JI has grown into a powerful radical Islamic group which employs method of violence in achieving its political goals.

Some of JI’s members were sent to Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) camps in the Philippines and Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia or KMM (Malaysian Mujahidin Group) camps in Malaysia for training. MILF is a Muslim separatist rebel group located in Southern Philippines. The area where the group is active is called Bangsamoro by the MILF and it covers the southern portion of Mindanao, the Sulu Archipelago, Palawan, Basilan and the neighbouring islands (de Guzman, 2003). Meanwhile, KMM favours the overthrow of the Mahathir government and the creation of an Islamic state comprising Malaysia, Indonesia, and the southern Philippines. Malaysian authorities believe that smaller, more violent, extremist groups have split from KMM. Zainon Ismail, a former mujahidin in Afghanistan, established KMM in 1995. Nik Adli Nik Abdul Aziz, currently detained under Malaysia’s Internal Security Act (ISA), assumed leadership in 1999. Malaysian police assert that three Indonesian extremists, one of whom is in custody, have disseminated militant ideology to the KMM (FAS, 2003). In November 1994, for instance, JI opened a military training camp in Barera Mindanao, South Philippines, which is occupied by MILF fighters.
In an attempt to help Muslims fighting Christians in Maluku (the Moluccas) and Poso, JI formed its own militant groups – the Laskar Mujahidin and the Laskar Jundullah – in 1999. JI’s involvement in Maluku and later in Poso was its first violent military action since its establishment. According to Abuza participation in Maluku and Poso was a necessary and beneficial action to take, “…in order to grow, the organisation had to replicate the Afghan experience for a new generation of members, giving them a ‘taste’ of jihad” (2003, p.16).

By 1999 the sectarian violence in Moluccas, involving Christians and Muslims, had spread to large-scale communal warfare. Christian paramilitaries, some of whom were remnants of the secessionist group from the 1950s Republic of the South Maluku, killed more than 5000 Muslims in one massacre in December 1999, triggering Muslim retaliation. The fighting, however violent, was fairly contained, until the introduction of external forces, the largest of which was Laskar Jihad. JI militant groups were among the external forces that were sent to Maluku to fight the Christians.

The role of JI militants in the violence inspired JI leaders to believe that they had the capabilities to launch their own terrorist attack. At the same time, tensions within the JI organisation grew due to different perspectives on how to achieve the main objectives of the organisation and how to overcome the perceived suppressive social and political conditions of the time. In its report (No. 43, 11 December 2002), the ICG states when Abdullah Sungkar died in November 1999, shortly after his return to Indonesia, Ba’asyir was named his successor as head of JI. However many of Sungkar’s younger Indonesian recruits, namely Riduan Isamudin (alias Hambali), Abdul Aziz (alias Imam Samudra), Ali Gufron (alias Mukhlas) and Abdullah Anshori (alias Abu Fatih), were very unhappy with the idea of Ba’asyir taking control over JI. They saw Ba’asyir as too weak, too accommodating, and too easily influenced by others. The split worsened when Ba’asyir, together with Irfan Awwas Suryahardy and Mursalin Dahlan, both Muslim activists and former political prisoners, founded the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI) in August 2000. According to the radicals, the concept of MMI diverged from Abdullah Sungkar’s aims. MMI’s accommodation of the interests of Islamic political parties was considered by radicals as having a potential to contaminate the faithful. Based on these circumstances of internal dispute it is unlikely that Abu Bakar Ba’asyir was the mastermind of several bombings that occurred in Indonesia and elsewhere in Southeast Asia during the early
2000s. Nevertheless, these external as well as internal turbulences played a significant role in causing JI to adopt methods of violence in order to achieve its objectives. JI initially adopted methods of violence as part of a reaction toward Christians for the killing of Muslims in Maluku, North Maluku and Poso (Central Sulawesi). The sending of JI members to Poso to help defend the region from Christian attacks was structured under the “Uhud program” in 2000. The program was also meant to spread Islamic preachers within the community. This program was led by Mustapha as part of JI’s territorial construction program. This program was eventually stopped in October 2002.

Conflicts in these provinces became the impetus for JI to initiate its acts of violence. Not only did the conflict serve to give concrete meaning to the concept of jihad, but it also provided easily accessible places where recruits could gain practical combat experience. This statement is supported by the confession of Nasir Abbas who wrote in his book that the sending of JI members to conflict areas was one of the ways to take part in waging jihad as training camps alone were too short and limited (2007, p.132).

The Christmas Eve bombings in December 2000 have become the first large-scale JI terrorist act in Indonesia and Southeast Asia in general. Despite the low professionalism in making and delivering the bomb, the ICG (Asia Report No. 43, 11 December 2002) was amazed at the coordination of the bombings. All bombs were delivered to 38 churches or priests in Medan, on the east coast of Sumatra, in Pekanbaru, capital of the nearby province of Riau, and in Bandung, Sukabumi and Ciamis, cities in the West Java province; as well as to Mataram on the island of Lombok. Nineteen people were killed in the bombings and 120 people were wounded. Based on the confession of some of the 200 JI operatives after capture by the Indonesian police with the coordination of the Australian Federal Police, it was later clear that Hambali (Riduan Isamuddin) was the mastermind of the bombing. He coordinated the bombings with some JI young radicals, including Imam Samudra who had been punished with a death sentence and had already been executed.

In 2000-2001 in other areas of Southeast Asia a number of bombings against soft targets causing limited loss of life were also linked to the JI network. A series of bombings in Manila in December 2000, the assassination of a local politician in Malaysia in November 2000, and bombings in Yala, southern Thailand, in April 2001 are some of these examples. Some political analysts, such as Zachary Abuza, argue that the Manila bombings were the
joint operation of JI-MILF to train the conventional armed forces of MILF in urban warfare and terrorist tactics (NBR Analysis 2003, p. 17).

The US-led war on terror following the attack on the World Trade Centre, the symbol of American economic power, have affected the shift of JI’s main object of wrath. A secondary reason is that after the failure of JI’s plan to launch the terrorist attack on a US navy ship in Singapore in 2001, JI tended to direct its attacks toward soft targets that can be considered as representing western interests, such as bars or tourist resorts. Further, the Bush administration’s accusation of the involvement of the radical Islamic group Al-Qaeda in the 9/11 attacks, followed by the US led attack on Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 have contributed to the rise of anger amongst Muslims, including radical Islamic groups (JI), against Western countries. At the same time, the conflicts in Maluku as well as Poso have decreased. A combination of these factors has led to the shift in focus by JI to the firm objective of retaliation to attacks by Western nations against Muslims, including a response to the erosion of Islamic values in Indonesia due to perceived Western influence.

After the shift of JI’s target of terrorist attacks, a number of bombings that exploded in Indonesia after the 9/11 attacks on the US have been associated with Western interests. Of the four suicide bombings that were suspected to have been carried out by JI operatives, the bombing of Paddy’s and Sari Club in Denpasar, Bali on 12 October 2002 was the biggest. The power of the explosion, coordination of the bombing, as well as the number of lives lost (202 dead and a further 400 injured) far exceeded the soft targets of JI’s previous attacks. The Bali bombing has become clear evidence of the existence of this group which was previously denied by both the Indonesian government as well as most Muslims in the country. The detainment of JI operatives such as Imam Samudra, Amrozi and Mukhlas and their clear explanation in front of the Indonesian police, global media network and public of how they had been able to create bombs through explosive materials that are available in the market proved the existence of this group and the ease in which they were able to go unnoticed by the authorities.

The timing and the place of the bombing indicates how JI has taken advantage of the political dynamic of Indonesian transition to democracy. The separation of the Indonesian police from the army and the unstable economic as well political conditions of Indonesia due to multiple crisis, added by the fact that Islam had been marginalized for more than
thirty years by a secular government had laid the pre-conditions from which JI could develop and carry out its increasingly destructive terrorist campaign in Indonesia. These factors, compounded by the emergence of a new post-9/11 global political dynamic between Islam and the West and growing desire for retaliation against the US-led War on Terror, became the impetus for the JI network's terrorist activities. The choice of Bali as the place to launch the 2002 terrorist attack has raised questions as to why the Indonesian government had not anticipated JI's increasingly bold terrorist operations. Why Bali? What motivated them to perpetrate this act? These questions are crucial as many of the JI suicide bombers were young and naïve. The recorded confession of the suicide bombers of the 2005 Bali bombing (Misno aka Wisnu, Mochmad Salik Firdaus, Aep Hidayat aka Yatno) shows how these foot soldiers believed that what they did was to wage jihad against Western governments considered as kafir.

In his book, Samudra claimed that it was the western people rather than the place that became the target of the 2002 Bali Bombing. Thus, the attack may have occurred in any country, including Islamic countries, but their object of attention is Western people who stay or live in those countries. The interrogation of Imam Samudra following his capture yielded a list of reasons that motivated the Bali bombing and which also justified JI’s later bombings. When asked about the motivations of his jihad, he answered: “I carry out jihad based on the following background and motives” —

1. To fight against the savage American Crusade Armed Forces and their allies (England, Australia, Germany, France, Japan, Orthodox Russia, and others),
2. As the duty of a Muslim to avenge the heartbreak of the death of 200,000 innocent women, elderly men, and children because of the tons of bombs dropped in Afghanistan on September 2001, Ramadhan 1422 H,
3. Because Australia intervened in the effort to segregate Timor Timur (East Timor) from Indonesia, all of which is an International Crusade conspiracy,
4. The intervention of the Crusade Armed Forces in collaboration with the Hindu heathen troops in India massacre of the Muslims in Kashmir,
5. As an answer to the savage intervention of the Crusade Armed Forces in the Muslim cleansing at Ambon, Poso, Halmahera, etc.,
6. In defence of the Bosnian Muslims who were slaughtered by the Crusade Armed Forces,

7. Carrying out the *Fardhu’ain* duty for Global *Jihad* towards Jews and Christians all over the world (in Muslim countries),

8. As *Ukhuwah Islamiyah* between one Muslim to another, regardless of geographical boundaries,

9. Executing the will of Allah in *An-Nisa* verse 74-76 on the duty to defend weak men, women, and innocent babies who are always the target of the atrocities of the American terrorists and their allies,

10. As a “harsh reprimand” to Jews and Christians led by American heathens in oppressing and tainting the Islamic holy land, where the Revelation of the Prophet descended,

11. So the American terrorists and their allies understand that the blood of the Muslim community is not shed for nothing, and it must not be treated disrespectfully and made the target of American atrocities,

12. So American terrorists understand the pain and suffering of losing a mother, husband, child, or wife whom they have treated with disregard in the Muslim communities in the world,

13. To prove to Allah that we have done all we can to protect the weak Muslims and fought against the oppressors and the American terrorists and their allies (may Allah curse and destroy them, amin) (Abuza, 2003, 166-167).

Imam Samudra concluded by stating that everyone in his cell was infused with similar teachings and beliefs and was willing to engage in the bombing. Similar motives appear in a statement broadcast on the Internet after the attack on the Australian embassy in Jakarta on September 9, 2004.

Thus, based on the list of the motives for the attack above, it can be concluded that *JI* has mixed religious, cultural, political as well as social factors which provide the reasons for launching its terrorist attacks.
Although one of the meanings of *jihad* in Islam may include war, there are some conditions that must be met before a Muslim can declare a war. In the history of Islam in the Arab world, the practice of ending other peoples' lives due to differences in politics was started by the Khawarij group after the Daumal Jandal meeting in 657 A.D. in order to end the Shifin war, 25 years after Prophet Muhammad died. The Khawarij group, as the faction and supporter of caliphate Ali bin Abi Thalib, became frustrated and could not accept the solution offered in the Daumal Jandal meeting as the Muawiyah group represented by Amr bin Ash had been considered to have insulted Abu Musa Ashari who represented the side of caliphate Ali bin Abi Thalib. Thus, principally, killings in the name of theology are merely an Arab phenomenon rather than an Islamic world or Indonesia phenomenon. As Nasir Abbas exposed:

Ada sebagian anggota Al-Jemaah Al-Islamiyah yang telah menggunakan ayat-ayat Al-Quran dan Hadis Nabi Muhammad Saw untuk mendorong seseorang untuk siap mengorbankan dirinya menjadi pelaksana bom bunuh diri di tengah kerumunan orang awam dengan alasan mati syahid dan masuk syurga.

[There are *JI* members who have used and quoted the Quranic verses and the Prophet Muhammad’s Hadith to persuade young Muslims to sacrifice themselves as the suicide bombers in order to wage *jihad* and believe they will go straight to heaven] (2007, p. 97).

The Bali bombing can be regarded as a terrorist event that has prompted the Indonesian government to seriously pay attention to radical groups who adopt method of violence by spreading terror in the name of Islam. Through an intensive investigation of the bombing site which involved 400 Indonesian police and 110 foreign investigators, the police were later able to detain more than 200 *JI* operatives. The Indonesian police even offer a 1 billion rupiah ($183,000) award for any information leading to the capture of *JI* members. In cooperation with other security agencies within and outside Indonesia, policies and actions have been taken to eradicate the *JI* network in Southeast Asia. Malaysia’s most widely referenced English news source, *The Star*, noted on October 5, 2004 that Riduan Isamuddin (Hambali) and Abu Bakar Ba’asyir along with 16 other *JI* operatives have had their permanent resident status revoked by the Malaysian Home Ministry. *CNN*, in its website on August 14, 2003, almost two weeks after the explosion of the J. W. Marriott hotel
in Jakarta, wrote about the capture of Riduan Isamuddin by Thai authorities. This capture is significant in helping to uncover and eliminate the JI network.

On some levels the Indonesian police and its counterparts may have damaged the JI network but it is far from being destroyed. The bombings of the J. W. Marriott Hotel on 5 August 2003, the Australian Embassy on 9 September 2004 and later the simultaneous attacks on a restaurant in Kuta and several cafes at Jimbaran Beach in Bali in October 2005 provide clear evidence that the organisation remains capable of planning and executing a major operation in a large urban centre. If these are the case, what is the current state of the Jemaah Islamiyah network?

Despite the killing of one of the masterminds of a number of the bombings in Indonesia, Azahari bin Husain on November 9, 2005 in Malang, Indonesia and the arrest of JI leaders, Abu Dujana and Zarkasih later in June 2007, JI remains a threat to Southeast Asian governments in particular and the international world in general. The ICG notes—

The information emerging from the interrogation of JI suspects indicates that this is a bigger organisation than previously thought, with a depth of leadership that gives it a regenerative capacity. It has communication with and has received funding from Al-Qaeda, but it is very much independent and takes most, if not all operational decisions locally (ICG Asia Report, No. 63, 2003).

The killing and arrest of JI leaders does not automatically destroy the network. According to the interrogation report of Muhammad Nasir bin Abas, following the arrest of Abu Bakar Ba’asyir in October 2002, many of the surviving JI operatives elected Abu Rusdan as a new emir and Abu Dujana as the secretary, also three other mantiqis (regional leaders of JI). Thus, the JI network is larger than first believed, with a depth of leaders that allows it to make up losses and regenerate itself.

Further, the first pledge of allegiance in becoming a member of JI requires a commitment to help, defend and protect all other members, including the amir (leader). Consequently, no matter how guilty JI members are they will never turn in their fellow members who commit crimes to law enforcement officers. In their view, laws within secular countries are not to be adhered to. Thus, it may be difficult for the security apparatus to totally eliminate this terrorist group given its strong internal solidarity.
Regional governments also need to pay attention to the capability of the JI network to raise funds locally, despite a debate over whether JI has received funding from Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaeda’s network. Hambali, before his arrest in Thailand, is believed to have been a member of both al-Qaeda as well as JI and therefore became the mediator that linked al-Qaeda to JI through funding. Zachary Abuza, through his analysis report entitled *Funding terrorism in Southeast Asia: The financial network of Al Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah*, highlighted a variety of methods that JI uses to raise and transfer funds:

The organisation uses Islamic charities (many of which are associated with charities based in Saudi Arabia) and front companies to raise funds and move money around the region; it secures pledges from its members and supporters, as well as diverts legitimate donations away from mosques and charities to its coffers; it uses the *hawala* (underground banking) system and personal couriers (carrying cash, gold, or gems) to transfer funds across borders almost without trace; and some cells have also resorted to petty criminal activities, such as bank robberies, to support their operations (NBR Analysis, 2003).

The inability of governments to shut down the financial pipeline between al-Qaeda and the JI network may lead to the failure of counter-terror operations carried out by the governments of Southeast Asian countries.

Since the JI network is still dangerous, its ideology of forming an Islamic caliphate in the Southeast Asia region and its emphasis on *jihad* remain strong. Thus, JI will continue to take any necessary means, including acts of violence, to achieve its goals. JI’s methodology for operations (*al-Manhaj al-Amaliy*) as outlined in *PUPJI*, lays out the military procedures and the combat rules for the group. It is an essential component of JI’s operational evolution since it focuses on the real and effective cultivation of JI’s military strength. As stipulated in the pamphlet, JI’s operational branch is responsible for managing the group’s military camps and training programs, its field preparations and field testing efforts, and its territorial development and personnel development programs. Given JI’s paramilitary aspirations and its involvement in terrorism, it is not inconceivable that JI’s operational branch is also the de facto entity in charge of the group’s terrorist activities (Pavlova, 2006, p. 24).
It is also important to identify as well as understand the role of members of the Central Executive Council, the *Qiyadah Markaziyyah*, in setting policy and deciding on operations strategies. Identifying the key figures of the Central Executive Council is pertinent to an understanding of the group's relation to counter-terrorism activities. However, it is difficult to examine the precise roles played by these key figures because they are not constrained by the formal hierarchy of *JI*. Furthermore, *JI*’s maintenance of alliances with a loose network of like-minded regional organisations all committed in different ways to *jihad* may become an additional obstacle for the police in eradicating this network. As the ICG observes:

> Both the core organisation and this looser network are bound together by history, ideology, education, and marriage. They share a commitment to implementing salafi teachings – a return to the “pure” Islam practiced by the Prophet – and to *jihad*. More than 200 members trained in Afghanistan from 1985 to 1995 and even more than that in Mindanao from 1996 to 2001. These bonds are likely to enable the network to survive police efforts to dismantle it (ICG Asia Report No. 63, 2003, pp.1-2).

Thus, it can be claimed that despite the captures of some of its leaders, *JI* remains a threat to all governments in the Southeast Asia regions. The formal structure of *JI* which shares the principles of the networked organisations' relatively flat hierarchies, decentralized rule and delegated decision-making has made it difficult for the authorities to eliminate this terrorist network.

The new *Jemaah Islamiyah (JI)*, however, is different from the previous *Jemaah Islamiyah* formed by *BAKIN*. The principal difference is that the new *JI* has been radicalised as the consequence of military repression. However, the founder and co-founder of *JI*, Abu Bakar Baasyir and the late Abdullah Sungkar, have a strong relationship to the *DI* movement. The *DI* idea of establishing an Islamic State and implementing Sharia law created the necessity of forming a new radical organisation to achieve these goals.

*JI* tries to distinguish itself from the *DI* movement by claiming that not all *DI* members were driven by religious argument when the rebellions took place during the early independence of Indonesia. In order to do distinguish itself, *JI* leaders needed a new
organisational model, a distinct development trajectory, and a different institutional template to embody and sustain the group’s unique vision and mission. They developed JI’s structure, goals, methods of operation, strategic program, also known as PUPJI. In contrast to DI’s extensive social network, PUPJI maintained an exclusivity of membership and selective recruitment. PUPJI responded to DI’s multiplicity of cell rings and small networks with a centralized, yet flexible structural apparatus. And importantly, DI’s elasticity in religious matters can contrast sharply with the PUPJI’s emphasis on religious purity and ideological discipline (Pavlova, 2006).

Conclusion

The motives driving the radicalism of some of Islamic groups are religious, social, cultural and political. These motives are also inter-related. Radicalism within Islam is not merely the result of a literal understanding of the interpretation of the teachings of Islam. However, since this understanding varies among groups, the attitude in implementing the understanding also varies among radical Islamists. Their radicalism can be on the level of discourse and attitude followed by action.

Within the context of Indonesia, the emergence of radical Islamism has also been driven by the particular set of historical circumstances which have shaped the evolution of the Indonesian state. The marginalisation of Islam politically during the secular nationalist period of Sukarno, in particular by the refusal of the secular government to adopt the Jakarta Charter, as well as the continued suppression of Islam under Suharto, can be viewed as key causative factors in radical Islam's emergence. Conclusively their radicalism is related to the disorder and breakdown of Indonesian political as well as social systems during the late Suharto period and in the reformation era.

The emergence of radical Islamism in the reformation era relates to the political turbulence and unstable political and social conditions which followed the resignation of Suharto from his presidential chair. Radical Islamic groups like Jemaah Islamiyah flourished in this instability and could readily propose their goals of implementing Shari’a law, forming an Islamic state and a universal Islamic entity. Despite the fact that not all radical Islamic groups have adopted a violent approach to achieve their political ends, some groups have adopted terror acts in the name of Islam in the reformation era.
Based on the current Indonesian social and political conditions as well as growing support for some radical Islamic groups in Indonesia, it is unlikely that the government will be able to control Islamic radicalism. However the government can ensure that these groups do not turn into terrorist groups through continued monitoring. To succeed in this, highly trained police officers with anti-terrorism skills must be employed.

*Darul Islam* can be identified as the first radical Islamic group in the modern history of Indonesia. Its mission is to establish an Indonesian Islamic state through the use of methods of violence. Although successfully pressured and co-opted by the New Order regime, this organisation still exists and some of its members have become the main figures behind the formation of *Jemaah Islamiyah*, a Southeast Asia based terrorist network. The co-optation of *DI* leaders by *BAKIN* (the New Order’s intelligence agency) through the formation of *Komando Jihad* had consequently renewed bonds amongst radical Islamists; something that Suharto’s government had miscalculated and underestimated. Therefore, it can be concluded that the policies of Suharto in the New Order regime contributed to the emergence of the *DI* movement which was the embryo of development for *Jemaah Islamiyah*.

*Jemaah Islamiyah* can be described as the pre-eminent terrorist network in the Southeast Asia region. The objective of *JI*, which includes not only the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia but also the formation of an Islamic Caliphate in the Southeast Asia region through acts of violence has made the *JI* network even more dangerous than the *DI* movement. The *JI* network has developed through links with some *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) that teach fundamentalist interpretations of Islam. Marriage has also become one of the ways to build the *JI* network. Many *JI* figures are the children of *DI* leaders.

Although seriously damaged, the *JI* network still has the potential to commit further terrorist acts according to the latest report of its ex member, such as Nasir Abbas (ICG Asia Report, 2003). Additionally some military training camps in the Philippines and Afghanistan which are developed and managed by *JI* still exist which are potential places for the future development of the military skills of *JI* members and could therefore jeopardise the security of the Southeast Asia region and give Islam bad publicity on the international level. The coordination among governments of Southeast Asian countries is
central in order to exterminate the terrorist group. While the security solution is important in directly combating the immediate JI threat, it is just as crucial for the Indonesian government to take actions in other areas to weaken JI's organisational resilience and its regenerative capacity. Doing so requires tackling the JI ideology, the credibility of the JI leaders as well as religious, cultural, social and political factors that allow embers of Islamic radicalism to be fanned in Indonesia, such as tense communal relations.

Given all these facts, the Indonesian news media have the responsibility to report news of terrorism that had occurred in Indonesia may have relation with radical Islamic group, Jemaah Islamiyah. It is noteworthy how the three news outlets – The Jakarta Post, Sabili, and Tempo – reported this issue. To what extent they accommodate facts and represent these facts in their news reporting of terrorism? The findings of this question are described in detail in the analytical chapters (Chapters VII-IX).
CHAPTER VI
THE INDONESIAN PRESS:
FROM “ORDERED PRESS” TO “LIBERAL PRESS”

Introduction

The past ten years have witnessed the changing role of the press in Indonesia. The press has both played a major role in influencing the political turbulence of the transition period and, ironically, has itself been affected by the changing political and cultural landscape. This chapter examines the development of the press during and after Suharto’s New Order. In particular, the chapter explores the development of the press in the era of ‘reform’. The emphasis on this period is based on two considerations. Firstly, there have been many studies of the Indonesian press in the era preceding the New Order and during the New Order, namely Hill (1994), Abar (1995), Atmadi (1985), Dhakidae (1991), but few studies have been conducted on the Indonesian press in the reform era. Secondly, since the terrorist events that are analysed occurred in the reform era, an exploration of the development of the press in this period will provide the context in which the press reports these terrorist events. Nonetheless, to understand the role the Indonesian press plays in the reform era without looking at its role in the previous period can be misleading. The struggle of the press against the New Order politics was integral in laying the foundations of the free press movement which emerged during the reform period. Therefore, we need to take into account the development of the press in the New Order era, although it is not explained in detail.

In relation to my overall thesis, this chapter will give a contextual background to an analysis of how the press has reported on the highly political issue of terrorism after being suppressed for more than three decades. Further, an examination of the development of the press is pertinent in order to understand how the press has changed and how these changes have affected the way the press reports news, especially in reporting potentially divisive and sensitive issues such as terrorism and radical Islamism. It is also crucial to see how the
euphoria of reform has made the press pay attention to some social and religious groups who, in their attempt to voice their aspirations politically, tend to adopt violent approaches.

Thus, this chapter outlines the performance of the press during the New Order period. It is examined through the interplay between the state, society and the press. Further, this chapter also outlines the development of the press in the reform era. It explores how the press has become part of the rise of civil society and how, in turn, civil society has affected the development of the press itself. The rise of civil society, for example, has played a significant role in the flourishing of many press industries in the reform era after being suppressed for decades. This chapter also looks at the new challenges press institutions are facing as the consequences of freedom of expression and civil society.

This chapter addresses two essential questions: How has the rise of civil society affected the development of the press? What are the new challenges to freedom of the press? Through this chapter I want to argue that there remains a continuing challenge of freedom of the press in the period following the New Order regime. I also argue that although the press is freer and no longer the government’s instrument of political control in the era of reform, it must still face new challenges that may affect the way it reports news to the public and its professional conduct.

The Ordered Press

To analyse the relation between the state, society and the press during the New Order period, it is best to use the authoritarian and bureaucratic model (Abar, 2005). According to this model, the state and society are seen as two different and separate entities, instead of forming an integrated relationship. The state is assumed to be autonomous and tends to dominate society. This perspective, as suggested by Abar (1995. p.36), reveals two ideas about the position of the press. Firstly, the press is regarded as a mediator between economic, social and political processes. In this context, the press reflects the political relationship between the state and society. If the state dominates society, the press tends to focus its orientation toward the state. Conversely if society dominates the state, the press tends to focus its orientation toward society.

Secondly, the press has its own social and political powers. If the press positions itself as one of the non-state social and political powers against state political power, this will have
sociological, political, ideological, and historical consequences. It is also possible that the press becomes part of the state power. Thus, the strong and weak political positions of the press toward the state can be measured by examining its role in influencing the making of political policies by the state.

The State Policies over the Press

Since its establishment, the New Order regime, which was supported by the military, realized the importance of structuring and controlling the press. It implemented a policy known as the 'System of the Press', which adopted the state ideology of Pancasila, and was legalized through the constitution. In its 25th meeting at Solo in 1984, the Press Council, as the extension of the power of the state, declared that the Indonesian press system was to orient its behaviour and attitude toward the values of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution (Rachmadi, 1990). This statement implied that although the press must be healthy and free from pressure, it must also be socially responsible. Social responsibility meant that the press must foster the feeling of trust that would lead to a democratic and open society with a positive interaction mechanism between the press, state and society.

The problem with the Pancasila press system under the New Order regime was that there was no clear definition of ‘socially responsible’ press. This phrase could therefore be used as a political instrument by the power holder to criticize the press and advance its own political agenda. According to Sumanang (Kompas, 2/6/1980), the interpretation of a ‘socially responsible’ press is very much determined by those who hold the power. The New Order government, purposively, stressed the aspect of responsibility in order to limit the freedom of the press. Its strategy of emphasising the need for economic development led the press to becoming the state agent of development by reporting the progress of development to society and building a good image of the state (Prayudi, 2004).

It is also noteworthy to understand the concept of ‘development journalism’, which had been adopted by the New Order regime. The concept, which emerged in the late 1960s, emphasizes the role of the press to report the process of state development (Oetama, 2001). Development journalism theories arose in the late twentieth century when many developing states, which had thrown off the yoke of colonialism in previous decades, attempted to formulate appropriate models of journalistic roles and practice in accordance with their desires to establish independent national identities. Dominant paradigms on
development journalism have mirrored changes in wider discourses about the nature of development and the ways in which the news media assists that development (Romano, 2003). Thus, development journalism requires the press to promote political stability, economic development and national unity. The concept, however, has been coopted by some governments, including the New Order regime, to benefit their political interests.

The relation between the state and society during the New Order era had been structured to ensure the state dominated society. Society’s involvement in the economic restoration process at the beginning of the New Order regime was part of the state’s strategy to gain control over society. The state never had any intention of distributing the power at the level of broader society as it could endanger the sustainability of the state power. Further, since the government received funds from international bodies instead of Indonesian society, it had no obligation to involve society in the governmental process.

This condition strongly affected the life of the press in Indonesia. The New Order regime did not want the press to grow like those in western countries where the press is allowed to criticise the government without being afraid of being banned. There are two arguments to explain this. Firstly, during Sukarno’s Guided Democracy, the press freely criticised Sukarno’s idea of being the life-long president and they criticized the formation of the National Council on which he appointed himself as chairman so that he could direct the state policies according to his will. This experience might have worried the New Order regime. Additionally, Sukarno’s strategy to control the press by issuing a decree on 12 October 1960, which stated that all publishing companies must enrol themselves to obtain Surat Ijin Terbit or SIT (Letter of Permit to Publish), had inspired the New Order to apply the same policy on the press. Further, the New Order regime had also adopted and applied the Dutch Subversive Act to punish the newspaper editors who were regarded as having insulted the government and the integrity of the Republic of Indonesia (Leknas LIPI, 2002).

Secondly, along with the restoration of economic conditions, social and political powers within society also became stronger. Suharto and his patronage strategy to use people movements sponsored by students and youth organisations to topple Sukarno from his presidency had highlighted the potential strength of social and political powers within society to enact change and undermine state power. Since the press was regarded as part of
political power within society, it was possible that the press may trigger political and social powers within society to attack the state. These arguments caused the New Order government to impose tight structures and controls over the activities of the press in Indonesia.

The relationship between the state and the press during the New Order era had taken various forms. However, the press tended to be used as the political agent of the state, especially after the Malari event (The Catastrophe of the Fifteenth of January) in 1974. The development of the press in New Order Indonesia is characterised by two factors. The first is the state policies on the press in the form of press systems and the Press Act. The system of the press described a structure for the press based on the state ideology, Pancasila, whereas the Press Act set the rules of conduct for the press. The problem with this Act was it gave the press a feeling of freedom because there would be no prohibition, but on the other hand, each newspaper publisher was required to obtain a Permit to Publish from the Department of Information and Permit to Print from Komando Operasi Pemulihan Keamanan dan Ketertiban or KOPKAMTIB (the Operation Command of Security and Order Restoration). The second is the banning of the national press during particular periods of political instability in the New Order era, which represented the state's power over the press. In this context, the press was seen as one of the social and political powers within society that might endanger the sustainability of the power of the state.

Besides all the above restrictions, the patriarchal, militaristic, corporatist New Order system constrained journalistic culture by (Romano, 2003, xiii)—

- Legally defining an officially sanctioned role for journalists within politics and society,
- Limiting the ability of reporters to deal with news sources,
- Restricting journalists’ ability to share information through direct and indirect forms of censorship,
- Controlling the capacity of journalists to organise as professionals and workers,
- Defining who was permitted to enter the profession and influencing which journalists might be promoted to senior editorial positions, and
- Circumscribing the potential for gender equity in profession.
The repressive conditions of the press were described by the editor-in-chief of Sabili news magazine in an interview I conducted as follows:

Pemerintah Orde Baru tidak memberikan sedikitpun peluang untuk berbeda pandangan, terutama terhadap media-media yang sangat mengkritik pemerintah. Hal ini berdampak pada standar jurnalisme yang dikembangkan adalah yang tidak bertentangan dengan pemerintah agar tidak dicekal. Pers tidak bisa menjadi pengawas dan pengawal kebijakan pemerintah (Sabili Interview, 2006).

[The New Order government did not give the press any chance to voice different views, especially news media that were critical of the state. Consequently, it affected the journalistic standards employed by the press, so that the press had to develop a reporting style that was not against the government to avoid prohibition of the news media. Consequently, the press could not play its role as the watchdog of government policies].

In sum, the New Order regime’s multi-layered policies had made the national press unable to act as the ‘watchdog’ of the state. Instead of criticizing the government, the press was required to support the government if they did not want their SIUPP withdrawn. Most of the news was about the success and good intentions of the state, as well as suggestions for ways the society could participate in the development program. The press was also required to conduct self-censorship of the collected news materials. Factual and interesting news materials that questioned and criticized government policies were not published. By doing so, the press would survive and not be subjected to further restrictions and bans by the state.

During the New Order era the Indonesian Department of Information officials described the liberal watchdog, fourth-estate press system as culturally inappropriate, maintaining that a consensus-oriented press was more philosophically suitable (Forum Keadilan, 23 December 1993, p. 28; Romano, 2003, p. 44). The New Order Department of Information official in charge of Indonesia’s journalists, Sukarno, said: “Ours is not a watchdog press in the Western fashion. A watchdog must stand guard outside the house. We prefer to keep our press inside along with the rest of the family” (Asia Watch, 1988; Romano, 2003, p.44). As a member of the national family and a participant in the totality of national development processes, the Pancasila press as defined by the New Order “does not stay
outside the system monitoring and checking as well as criticizing the system, it is rather “responsible within the system to develop the nation as a whole in all fields” (Sinaga, 1987; Romano, 2003, p.44).

Under the Pancasila Press System, the Press Act, the Decree of Minister of Information and other forms of press limitations (either over the phone by calling the news media editors or written warnings), the New Order government had co-opted the national press as an extension of its political arm within society. It acted as the political instrument of the state in which the press oriented themselves toward the state’s interests instead of society. The position of the press as subordinate to state power reflects the state’s politics of violence. As a result, the discourses of the press, which was supposed to be free from any pressure, had been dominated and monopolized by the state during the New Order era.

In this suppressed condition, the representation of any issues that would lead to conflict or dispute within society was avoided. In the research on ethnic violence that I conducted for my master thesis, mainstream news media like Kompas and Republika were required to create a unique way of reporting which was called “criticizing with compliment”. By doing this, they reported issues that were sensitive to government by writing the success of development whilst at the same time criticizing the New Order government through euphemistic sentences. For instance, Kompas first coverage of the violence was on 2 January 1997 entitled ‘Sanggau Ledo Under Control’ concentrated on the military approach to handling the violence. At the end of this article Kompas emphasized the existence of government companies in the area of violence as follow:

Main commodity of West Kalimantan is reflected in Sambas. Rubber, copra, white and black pepper and oil palm plantations are developed here. Some of these projects are managed under PT Perkebunan Nusantara XIII which one of its offices is in Samalantan sub district. There were many calls in Wednesday evening (yesterday night) to editorial desk of Kompas asking for current situation in Sanggau Ledo.

Here, Kompas presented implied meanings. Rubber, copra, white and black pepper and oil palm plantations represented government development projects, which had overtaken tribal land of indigenous people through the Agrarian Law No. 5. PT Perkebunan Nusantara
XIII (a government-owned company) represented the government extension hand in exploiting the natural resources for the benefit of elite in Jakarta. Meanwhile calls accepted at the editorial desk signifies that Kompas was pressured to carefully report the violence (Prayudi, 2004, pp.102-103).

The Struggle for Freedom of the Press

Despite the fact that the life of the press had been coopted under the New Order regime, there were times where the press tried to struggle for its freedom. The fragile structure of the New Order state, indicated by the weakened relationship between Suharto and the army, had driven the press to bravely articulate and criticize the government. Unlike the 1974 and 1978 press restrictions, when the banned press enterprises did not get support from other press enterprises and society, possibly because of the strong power of the state, the 1994 restrictions had triggered massive demonstrations from social and political powers within broader society. Even military officers like General Syarwan Hamid, head of the centre of information for the army and Lieutenant General Harsudiono Hartas, ex head of social and political affairs for the army, regretted this unnecessary press restriction and stated that the government could have prosecuted the editor in chief of the responsible press and then allowed the weeklies to continue to publish. Though the support for the freedom of the press from the army was seen by Vatikiotis (1993) as part of the army’s strategy to strengthen its political influence, for the press, it symbolized the weakened condition of the state. Thus, even if the press during the New Order era was transformed from a medium of political discourse to a commercially significant industry (Dhakidae, 1991), the repressive condition of the state did not automatically eliminate the ‘spirit for struggle’ of the press, which became the characteristic of the press during early post independence Indonesia (Prayudi, 2004).

To some political analysts, the banning of Tempo, Editor, and Detik weeklies on 21 June 1994 marked the new struggle of the press against the repressive regime. None of these publications had been given written warning or phone calls before. Harmoko, the Minister of Information during this period, did not clearly state what was wrong with the news coverage and why these three news media’s SIUPP were withdrawn. He only mentioned that these three news media had applied unhealthy journalism (Tempo), violated the given permission (Editor), and violated news reporting (Detik). Media analysts believed that the
bans were the result of these three weeklies reportage on the issue of the purchase of ex East German warships by the Minister of Research and Technology, B. J. Habibie (Hanazaki, 1998, p.151).

McCoy (2005, p.143), for instance, identifies two developments that became engines for the sustained momentum of the fledgling press freedom movement beyond initial protests against the bans. The first was the founding of an alternative journalists’ association (Aliansi Jurnalis Independen or Independent Journalists Alliance) by a core of new and old activists who defied the government’s requirement that all journalist belong to a wadah tunggal, or a single, government-sanctioned association (a status enjoyed by the PWI or Indonesian Journalists Association). This policy was administered in the ministerial decree (No. 47/KEP/MENPEN/1975). The board members of this journalist organisation were dominated by personalities with strong links to the state. The PWI reinforced its corporatized status in the 1980s with internal decrees (No. 009/PP-PWI/1989; No. 010/PP-PWI/1989) that described the association as the only body authorised to provide identification cards to journalists (Romano, 2003, p.89).

The foundation of AJI on 7 August 1994 as a form of disappointment at PWI after its failure to insist that the New Order government provide justification for the ban of the three weeklies marked the change in the press attitude toward the New Order regime. Instead of fear of another banning, the journalists gathered to form an independent journalist association to show their struggle against the repressive regime. In the meeting held in Sarnagalih, West Java, more than a hundred journalists signed a declaration of the formation of AJI. One of the statements in the declaration states:

Aliansi Jurnalis Independen (AJI) menolak segala bentuk campur tangan, intimidasi, sensor dan pembredelan yang mengingkari kebebasan berpendapat dan hak warga negara memperoleh informasi.

[Indonesian Journalists Alliance refuses any interference, intimidation, censorship and ban that denies the freedom of expression and citizen’s right to obtain information.]
According to Stanley (in McCoy, 2005, p.145), who was one of its original signatories, the formation of AJI “represents an effort to revitalize the press’ role as a builder as well as a controller of strength, and not just a political instrument of the government.”

Another psychological shift driving AJI’s founding was its rejection of the paternalistic attitude among conservative press owners and chief editors who felt a greater responsibility to protect their employees (and their businesses) from losing their jobs than to protesting a crackdown. AJI’s position was that the press community should have taken a tougher stance opposing the recent bans. Its founders objected to the irony which Ayu Utami noted—

At a time when the press should adopt a strong attitude to maintain its integrity and strength, we were instructed to be careful so that we, as journalists, could be safeguarded (in McCoy, 2005, p.146).

Following its foundation, AJI, some NGOs and ex Tempo journalists intensively published books, pamphlets as well as journals which criticized press policies issued by the Department of Information and PWI. Bredel 1994 [The 1994 Ban], Buku Putih Pembredelan Tempo, DeTIK, Editor [The White Book of the Ban of Tempo, DeTIK, Editor], Buku Putih Tempo: Pembredelan Itu [The White Book of Tempo: the Ban], and Independen [Independent] were some publications issued to protest government policies on the press.

The second development in advancing the free press movement was Tempo’s decision to lodge a lawsuit against the Minister of Information, challenging the legality of the bans, followed by lawsuits from other news groups. This was a historically significant event in the free press movement which subjected the government’s use of ministerial decrees against the press to prolonged and damaging scrutiny. Led by Goenawan Mohamad who acted as chief editor, some 43 journalists and other staff sued the Minister of Information on seven issues, ranging from the hardship of losing their livelihoods, to their loss of both press freedom – protected by the Press Act and the 1945 Constitution – and of Tempo itself (McCoy, 2005, p.147).

Former Tempo workers’ action was the first in the history of the New Order that a publication challenged the revocation of its license via the court. From the day the bans
were announced, *Tempo* leadership, their legal advisors, and even sympathetic members of parliament recommended the magazine took its case to court. Interestingly, the head of the military information centre visited some media institutions in Jakarta and showed his sympathy with the issue. What is also interesting about this case is how a state administrative court called *PTUN* (*Pengadilan Tata Usaha Negara*) had become a new vehicle for the journalists to voice their demands and challenge the regime’s use of legally questionable decrees to control the press (McCoy, 2005).

The former *Tempo* journalists realised that it was not possible to sue the authoritarian regime. However, most wanted merely to demonstrate that the regime's abuses of power would no longer go unchallenged and that those in power could no longer, as former photographer Rully Kesuma put it, “make decisions as they please, without going through legal channels.” Several journalists, such as former head of the Yogyakarta bureau, Rustam Mandayun, wanted to normalize the idea that the public should fight the arbitrary actions of officials through the courts, and “teach those in power to get used to using legal channels” (in McCoy 2005, p.151).

The legal actions taken by former *Tempo* journalists and the court sessions that followed had given courage to some news media institutions to report the trial process. The case, for instance, was reported in a number of newspaper headlines after the testimony of Jakob Oetama, member of the Press Council and also editor-in-chief of *Kompas* daily, in court on 9 March 1995. *Media Indonesia* daily, in its 10 March 1995 edition, reported Oetama’s testimony entitled “Kesaksian Jakob Oetama tentang Pencabutan SIUPP Tempo: Usul Dewan Pers seolah tidak didengar” [Jakob Oetama’s Testimony on the Withdrawal of *Tempo*’s license: Press Council’s proposal not heard]. Its news lead was “Pembatalan SIUPP majalah berita mingguan Tempo tidak sesuai dengan usulan dan pertimbangan Dewan Pers” [Cancellation of *Tempo* weekly news magazine’s SIUPP was not based on Press Council proposal and consideration]. *The Jakarta Post* daily reported the news on that day with a similar perspective: “Tidak ada petunjuk membreidel ‘Tempo’: Dewan Pers” [No recommendation to ban “*Tempo*”: Press Council]. Its news lead read ”Dewan Pers Indonesia tidak merekomendasi pemerintah membreidel majalah Tempo bulan Juni tahun lalu, menurut kesaksian salah seorang pelaksananya di persidangan kemarin” [According to the testimony of one of its members in court yesterday, the Indonesia Press Council did not recommend the government to ban *Tempo* magazine].
Despite the rise of press struggle against the repressive government action, what shocked the public was the court decision on the case. On 3 May 1995, the head judge of the state administrative court decided that the Minister of Information decision to revoke *Tempo*’s license was illegal. He ordered the minister to cancel his decision and return *Tempo*’s license. As Hanazaki notes (1998, p. 175)—

_Dalam pertimbangan putusan, Hakim ketua menegaskan bahwa pembredelan itu bertentangan dengan prinsip Undang-Undang Pokok Pers, hukum yang lebih tinggi, yang menetapkan bahwa pers bebas sensor dan kekangan. Selain itu, keputusan pencabutan SIUPP itu diambil Menteri Penerangan tanpa berkonsultasi terlebih dahulu dengan Dewan Pers._

[In his consideration, the head judge stated that the ban was against the principles of Press Act, a higher product of law, which stated that the press was free from censorship and pressure. Furthermore, the decision to revoke the SIUPP was taken by the Minister of Information without consulting with the Press Council.]

Following the head judge of the state administrative court’s decision, the high state administrative court (*Pengadilan Tinggi Tata Usaha Negara* or *PTTUN*) affirmed the *PTUN* verdict. However, the Minister then appealed to the Supreme Court (*Mahkamah Agung*) which overturned both lower court rulings on 13 June 1996, finding that the Ministry of Information’s cancellation did not conflict with the law.

Despite the compromises the bans forced upon much of the press, *Tempo*’s counter-offensive, and the pendulum swinging appeals process, inspired resistance to the Suharto regime’s established system of controls. And for a portion of the press community—a group whom Goenawan Mohamad described as infused with a new ‘determination’—opposition to the bans was a transformative moment that produced a new solidarity, and a momentous break with the past as it bound together a growing activist movement (Mohamad, 1994; McCoy 2005).

In terms of the struggle for press freedom, the formation of the Indonesian Journalist Alliance and the banning of the three weeklies, followed by demonstrations and the lawsuit against the government, signify the rise of press awareness of the fact that pressure on the
press was also a setback for democracy. This experience had made the press and other social groups more open to voicing their aspirations. As Hanazaki (1998, p. 179) notes—

Seringkali media massa tunduk pada kekuatan politik, namun, ketika sejarah mulai bergerak dan sebuah rezim memasuki periode pergolakan, media terkadang menambah kecepatan perubahan dengan merubah sikap mereka, menyebarkan informasi, dan dengan demikian melibatkan masyarakat dalam proses perubahan.

[Most of the time media has to submit to political power. Nonetheless, when history moves and a regime enters a turbulent period, the media accelerates the velocity of change by changing the public's attitude; by disseminating information and hence involving society in the change process.]

Apart from the two developments that marked the acceleration of the press freedom movement, the developments also indicated the weakened structure of the New Order regime. It was signified through the disagreement of some military officials with the bans and the PTUN and PTTUN’s verdict on the case of Tempo news magazine. According to McCoy—

Admittedly, the 1994 bans contributed to both, sparking a new wave of opposition to New Order controls and accelerating this decay when the press lost virtually all ability to impose transparency and accountability on public officials.” (2005, p. 188).

The New Order’s legitimacy finally disintegrated following the collapse of the economy in late 1997. Demonstrations were held almost daily against Korupsi, Kolusi, Nepotisme or KKN (Corruption, Collusion and Nepotism). Heated calls for Suharto’s resignation were made by students and intellectuals, and as time progressed, by bureaucrats and military figures. During this critical period, the press had become an agent of political change in shaping public opinion regarding the reform agenda. Suharto’s regime was unable to take any authoritarian actions like banning the press because, at the same time, a multidimensional crisis occurred. Banning the press would only worsen the situation. One interesting issue regarding the relations between the state and the press during this period was the fact that the pressure on the press never ended, and it even came directly from the president himself. President Suharto, in early 1998, had blamed the media’s critical
reporting on the economy for both sparking the panic that led to capital flight and the loss of investor confidence. Suharto’s move, nonetheless, did not do much to restore the condition. After losing support of his main allies, Suharto relinquished the presidency on 21 May 1998 to his deputy, B. J. Habibie (Romano, 2003, p. 26).

**Indonesian press in the era of reform**

Freedom of the press is a fundamental component of the delicate system of relations between the media, society and the state. The media has an obligation and responsibility to provide the public with the information necessary for informed social decisions, to serve as a watchdog regarding centres of power in society and to function as a conduit to express all shades of public opinion.

Freedom of the press can be associated with the characteristics of Siebert’s so-called libertarian theory of the press (1956), or the CHAOS – competition, heterogeneity, autonomy, openness and selfishness – paradigm (in Merrill, 2000). The Hutchins Commission (Commission on Freedom of the Press, 1947, p.12) wrote—

> Freedom of the press is not a fixed and isolated value, the same in every society and in all times. It is a function within a society and must vary with the social context (Hocking, 1947, p.194).

Based on this concept, how has freedom of the press in Indonesia developed in the era of reform?

**Changes to freedom of the press**

Political changes that occurred during the transition period of the Habibie government significantly influenced the freedom of the press. The new composition of Habibie’s cabinet, though some of them were still related to the New Order, contributed to the development of the free press. M. Yunus Yosfiah, then Minister of Information and active general, first proposed the idea of the freedom of the press. In a seminar conducted by UNESCO, he strongly states—

> Rapid changes have made it important to formulate a new paradigm in the relations between the state and media. We are fully aware that society must be free to access
information despite its amount and time. Society must also be free to express, convey or disseminate their aspiration and interests. Thus, press is a suitable medium to fulfil their interests and needs in accessing and disseminating information and opinion (UNESCO, 1999).

In a dialogue with a group of journalists, editors, and newspaper owners within a week after Suharto’s fall, the minister responded affirmatively to the group’s three major demands that lead to freedom of the press: 1) abolish the press licensing system, 2) allow journalists to form their own associations and free them from mandatory membership in the government-sponsored Indonesian Journalists’ Association (PWI), and 3) allow blacklisted reporters to write under their own names. Despite Yosfiah's controversial military background, he had shown his firm support to freedom of the press.

Freedom of the press was initiated by making changes to the Press Act. The process of forming a new press act provoked long debate between government, interest groups and members of the House of Representatives. After these discussions and the publication of the draft to gain suggestions and criticisms from various groups, the draft, which attempted to accommodate various inputs, was finally acknowledged by the House of Representative on 23 September 1999. The draft itself had to be approved by two different groups of members of the House of Representatives. The first was members of the House of Representatives which were a product of the New Order’s 1997-engineered general election in which only three political parties were represented. In some meetings of members of this group there was still fear that the press would act freely and be uncontrolled in reporting news. The second group comprised members of the House of Representatives that were elected in the free and fair 1999 general election in which 48 political parties were represented. The new Press Act No. 40/1999 automatically replaced the Press Act No. 21/1982 (Prayudi, 2004) following acceptance by the members of this second group.

The Decree of Minister of Information No 1/1984 that gave the New Order government authority to withdraw SIUPP (Letter of Permit for Press Publishing Enterprise) was abrogated through the Decree of Minister of Information No.01/1998. In this decree, the authority of the Minister of Information was limited to administrative sanctions such as written warnings. When the Department of Information was abolished after Abdurahhman
Wahid became the president, the government's legal sanctions on the free press were restricted to prosecuting the editor, whilst the newspaper was allowed to continue publishing (Simaremare, 2001).

Another breakthrough to freedom of the press was the revocation of the Decrees of Minister of Information No. 47/1975 and No. 184/1978, requiring all journalists to belong to the government-controlled *Persatuan Wartawan Indonesia* or PWI (Indonesian Journalist Association), *Serikat Penerbit Suratkabar* or SPS (Newspaper Publishers Union), and *Serikat Grafika Pers* or SGP (Graphic Press Union). They were now free to establish and join their own professional organisations.

Although some regulations had been withdrawn by the Minister of Information, there was still anxiety among journalists as well as media analysts that there might be another government pressure practice on the press. This anxiety was stated by the chairman of *AJI*, Lukas Luwarso and press analyst of Gadjah Mada University, Ashadi Siregar who both said that pressure on the press still existed, only in a simple form (*AJI* Yearly Report, 1999, pp.9-10). The new government accommodated and responded to this criticism and explained that any conflict between the government and the press would be settled in court instead of by a press license withdrawal. Table 6.1 below provides the details of the Press and Broadcasting decrees and rules that were withdrawn by the then Minister of Information, Yunus Yosfiah.

**Table 6.1**

*List of withdrawn New Order Press and Broadcasting Regulations*

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Habibie’s successor as President, Abdurrahman Wahid, continued the reform of the Indonesian press. In November 1999, he disbanded the Department of Information, issuing never before imagined freedom for the Indonesian press. There was no longer to be governmental agencies to control or restrain the liberty of the Indonesian press. Wahid also endorsed the principle of a participatory and democratic media, according to which individuals, businesses, local communities and social organisations were allowed to establish and operate their own press media (McQuail, 1994, p. 132). It is possible that Wahid had not heard of democratic-participant media theory, but his disbanning of the Department of Information showed his determination to create a more democratic society by enabling a small-scale, interactive and participatory press to emerge and develop without government oversight or hindrance. According to Abrar (2007)—

Wahid was able to validate the philosophy and practice of decentralization on January 1, 2001, under Law No. 22/1999, transferring much of the central government’s authority to local regencies and municipalities. In taking over of the central government agencies, these local governments utilized many civil society components, including the press, to disseminate information and influence public opinion. The Indonesian press also finally had the chance to monitor and comment on local politics, and conduct checks and balances on government behaviour and policy-making.

In consequence of the events above, the number of press enterprises had risen significantly following the New Order era. According to the Serikat Pekerja Suratkabar or the SPS (Newspaper Publishers Association) inventory, there were 289 press publishers in 1997. This number increased significantly in 1999 to 1687 press enterprises, whereas during 32
years of Suharto’s government, the Department of Information only issued 321 press licenses. Meanwhile, the number of newspaper copies sold increased from 14.4 million copies in 1997 to 16.7 million copies in 1999 (Batubara, 2001). Along with the introduction of local autonomy policies, the distribution of press publications and printing enterprises proliferated at the regional and district level. Nevertheless, Jakarta still dominated as the city with the most licensed media. Until 15 April 1999, the Department of Information had issued 415 press licences for Jakarta, followed by Ujung Pandang (58), Bandung (42), Surabaya (39), Medan (36), Manado (23) and Semarang (18) (AJI yearly report, 1999).

The deregulation of press industries in Indonesia in the post New Order period had given a wide opportunity to people to establish press publication enterprises. Many groups within society published both newspapers and tabloids despite the economic crisis that was still occurring. This condition has raised some critical questions among journalist activists. What motivated these groups to publish these kinds of media outlets? Did these people seriously enter the press industry to fulfil the role of the press as the fourth estate? The answers, as AJI revealed, tended to vary. Many people were worried that the freedom of the press might be closed by the new government, some honestly admitted they entered the press industry because of profit motives instead of idealism, while others just wanted to enliven the euphoria of freedom of the press (1999, p. 21). The chairman as well as editor-in-chief of Ekonomi (Economy) magazine and The Nations tabloid, Audrey J. Tangkudung, states that—

“...many people who attempted to obtain press licences today because of their anxiety that freedom of the press may not last long. Further, there is no charge imposed to obtain a licence” (Bisnis Indonesia, 17 October 1998).

However, free market competition and the need for strong and professional press management soon intensified the competition between press enterprises. McCoy describes this condition as follow (2005, p. 224)—

The news industry also faced a sudden proliferation of new players in a previously protected market. This rapid expansion forced the established press to become more aggressive in their reporting to stay competitive. At the same time, these outlets tempered the uncertainty of an open market by promoting professional
From 289 press enterprises in 1997, about 218 of them are still operating and 487 out of the 1398 new press enterprises in 1999 have survived the competition. Most did not survive because of lack of press managerial skill and capital, and problems associated with unprofessional press workers. This has also occurred in some countries in the period of transition to democracy, like Cambodia, Taiwan and South Korea (Batubara, 2001).

As with press institutions, media policies also experienced significant changes. Under the New Order authoritarian press system, the government determined the media and editorial policies and they were required to be congruent with government communication policy, whereas under a more libertarian press system, the capital owner and editor will determine media policy. The editorial policies of big press enterprises like Kompas, Media Indonesia and Tempo, are strongly in accord with their mission statement and the objectives of the founding press enterprises. The press sets its own standards of accuracy, fairness and equity. Government communication policy only regulates the press in order to ensure they obey codes of ethics and the law (Prayudi, 2004).

Thus, it can be concluded that after the fall of Suharto, the press became more open and less afraid of reporting issues that may relate to the government. The replacement of the Press Act and the elimination of press banning signify the emergence of freedom of the press in Indonesia. These conditions have important implications for the press institutions reporting policies regarding sensitive issues like terrorism, as further discussed in Chapter VII. For instance, Sabili news magazine dared to question security authority policy over the issue of the capture of some Islamic activists suspected of having involvement in terrorist activities. Tempo news magazine, on the other hand, gave an in-depth analysis of some Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) that have taught Islamic ideology considered to be radical. Both issues would have been unlikely to appear in the news media during Suharto’s New Order.

Nevertheless, whether the Indonesian press has performed as expected by the public is still unclear. New freedom of the press and responsibility to the public in the era of reform, democracy and decentralization may be useless if they are not followed by a professional
journalistic practice. The next section examines some challenges to the freedom of the press in the era of reform euphoria.

**Challenge to freedom of the press**

The reform era in Indonesia, signified by political succession, has impacted significantly on the Indonesian press. There is no direct government control, no political pressures from the government security apparatus or political interest groups who might have direct relationships with the government. Instead, the press has become one of the new powers to ensure that the reform agenda of democratisation is accomplished.

Nevertheless, this has not meant that the press is able to smoothly play its ideal role as the fourth estate and be responsible to the public for disseminating fair and balanced news. There are some significant challenges that affect the freedom of the press in the reform era. One is pressure from social groups within society. As the consequence of the liberalizing of controls on public speech, all groups suddenly have the freedom to express their aspirations, some of which have adopted methods of violence to force their aspirations upon others. Unfortunately, press institutions have become the target of such misinterpretation of freedom of expression. This condition was expressed by Managing Editor of *The Jakarta Post* in an interview I conducted in August 2006 as follows:


[The future challenge is not the direct interference from the government, but the relationship between the press and society. This relationship is evolving into a new paradigm in the reform era. What now worries the press is that there are groups within society that take the law into their own hands.]

There have been cases where press institutions were targeted by some social groups who regarded the news reporting of those press institutions as insulting to their leaders or groups. The occupation of *Jawa Pos* daily in Surabaya by the supporters of President Abdurrahman Wahid in 2000 encouraged other groups to replicate this move when they
disagreed with press reporting. In this case supporters of Wahid protested the graphic that appeared on the front page of the daily on 6 May 2000 edition which intimated Wahid’s involvement in corruption. The news report itself, entitled *PKB Gerah, PBNU Bentuk Tim Klarifikasi*, sought clarification from both *PKB* and *PBNU* on the issue of KKN (corruption, collusion and nepotism) by Wahid’s government.

In early March 2003, *Tempo* magazine’s office was occupied by hundreds of people. They claimed that they acted on behalf of Tommy Winata, a business man who had been reported by *Tempo* magazine to be responsible for the conflagration of *Tanah Abang* market, the biggest market in Jakarta. Another similar case occurred by protesters against *The Jakarta Post* daily. In 2006, *The Jakarta Post*’s office was occupied by *Front Pembela Islam* (Islamic Defenders Front). They objected to *The Post*’s editorial that included FPI as one of the radical Islamic groups in Indonesia that had adopted a violent approach in their political activities.

Besides these cases of protests some individual journalists have also become the target of violence. The 1999 yearly report on the development of the Indonesian press of post Suharto’s New Order, issued by *AJI*, revealed the fact that pressure from social groups on journalists and media, was quite high. Pressure was not only in the form of harassment, terror, threat and intimidation but also bashing, shooting and even murder. In the province of Aceh, for instance, Mukmin Fanani, a journalist of *Panji Demokrasi*, was shot dead by a mysterious killer. Meanwhile, a journalist of *Forum Keadilan*, Lamhot F. Sihotang, was stabbed and bashed by a group of unknown people in Pontianak (1999, p. x). It has been suggested that the motives of these crimes can be linked to discontentment over the publications of the two journalists.

Table 6.2
Sources and Types of Pressure Against Journalists
Period: March 1998 - April 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Source of Pressure</th>
<th>Physical Pressure</th>
<th>Non-physical Pressure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Security personnel</td>
<td>11 (55%)</td>
<td>7 (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Governmental officials</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>9 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Local community</td>
<td>5 (25%)</td>
<td>10 (37%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>1 (4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This condition has become a new challenge to the freedom of the press in the reform era. Along with the government, the press has an obligation to educate society about the role of the press. If groups or people within society assume that the press has produced unfair and unbalanced reports, they could use ‘the right to answer’ (*hak jawab*) in the media, through dialogue, or through other legal avenues such as defamation instead of using violence.

Despite the above condition, the freedom of the press that Indonesian journalists have fought for decades also brings a new challenge to the professionalism of the press. Freedom House rates Indonesia’s media system as being ‘partly free’ and whilst many believe its press is moving in the right direction to soon be ‘fully free’ there is growing concern about a significant decline of professionalism in journalism, signified by a loss of accuracy, objectivity, neutrality, completeness, and depth in national and local news coverage (Hanitzsch, 2006, p.171).

As a consequence of the flourishing of press industries, a large number of media have to compete to gain a market for their publications. On the other hand, the level of readership and capacity of citizens to purchase news media products is low. As a result, there are some news media institutions that cannot pay high salaries to their journalists and employees. This has led to corruption practices among journalists, which were also common under Suharto’s New Order. Corruption has penetrated virtually every aspect of everyday life in Indonesia and should therefore be seen as a significant aspect of Indonesian culture throughout the crisis-ridden archipelago (Hanitzsch, 2006, p.171). Because of its deeply entrenched role in Indonesian culture, corruption is referred to as the so-called *budaya amplop* (the ‘envelopes culture’) (Eriyanto, 2002, p.38). The term was used because the bribe usually changes hands wrapped in envelopes.

A former *Indonesia Raya* journalist Astraatmadja (1996) suggests that a type of ‘envelope culture’, or ‘amplop’ in the Indonesian language, existed in the 1950s in the form of general patronage. Due to the shaky economy, newspaper subscriptions were low, advertising income was negligible, and media proprietors were driven more by political ideals than profit motives (Anderson, 1984; Romano, 2003, p.151). Another senior former journalist, Rosihan Anwar, suggests that these early forms of ‘envelope culture’ were offered to help struggling journalists—
Journalists only accepted that money for the sake of filling their rice bowl without thinking further about the need to defend their self-respect, dignity and journalistic integrity in the conduct of their profession (Anwar, 1977; Romano, 2003, p.151).

Nonetheless, the ‘envelope culture’ is primarily a New Order phenomenon, both in the sense that the ‘envelope culture’ started to boom during the early years of Suharto’s rule and also that by implication the envelope arose from a specific New Order politico-economic culture.

The envelope culture has often been attributed to the fact that, as one of Harian Terbit journalist described, most journalists live in a permanent state of ‘personal economic recession’. According to a study conducted in East Java, 70 per cent of the interviewed journalists admitted that they received money or other presents outside of their direct journalist wage during their work (Budiyanto & Mabroer, 2000). Naturally, the amount of money given to journalists varies from one institution to another. In 2006 in Yogyakarta, the average money (envelope) journalists received ranged from 50,000 to 200,000 rupiah (US$ 5-20) (interviews with journalists and public relations professionals, names to be anonymous, 2006). Commercial and public companies sometimes even provide two million rupiah (US$ 200), which is close to the salary of an editor-in-chief (Wijaya, 2002; Hanitzsch, 2006).

According to the research conducted by Hanitzsch (2006, pp.179-180), journalists employed by public or state-owned media companies (TVRI television, RRI radio and ANTARA news agency) are more likely to advocate for the acceptance of ‘envelopes’ during their professional work. This holds true also for the number of journalists who actually engage in corrupt practices. If it is true that corruption is an everyday phenomenon within the Indonesian bureaucracy, it is not surprising that journalists working for state-run media share a positive attitude towards bribery, given the fact that they have been embedded in government structures for years. These economic conditions and cultural practices of bribery have raised concern amongst some journalists. Budiman Hartoyo, a journalist union activist, equates the acceptance of envelopes with ‘prostitution’ (Christianity, 2001; Hanitzsch, 2006; Romano, 2003). Some worry that this practice may affect the freedom of the press which has been strongly fought for over many past decades. For example, the acceptance of bribes in return for favourable advertising or news reports clearly undermines the objectivity and integrity of the news reporting service.
On the other hand, the tendency to justify and practice bribery is low among journalists working for daily newspapers that have a national audience. Most of these ‘quality newspapers’ have editorial policies which strictly forbid their journalists from receiving any gifts or money from people whilst covering news (Hanitzsch, 2006). In an interview I conducted in 2006, one journalist from Kompas explained—

> Once the editor-in-chief finds out that there is a journalist who receives money whilst doing his journalistic job, he will be fired the following day and his name will be blacklisted among press institutions to make it difficult for him/her to find another job as a journalist.

Kompas’ strict policy on journalist corruption was explicitly stated: “All Kompas journalists are supplied with ID cards and are not allowed to accept/ask for any kind of presents from news sources” (Eriyanto, 2004; Hanitzsch 2006). However press institutions such as Kompas back their policies with appropriate remuneration. This distinguishes them from many lower tier regional press organisations which simply cannot pay a sufficient wage to their journalists and consequently corruption is more evident.

Another challenge to the freedom of the press came from owners of press institutions. From the economic perspective, news media has economic potential to give profits to its owners. As Albarran notes (1996, pp.13-14)—

> Media companies produce and distribute products to consumers in order to generate revenues and ultimately profits in a mixed capitalist society. This system encourages the interaction and interplay among media producers and consumers and, in the case of advertisers, media buyers. Consumers influence media companies by the types of media content they see or demand.

This perspective emphasizes the media as a product with high economic value. In the reform era when the license to publish press publications was eliminated, many businessman invested their capital into press institutions. Some of them saw information as a ‘commodity’ to be sold to the public. This phenomenon was observed by Abrar (2007) as follow—

> As the government no longer curbs the operations of the Indonesian press, many publications were launched not only to disseminate information and express
opinions, but also to make a profit, as more people now enjoy reading newspapers and magazines, and the media is quick to respond to people’s demands.

Within this context, the press institutions saw society as a consumer and media outlets competed energetically to satisfy and extend their readership. The type of news considered to be of ‘high quality’ was that which most pleased and attracted its readers. It thus must be conceded that the press has increasingly applied the principle of ‘press commodification’ in conducting its business. This reality is valid because, in addition to being a political organ, a newspaper is an economic enterprise that must make a profit if it is to survive (Abrar, 2007, p.3). Consequently, there were some media outlets—newspapers, tabloids and magazines—that prioritised content on entertainment (celebrity gossip), sensationalism, sordid events, titillation and pornography. To the media owners, this kind of content was regarded as a commodity to lift sales, without having to adopt a high standard of journalism. Moreover it didn’t require their journalists to be responsible to the public.

This condition has become a concern among many journalists, as commented by Managing Editor of The Jakarta Post—

_Euforia yang dihadapi oleh pers Indonesia dengan banyaknya media yang terbit dan pada akhirnya berguguran menunjukkan betapa susahnya membangun industri pers yang profesional. Industri pers profesional membutuhkan sumber daya manusia profesional, berpengalaman, memiliki etika dan tidak hanya merekrut orang sembarangan. Institusi pers sendiri menghadapi dorongan kebutuhan ekonomi, persaingan, dan sebagainya yang menyebabkan mereka kadang lebih mengutamakan ekonomi dan mengabaikan profesionalisme. Yang menjadi persoalan adalah karena mereka yang terjun ke dunia media adalah orang yang memiliki modal dan sense of business daripada keinginan untuk berkomitmen untuk menegakkan nilai dan etika pers yang bertanggung jawab, maka orientasi mereka lebih mengejar keuntungan daripada idealisme. Sebagai institusi media, harus ada idealisme menyampaikan informasi yang bertanggung jawab kepada publik (The Jakarta Post Interviewc, 2006)._

[The euphoria of the Indonesian press evidenced by the publishing of many new news media and thereafter the collapse of many of these new media outlets became clear evidence of how difficult it was to build professional press
industries. Professional press industries require professional, experienced and ethical human resources; they cannot just recruit anyone without giving heed to these particular considerations. On the other hand, press industries as business entities also have economic needs that sometimes force them to prioritise profit over professionalism and idealism in order to survive the high competition. Ironically, in some cases, people who enter media industries are those who have capital and a sense of business rather than the willingness to uphold ethical and responsible press. Consequently, they tend to pursue profit rather than idealism. Press industries must have idealism to disseminate responsible information to the public, despite the fact that they also have to make profit.

The widespread practice of prioritising business ethics over journalistic ethics has caused the professionalism of Indonesian journalists to be questioned. A survey of 330 journalists in 155 regencies and cities in 25 provinces, conducted February-April 2001 by the Centre for Population and Policy Studies, Gadjah Mada University (CPPS, 2002), proved the claim that professionalism had been compromised in the early reform period. The findings of the research indicate that the press needs to develop its journalists’ professionalism in order to fulfil its responsibilities to the public. Meanwhile, bureaucrats seemed to perceive journalists negatively, seeing them as interlopers or trouble-makers looking for scandal, and taking advantage of press freedom to adversely or unfairly report news events or political developments in their regency or city (Abrar, 2007).

Media owners need to be aware that freedom of the press does not only belong to the press, but also belongs to society as they also deserve professional reporting of news. Society expects the press to be honest, objective, accurate, and ethical in their reporting as well as firmly upholding the principles of human rights. Ideally, the attainment of freedom of the press in Indonesia, which has been struggled for over thirty years, should mean that the press is now able to perform its function and role maximally to form public opinion, to uphold democratic values, justice and truth. It is thus clear that freedom of the press in Indonesia must still breakdown a number of significant barriers before the press can be said to be fully performing its appropriate function in society.

It is also worth noting the appearance of media watch organisations with their main objective of securing the public’s right to know and right to express. According to
Astraadmaja (2001), there have been 25 media watch organisations established in at least ten cities in Indonesia. Some organisations have been able to regularly publish media: Sendi and Media Watch Lembaga Konsumen Media bulletins in Surabaya; Kupas (Discover) magazine in Medan; ELSIM magazine in Makasar; Pantau (Monitor), Independent Watch, and Media Watch and Consumer Centre magazines (one of the divisions under the Habibie Foundation) in Jakarta. Media watch aims to uphold and monitor the ideal of freedom of the press. It ensures that the press is not misused as a political medium by particular powers. The activity of media watch itself is usually done on three levels. Firstly, it is done by the media institution itself through an independent ombudsman organisation where selected people analyse professional journalists and news media content. Secondly, a professional association, in which press professional workers become members, conducts supervision and control. This association also provides information at the request of the press institution about its workers. Thirdly, independent media watch organisations within society continually observe news media content to secure the rights of the public (Siregar, 2000). Thus, freedom of the press does not automatically indicate that the press is an independent entity, separate from other groups within society. Rather, the press is strongly embedded in its environment in which a system of checks and balances by other media watch organisations governs how the press functions. This in turn affects media policies by limiting the potential for journalistic professionalism to deteriorate.

In relation to my research, the examination of the development of the press in the era of reform gives the cultural as well as political contexts in which the press operates in reporting news. Despite the fact that the press is no longer suppressed by the government, it still needs to consider the impacts of its news reporting on society. The managing editor of The Jakarta Post in an interview I conducted in relation to reporting on the issue of terrorism said that The Post had a strong role to represent Indonesian society in the global world and therefore carefully report the issue. Thus, apart from the freedom that the press gained, the responsibility to the public remained unchanged.

**Conclusion**

Principally, Chapter VI is of relevance in outlining the restrictions and capacities of the press to report on terrorism in Indonesia. The development of the Indonesian press strongly
relates to the dynamics of socio-political life. Based on the above description of the Indonesian press, it can be claimed that social and political conditions have affected and been affected by the role of the press. The relation between the state, society and the press changes significantly through different periods of the historical development of Indonesia to a modern state.

Within the context of the New Order period, it is important to understand the long term impact of the 32 years of Suharto’s rule on political and the life of the press. Suharto’s philosophical interpretation of Pancasila, as noted by Schwarz (1994), where ‘differences need to be subordinated to the common good’ and that ‘the common good can best be divined by an authoritarian state unbeholden to the interests of any social group’ had a significant impact on the role the press played in this era. A strong, repressive and authoritarian regime had made it difficult for the press to act as the fourth power of the state that watched and controlled the government. Instead, the government had successfully co-opted the press to be an extension of its political hand within society. Through the Pancasila Press System, the Press Act, the decrees of Minister of Information and other policies, the New Order government seized the role of the press and refused to endorse the idea of freedom of the press. In other words, the position of the press as subordinate to the political will of the state reflects the state’s politics of violence.

In spite of the facts above, there was a time where the press openly articulated its struggle for freedom. The banning of the three weeklies in 1994 marked the emergence of the press freedom movement. The founding of AJI (Independent Journalist Association) as a forum to refuse the government-sponsored journalist association (PWI) and the ex-Tempo journalists’ lawsuit against the Minister of Information’s decision to withdraw the SIUPP of the three weeklies signify the rise of press awareness that pressure on the press was a significant setback to democracy. This struggle came to its peak at the same time as the economic crisis hit Indonesia in 1997 and finally ended with the resignation of Suharto in May 1998. It can be asserted that the press had contributed in this critical transition to a more democratic Indonesia through its reportage of the massive people rallies in big cities in Indonesia asking for national succession.

In the era of reform, the new government showed a strong commitment to building a modern Indonesia in which democratic values were upheld for the welfare of society. This condition was marked by the ratification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by
the MPR (General Assembly) in 1998 and reinforced by the 1999 Law No. 39 on Human Rights which allowed freedom of expression and the free ability to seek, own and disseminate information. Realising the power of civil society, Habibie’s government in particular was aware of the role the press played and therefore supported the freedom of the press. The withdrawal of some of the New Order’s press and broadcasting regulations, the issuance of the new Press Act No. 40/1999 which no longer requires the press to obtain a licence from the government, and the new-found possibility to found and join their own professional organisations rapidly accelerated the free press movement.

Despite this, the reformation period has created new challenges to the attainment of freedom of the press. Pressure from particular social groups who feel press reporting has insulted their leaders as well as ideologies and the business imperative of press owners leading to unprofessional practices amongst journalists represent two major challenges. As a result of these barriers to free press media reporting tends to be inaccurate and only relays one-sided-information. News also tends to be presented briefly and provides a lack of perspective to readers. There has been a decrease in journalism standards due to an increased emphasis on entertainment content, sensationalism and pornography. Meanwhile, the culture of envelopes is an additional challenge to the attainment of free press.

It is also worth noting the institutionalization of supervision as the self control instrument which is voluntarily established, involving journalists, government, academics, as well as non government organisations. The aim of this organisation was not to ‘punish’ the press, rather to assure that press plays its ideal role to disseminate information to public ethically, responsibly and professionally.

Thus, there is a strong causal relationship between the dynamic of politic and the development of the press in Indonesia. Despite some new policies that principally support the freedom of the press in the era of ‘reform’, the euphoria of reformation has also brought new challenges to the freedom of the press and the role the press plays. It is therefore interesting to examine how the press has reported on issues of terrorism within these changing and challenging conditions. Using a Cultural Studies approach and textual analysis as the data analysis technique, press reporting of terrorist events in Indonesia is examined in the following chapter.
PART 3: FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION
CHAPTER VII
TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE JAKARTA POST
REPRESENTATION OF TERRORISM

Introduction

As examined in the previous chapter, the political transformations that have occurred in Indonesia strongly affected the development of the press within the country. The Indonesian press can only exercise its freedom after the fall of Suharto’s New Order regime when the press made a pertinent contribution. The Indonesian press, however, faced new challenges in the era of reform (Reformasi) where some social movements within society tended to adopt an antagonistic and violent approach toward press institutions they considered had insulted them ideologically as well as institutionally. This situation had somehow affected the way the press represented sensitive as well as divisive issues such as terrorism.

This chapter and the next two chapters analyse the representation of three recent terrorist attacks that occurred in Indonesia in three Indonesian news media. News media works through the dissemination of messages to public. In countries where democratic values are upheld and people have the right to seek, own, and disseminate information, the responsibility to inform the public has enabled the press to freely inform news without fear of being banned by the government. This condition, coupled with the fact that news media is chiefly an economic institution, has contributed to the significant presence of terrorism-based stories in the news media. While the media seeks to inform its publics and provide the sort of democratic Fourth Estate functions described by Thomas Carlyle, it has also been subject to the interests of cultural and political contentions.

Within Indonesia this transformation to a ‘free media culture’ is patchy, as indeed is the country's political and social transformations. Within this context, 'Islamic' based terrorism is particularly important as it is situated within these complex transformations. Thus, while Islam is a very varied and multiply articulated religion in Indonesia, its extreme expression
in modes of political violence—terrorism—is enmeshed within these transformative effects. It is not simply that one group's terrorist is another group's freedom fighter; it is also that the very acts of violence are to be articulated within an uneven and highly diverse Indonesian media sphere. The different media outlets and organisations' approach to the representation of these terrorist attacks illustrates this point very well.

Terrorism, thereby, is a particularly important issue in Indonesia as it is a symptom of cultural and political diversity, but also a symptom of precarious social transformation. Moreover, and as numerous commentators have observed (see Lewis, 2005; Lewis and Lewis, 2009), terrorism is a communicational event which is used by militants to attract attention to their cause. Terrorist groups in Indonesia have taken this advantage to bring their acts of terror to a higher level by emerging threats and terror toward government through the conduit of the news media.

Firstly, this chapter outlines the profile and editorial policy of the first analysed news media institutions: The Jakarta Post. The discussion of the profile of this news media institution is crucial to obtain the historical background of news media institutions which may affect the editorial policy of news media in reporting the issue of terrorism. This chapter also outlines news media policies on the issue of terrorism and news representation of terrorism. Specifically, the chapter examines how the meaning of news representation of issue of terrorism had been constructed in The Jakarta Post daily.

*The Jakarta Post: Profile and News Policies*

*The profile*

As has been discussed in the previous chapter, the development of the Indonesian press is directly related to the political dynamics that have been occurring in the country. The past forty years had witnessed significant changes in the role the press played in developing a modern Indonesia. It can be claimed that the pressure on the press equates to pressure on democracy. The fall of Suharto from the presidential chair marked the new beginnings of press freedom in Indonesia.

The reform era had brought significant changes to the practice of the press. Along with the democratisation of social and political life during Habibie’s transitional government, there has been a change in the role of the press as it became free from any pressure or threat
whilst conducting journalistic tasks. The press was also able to do its own news gathering, editing and presenting.

Nonetheless, there are some challenges to the freedom of the press in this era of reform that may affect the way the press reports news. The representation of the issue of terrorism involving radical Islamic groups in Indonesia may become another challenge for news media institutions. It is possible that news media institutions face a dilemma in reporting the issue.

Like the other two news outlets analysed in this thesis, *The Jakarta Post* has a distinctive cultural, political and institutional-professional history—all of which contribute to the ways in which the newspaper reports and represents news events. Popularly known as *The Post*, this newspaper plays a significant role in the history of Indonesian news media. First published on 25 April 1983, the new English daily is unique, not only in its goals, which is to improve the standard of English language media in Indonesia, but also in bringing together four competing media publishers (*Suara Karya*, *Kompas*, *Sinar Harapan* and *Tempo*) into producing a quality newspaper with an Indonesian perspective. Ten percent of equity (later increased to 20 percent) was provided as a collective share of all employees (http://www.thejakartapost.com/online_media_kit).

The objective of the news publication is to cater for the fast growing foreign community in Indonesia with English language. The objective is also to present to the public a newspaper of the highest quality that would provide its readers with all the news that was not only fit to print, but that would deepen their insight into the very workings of this vast archipelago, its people and its government, as members of the great family of nations. According to its own public pronouncements, this newspaper employs the highest standards of professional journalism, seeking to influence public opinion within and outside Indonesia.

In particular, *The Jakarta Post* seeks to provide an Indonesian perspective to counter the highly unbalanced western-dominated global traffic of news and views. In 1994, *The Post* became the first Indonesian news publications to go global. Three global companies providing database services from three different parts of the world signed agreements with *The Post* to make the paper accessible 24 hours a day to tens of thousands of their subscribers around the world (http://www.thejakartapost.com/online_media_kit).
Under the arrangements, *The Post* is transmitted every morning in digitalized format via modem to three main computers in New York in USA, London in the UK and Palo Alto in California, USA, each owned by *Chamber World Network*, *Reuters* and *Dialog*, making the paper the first in this country to go international without the heavy burden of transportation costs. It stands up to the expectation raised by the commitment of *The Post* to become ‘The Journal of Indonesia Today’. *The Post* management has employed some foreign journalists to provide different insights in its reporting.

According to its 2006 media kit, total daily average paid circulation of *The Jakarta Post* is around 35,000 copies. Meanwhile, the educational background of its readers shows that it is dominated by readers with postgraduate (45.6%) and undergraduate (35.9%). As of 5 nationalities that read *The Post*, Indonesian occupies the first rank with 45.2 %, followed by European (21%); whereas Australian is the lowest with 4.2%.

Going online has become a necessity for media businesses, as it connects the outlet to wider audiences and advertising revenues. Recent developments in Indonesia show that the Web is the future of news and information as evidenced by the increasing number of media publications available over the Internet. As the largest English newspaper in Indonesia, *The Jakarta Post* has anticipated this trend and provided the online version of the newspaper *thejakartapost.com* as more than just an extension of *The Jakarta Post* daily newspaper. As the name suggests, it also offers breaking news and a wealth of information on Indonesia. By providing up-to-date, in-depth accurate information and analyses, *thejakartapost.com* aspires to be a one-stop reference point on Indonesia that will serve both local and international audiences.

The Journal is a special, free-of-charge version of *The Jakarta Post*. Having in mind an international audience interested in events taking place in Indonesia, this online version of the newspaper – *thejakartapost.com* – carries local stories that appear in the printed edition, and more. To meet public demand for real-time news, *thejakartapost.com* has news flashes which are updated as each story develops.
Editorial Policy

As cited above, the relationship between news media and terrorism in Indonesia is both compelling and unique, as Indonesia has a long tradition of Islamic radicalism and militancy. Through the period of the New Order, these radical groups continued to fester and develop, unleashing themselves in violent attacks in the post-Suharto period. The development of the issue of terrorism in Indonesia has been associated with some radical groups that have adopted Islamic values to justify their acts of political violence. They had taken advantage of unstable political conditions following the fall of the New Order regime and the transition to reform period.

At the same time, Indonesia is the most populous Muslim country in the world and therefore the issue of terrorism associated with Islam has been very sensitive as well as divisive within the country. On the other hand, the Indonesian press has entered into a never-before-imagined condition where the press are now free to report any issues without being afraid of government control over the press. The euphoria of reform in Indonesia has led some social groups within society to take the law into their own hands. This situation may have become a threat-among other threats-to the freedom of the press. This is caused by their misunderstanding of the freedom of expression. Undoubtedly, news media institutions face a dilemma when they have to report issue of terrorism that may involve radical religious groups. What role did news media play in reporting the issue of terrorism? What were their policies in dealing with this issue?

Principally, the three print media under study—The Jakarta Post daily, Sabili bi-weekly and weekly Tempo news magazines—played the role as storyteller in representing the issue of terrorism. It was done by implementing the 5W+H formula, up-side-down pyramid, news values and worthiness as part of the professional journalistic standard. Nonetheless, the representation of sensitive issues such as terrorism requires more news media consideration. The facts of events were written as information based on a set of frameworks which state that the news reported should not mislead its readers or condemn people or parties involved in the matter. It should hold the presumption of innocence, place the matter in the way it really stands, involve the choice of relevant and balanced news sources, and always confirm the information gathered. Thus, as Cultural Studies proposes, the news media institutions cannot ignore the interplay of various levels of influence of organisational as well as cultural and political influences.
The condition of the freedom of the press in the era of reform can be seen from the reportage of the recent terrorist attacks. When the events occurred, all news media under analysis reported the events as their main stories. *The Jakarta Post* daily, for instance, placed the news for several weeks on the front page whereas *Tempo* and *Sabili* news magazines, as discussed in the next chapters, placed this issue as their main reports for several editions. In the case of the 2002 Bali bombing, *Tempo* reported the event as its main issue in twelve editions (2.5 months). Interestingly, the press dared to report the issue explicitly, considering the facts that the perpetrators claimed to have launched the attack in the name of religion which was a sensitive as well as divisive issue. This condition would have been unlikely to happen during the New Order era.

Despite playing the role as the storyteller, different vision, mission, and contexts of the three news media had resulted in the different editorial policies in representing the issue of terrorism. *The Jakarta Post*, as an English edition daily and posits itself as the reading for foreign readers in Indonesia, commits itself to stand for all and stays neutral from any parties in times of conflict. Its establishment by four competing media publishers (*Suara Karya*, *Kompas*, *Sinar Harapan* and *Tempo*) has made it easy for *The Post’s* editorial board to set its own editorial policies. As Managing Editor of *The Post* states—


perkembangan yang ada di tengah masyarakat karena pada prinsipnya pers adalah cerminan dari masyarakat (The Jakarta Post Interview, 2006).

[We have a strong editorial stand. We are taking no sides except in terms of our primary principle which is to present news based on professional journalistic standards. Although the acts of terrorism were conducted by radical groups who proclaimed their acts in the name of Islam and there were some Islamic groups who disagreed with some western news media reportage that tended to put Islam on the corner, The Post professionally reported the events without having any intention to discredit any particular groups or religions.

To do so, we reported the events by interviewing some Islamic leaders and asked their opinions of the claims of some perpetrators’ acts of terror that what they did was part of jihad. We don’t use the word ‘Islamic terrorist’. To us, terrorists are terrorists! We have to consider how the reportage of the events may bring some impacts to society. For instance, the acts of terror have violated human rights of other people. Thus, we cannot ignore the development within society as the press is principally the representation of society.]

In playing its social and political role, The Jakarta Post daily reported how the government, police and intelligence agencies’ responded to the terrorist events. These were done by quoting the statements of the officials and then contrasting them with statements from other social and political observers. In other words, The Post adopted a posture of 'balanced reporting', allowing the readers to judge the different perspectives that were presented. Moreover, besides reporting the events, the news media also criticized the way the government agencies dealt with the events through the ‘checks and balances’ principle. The Jakarta Post’s reporting of the issue reflects the freedom of the press within the context of Indonesia.

**Terrorist Attacks: the Setting**

There have been several terrorist attacks occurring in Indonesia since the year 2000. The first was Christmas Eve bombings of some churches and priests in eleven cities at the end of December 2000. According to police investigation, these attacks were carried out by young Islamic radicals linked to Jemaah Islamiyah network to establish an Islamic State.
Negara Islam Indonesia or NII). The latest terrorist attack occurred in July 2009 with the targets of two western-chain hotels, the JW Marriott and Ritz-Carlton hotels.

This study, however, is focused on the 2002, 2003, and 2004 terrorist attacks. The argument for choosing these three events was that there had been a shift in the JI’s reasons for choosing the targets. Before the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001, the attack launched by JI was carried out to take revenge on Christians for the killing of Muslims in Maluku. After the US government accused Osama bin Laden of being responsible for the attack and therefore launched the war on terror in Afghanistan which had caused the death of many innocent Muslims, Jemaah Islamiyah found new targets for their attacks, which were places related to the western interests, despite the fact that these places were in Indonesia. Thus, in order to give the context of the three news media representation of the terrorist attacks, the followings are descriptions of the three bombings.

The Bali Bombing

Powerful explosions rocked two night clubs in Bali--previously regarded as the safest place in Indonesia--on Saturday night, 12 October 2002. The first explosion occurred in front of Paddy’s bar followed by the second one in front of Sari club (Abimanyu, 2006, pp.60-61). As written by The Jakarta Post (14/10/02), “Witnesses said the explosion outside the Sari Club was so powerful it could be heard as far away as 20 kilometres, and could be felt as far as 10 kilometres from the blast site on the southern end of Jl. Legian”, indicating the strength of the explosions. The impact of the bombings proved horrific with the death toll set at 202, most of whom were Australians. Ominously, it emerged that the attack on Bali had involved suicide bombing using a car to carry the explosives. The bombing proved to be the most devastating terrorist strike in the world since 9/11.

To the government of President Megawati Sukarnoputri, it was a challenge in restoring security across the sprawling country. In a press briefing in Jakarta soon after the attack, she underlined that the bombings were proof that terrorism had become a real and imminent threat to the country’s national security.

The seriousness of the threat shown through this act of terror had raised broader security issues for the whole of the South East Asian region. The Bali bombings had prompted
some foreign governments--namely the Australian, German, British and American governments whose citizens became the victims of the bombings—to offer help to the Indonesian government. The then Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alexander Downer, immediately flew to Jakarta to sign an agreement to establish a joint investigation team and intelligence cooperation to uncover those who were responsible for the bombing. No fewer than 40 Australian forensic and explosion experts were sent to the explosion sites in Bali. On one occasion, Downer stated explicitly that *Jemaah Islamiyah* was responsible for this act of terror (Bambang-Abimanyu, 2006, pp.60-64).

Before the bombings, there had been a long debate whether terrorism really existed in Indonesia (Barton, 2004; Lewis, 2005; Lewis and Lewis, 2009). Government officials had issued different statements regarding this issue. Some stated that there were terrorist networks in Indonesia, while others denied it. The then Vice President Hamzah Haz, the Minister of Justice and Human Rights as well as the Minister of Foreign Affairs were among those who believed that no terrorist networks were operating in Indonesia (Azra, 2006). One of the arguments was because since the 9/11 attack, there had been a growing understanding in the western world which identified Muslims or Islam with the whole concept of terrorism (Karin Karin, 2002; Ali, 2002; Lewis, 2005). Since Indonesia is the most populous Muslim nation in the world, the denial of any attempts that equated Islam with terrorism remained strong. The bombings, nonetheless, had changed the perspective of Indonesian people that acts of terrorism could occur in their own yard and the perpetrators lived among society (Azra, 2006). In order to avoid any speculation which might relate the terrorist events with the Muslim religion, some organisations held press conferences and stated not to jump to any conclusions about the motives or the perpetrators of the bombing without providing credible evidence. Leaders of different religions, calling themselves *Gerakan Moral Nasional* or *GMN* (the National Moral Movement) pleaded with all people to refrain from linking the deadly Bali bombings with any religion, particularly Islam. The spokesman of *GMN*, Hasyim Muzadi, said that the bombings in Bali were a crime against humanity, which no religion condoned (*The Jakarta Post*, 19/10/2002). *The Jakarta Post* actively promoted the idea of inter-faith reconciliation in order to ameliorate the effects of an anti-Muslim backlash in the expatriate readership.

Even so, Megawati’s government acted fast to deal with the event by issuing two regulations to fight terrorism. The first regulation was a copy of the draft law on
antiterrorism to be submitted to the House of Representatives, served as the general
guidelines for the combating of terrorists. The second regulation was specially drawn up to
deal with the Bali bombings. It stipulates that the law enforcement agencies alone will
have the power to investigate and prosecute the perpetrators of the attack. Moreover, the
act gave extraordinary powers to the law officers who could now detain a suspect for up to
six months for the purpose of interrogation and detention. It was the retroactive nature of
the legislation, however, which created considerable controversy. Proponents of the
regulation argued that the principle of retroactivity implied in the regulation was against
both general legal principles and the amended 1945 Constitution. Critics also fear human
rights violations resulting from the enforcement of the new regulations. But the
government said that extraordinary crimes demanded an extraordinary response (*The
Jakarta Post*, 19/10/2002).

Two weeks after the attack, the police finally made a statement about the possibility of the
involvement of Hambali, a member of *Jemaah Islamiyah (JI)* network and who became the
coordinator of the attack. While *JI* was well-known in Malaysia, the Philippines and
Singapore, it was not a significant organisation in Indonesia until the Bali bombings.

After some thorough investigating work, and with the help from foreign investigators, the
police, under the new regulations on terrorism, arrested a number of people suspected of
having been involved in the bombing. Amrozi was first captured, followed by Imam
Samudra in November 2002. Mukhlas, who was captured later, was convicted for the
overall coordination of the attacks. Prosecutors said he approved the targets and channelled
the funds to finance the bombings, even though Mukhlas himself claimed he just gave the
bombers religious guidance. He also recruited two of his younger brothers, Amrozi and Ali
Imron, to carry out key roles in the attack. Mukhlas and Imam Samudra are said to have
chaired preparatory meetings in western Java during August and September. Ali Imron
said that the Bali attacks were originally planned for 11 September to mark the first
anniversary of the terror attacks on the US (*BBC*, 13 March 2006). The three convicts
above, Amrozi, Imam Samudera and Mukhlas, after long trials, were executed at the end of
2008. Dr. Azahari Husin, who was alleged to be the *JI*s top bomb-making expert and the
man who helped assemble the Bali bombs, was shot dead in Batu Malang in November
2005. *Jemaah Islamiyah*, however, remains a threat to the governments within the
Southeast Asia region (Lewis and Lewis, 2009).
The JW Marriott Hotel Bombing

JW Marriott Hotel in Jakarta became the next target of the terrorist attack. A high explosive device planted in a van went off at the entrance to the JW Marriott Hotel in the Mega Kuningan business district in South Jakarta at around 12:45 a.m, on Tuesday, August 5, 2003. It was the time when most people working in the area were having lunch, some of them were expatriates. Tuesday’s blast was the first major bombing to have hit the country since bombs ripped through the Sari Club and Paddy's Cafe in the packed tourist resort of Kuta, Bali. The attack claimed 14 innocent lives, 149 people injured and put the government's antiterrorism drive seriously to the test.

This event had invited analysts and legislators’ criticism against the government. They claimed that the government had not taken sufficient pre-emptive measures to counter the threat of terrorism. Hermawan Sulistyo, an expert on terrorism from the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), said that despite the enactment of the antiterrorism law, the government lacked initiative in taking concrete measures. The antiterrorism team set up by the police was short on funding and skilled personnel. Sulistyo added, however, that even with the existence of a professional anti-terror team, the terrorist threat would still loom large until the government uprooted the real causes of terrorism, "The government must in the first place deal with the problems of religious fanaticism, acute economic inequalities and hostility to the American presence here" (The Jakarta Post, 06/08/03). Director of Police Watch Rashid N. Lubis said that the police, who were supposed to play an important part in maintaining security, including anticipating terrorist attacks, had not improved their intelligence gathering skills following their separation from the Indonesian Military (TNI). "Before the separation, the military monopolized intelligence gathering and processing. The separation has downgraded both institutions' capabilities, but the police suffered the most as they are unskilled in terms of intelligence work," Rashid said (The Jakarta Post, 07/08/03).

Despite all these criticisms, the police acted quickly to investigate the explosion site. According to police preliminary identification at the blast site, there were similarities between the Bali and the JW Marriott hotel bombings. Both terror attacks were deployed using cars and bombs were engineered using black powder, TNT, RDX. Thus the police
concluded that this act of terror was carried out by the same group who blew two night clubs in Bali, *Jemaah Islamiyah*. This claim was supported by the police’s findings of a part of body (head) that belonged to Asmar Latin Sani, a member of *JI*. One month earlier, the police seized over 1,000 bomb detonators, 30 bags of potassium chlorate weighing 30 kilograms each, four boxes of TNT, and 65 PETN detonators from nine suspected *JI* members in Central Java and Jakarta (Abimanyu, 2006, pp.65-70). Most of these explosives, which in all were four times as powerful as those used in the Bali bombings, were active and ready to be detonated. Police claimed that one of the suspects, who killed himself during police questioning, had transported explosives to Jakarta twice.

The arrests of some people suspected of being connected with the bombing raised again the issue of Islam and terrorism within the country. Some worried that the retroactive principles and acts in the name of combating terrorism would be the reasons for the government to capture Islamic activists. To anticipate this situation, *Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)* and *Muhammadiyah*, the country's two largest Muslim organisations, led a chorus of condemnation against the bomb attack on JW Marriott Hotel and called on people to remain calm. In their joint statement, the two groups that boast 75 million followers between them, asked people, including community leaders and observers, to refrain from speculating on what caused or who perpetrated the act of terror that claimed at least 14 lives, but to leave it to the police (*The Jakarta Post*, 07/08/03). On behalf of their constituents, Hasyim Muzadi, who chairs *NU*, and Ahmad Syafii Maarif, who heads *Muhammadiyah*, said in their statement that speculation and conspiracy theories over the tragedy would only complicate the matter. Both leaders agreed that the Marriott bombing had nothing to do with Islam. *The Jakarta Post’s* specific representation of terrorism is discussed in the next sub heading.

After more than two months of investigation and pursuance, two suspected JW Marriott Hotel bombing, Tohir and Ismail, were arrested with five explosive devices, possibly blasting caps, in their luggage. The suspects said the bombing plan had been organized by Dr. Azahari bin Husin, a former Malaysian lecturer of statistics at the Malaysian Institute of Technology who was on the run and wanted in connection for his roles in the Marriott and Bali attacks. This confession and some other evidence from the previous Bali bombing proved the fact that *JI* did operate in Indonesia and had targeted western interests within the country.
The Australian Embassy Bombing

At least seven were confirmed killed and over 180 injured in a bomb explosion outside the Australian Embassy on Thursday morning, just 11 days ahead of the presidential election. Officials said ten people died and that some 150 from 182 victims had been released from hospital. Victims included embassy security guards, police and passers-by as well as office workers in high-rise buildings, some more than 500 meters away.

The event drew strong nationwide condemnation, with many saying the latest terror attack would further tarnish the predominantly Muslim country's image. Muslim leaders and leaders from different faiths extended their deep condolences to the families and relatives of the dead and at least 161 wounded victims, while urging the nation to unite to fight and root out terrorism. Some Islamic organisations, such as Muhammadiyah, Partai Keadilan Sejahtera or PKS (Prosperous Justice Party), and Hizbut Tahrir warned against the linking of the bombing with any religion "as all religions forbid and condemn such acts of terror". Nonetheless, some admitted that there may be groups who in the name of a particular religion launched terror attacks.

Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer described the bomb as a direct attack launched against Australia. "You would have to conclude that it was directed towards Australia," he said in Adelaide as quoted by AFP (The Jakarta Post, 10/09/2004). The bomb blast occurred less than six days after the U.S. and Australian Embassies issued a new travel warning on Indonesia. Australia and other countries quickly blamed the incident on the regional Jemaah Islamiyah terror network, which had also been accused of masterminding the bombings in Bali and at the JW Marriott Hotel.

The police immediately linked the embassy bombing with the Marriott bombing on August 5, 2003 and the Bali bombing on October 12, 2002. Both had a similar modus operandi: A car bomb on a street next to a site with a large number of foreign citizens. The explosion left a one-meter deep, three-meter diameter crater and ripped through the embassy's iron fence, bringing to mind the craters following the explosions of the first two bombings (Abimanyu, 2006). Like the Bali and Marriott bombings, police suspected that the driver of the vehicle was blown up, following the findings of nearly unrecognizable bodies near the site -- in this case a mangled torso. It was later found out that the car was driven by a 24
year old man, Heri Golun. Based on these early findings, the police were quick to name two suspected masterminds -- the two Malaysian-born fugitives who were also prime suspects in the Bali and Marriott bombings -- Azahari bin Husin and Noordin M. Top.

The blast, however, should prove to be something of an embarrassment to the police as they had previously announced that they had captured several new recruits of Azahari who were planning to launch attacks across the country (The Jakarta Post, 10/09/2004). This latest terror attack occurred at the precise moment that National Police Chief Gen. Da'i Bachtiar was at the legislature discussing security conditions prior to the elections. The police appeared to disregard fresh warnings from the U.S. and the Australian governments a week before the attack, which said that JI could be on the verge of attacking a number of Western interests in the country. Responding to the alert, the police said they had detected only minor threats from unidentified terror groups.

Nevertheless, less than ten days after the bombing, the police announced they had arrested several people suspected to have links with JI. One month later, the police arrested the wife of fugitive terror suspect Noordin M. Top, Munfiatun. She had confessed to knowing about plans for the blast, but did not report this to police. Linked with the history of JI, as described in Chapter V, such marriages had been used by members of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) to serve the interests of their organisation. As stated by the ICG, looking into the women of JI was crucial to understanding the organisation, the nature of its affiliations and its ability to evade arrests, and that more information was needed on the wives of all those arrested (Abimanyu, 2006).

In sum, all the three bombing events had led to the accusation that Indonesia was a terrorist haven. This condition appeared in Ramakrishna & Tan’s (2003) book, After Bali: the Threat of Terrorism in Southeast Asia. Coupled with statements by leaders of foreign countries like Lee Kuan Yeuw that appeared in some foreign or western newspapers, the accusation eventually spread widely. Taking advantage of the political dynamics and unstable security condition in the reform era, the perpetrators had managed to launch the acts of terror in the name of religion. The police and intelligence agencies in particular were faced with new challenges in dealing with the events. Within this volatile cultural and political context, the Indonesian police and anti-terrorist agencies faced additional difficulties, as these Islamist terrorist organisations were supported by other, non-violent
Muslims who believed in the organisations' principles, if not their methods. The location, arrest and deaths of the perpetrators caused considerable duress for many Indonesians, especially those who remain unconvinced about the accusations of militancy and violence. The next section presents a more detailed examination of the ways in which The Jakarta Post represented these events generally, and the terrorists more specifically.

The Jakarta Post Representation of Terrorism

Chapter 2 of this thesis argued that principally there is a strong interconnectedness between terrorism and the news media. The perpetrators of acts of terror need news media to amplify their threat and convey their messages to government; the news media functions to both inform the public and maintain its commercial viability through the re-telling of dramatic events in an engaging and forceful way. In this way, the media is both a servant and director of information and its public. This situation is described by Miller as follows—

Terrorism and the media are entwined in an almost inexorable, symbiotic relationship. Terrorism is capable of writing any drama-no matter how terrible-to compel the media’s attention... Terrorism, like an ill-mannered enfant terrible, is the media’s stepchild, a stepchild which the media, unfortunately, can neither completely ignore nor deny (Geissman, cited in Tuman, 2003, p.115).

Reporting terrorism -- whether the destruction of 9/11, the Bali bombing, the explosion of JW Marriott Hotel, or the attack on the Australian Embassy -- raises significant questions as to what extent news media can represent the events based on the journalistic standards of ‘balance’, ‘truth’, and ‘objectivity’. This section analyses the representation of the three terrorist attacks in The Jakarta Post daily within the cultural, political, and organisational contexts.

The representation of the three terrorist events in The Jakarta Post daily is interesting in relation to the political as well as organisational conditions. The three terrorist events had high news values as they occurred within the country and brought significant impacts to the life of society. The blasts that claimed the lives of not only Indonesians but also foreign citizens had made these terrorist events become the international highlights. The Bali bombing can be classified as the biggest terrorist attack since the 9/11 tragedy in the
United States, whereas the other two terrorist events involved foreign interests (America and Australia) in Indonesia. Thus, The Jakarta Post felt it was necessary to report the issue as part of its responsibility to the public.

The Jakarta Post tended to report the issue from a political perspective. Within this perspective, it gave significant attention to several issues: (i) government policies on terrorism and national security, (ii) how the Indonesian government managed the acts of terror, and (iii) how the Indonesian society accepted the facts that terrorism did exist in Indonesia. In particular, The Post focused on how the government, police, military and intelligent agencies investigated the events and discovered the perpetrators of the acts of terror. This is signified by the intense reporting of all the issues above. The choice of this perspective is strongly related to The Post's objective as a newspaper of the highest quality that became the main print news media for foreigners who lived in Indonesia and to provide an Indonesian perspective to what The Post and other people in Indonesia regard as the western-centric reading of Indonesia generated through western-based news outlets. The analysis of the representation of the issues above is divided into sub headings to make it easier to understand.

1. Government policies on terrorism and national security

The issue of terrorism and national security has become a big concern to some governments following the 9/11 attack in the United States. In Indonesia, this situation did not really become a crucial issue until the attack on the tourist island, Bali. The business of some political elites to gain power at the governmental level in the early phase of the reform era had created a political turbulence and unstable condition. This situation had been seen as an advantage for some radical groups to launch their acts of terror. Undoubtedly, it was not until the attack in Bali that the government started to deal with policies on terrorism and national security. Thus, it is important to examine whether The Post's reporting of these events supported or was critical of government politicization of terrorism. The representation of government policies on terrorism and national security appeared as follows—

The government issued two government regulations in lieu of law late on Friday that it says the country needs to crack down on terrorism following the Bali carnage.
President Megawati Soekarnoputri signed the unprecedented regulations just before midnight, implying heated debate within her Cabinet in the process. The announcement was rescheduled at least twice, with officials saying certain changes had to be made to the original drafts.

Opposition to the regulations is precisely based on this principle of retroactivity, which goes against both general legal principles and the amended 1945 Constitution. Critics also fear human rights violations resulting from the enforcement of the new regulations... (*RI issues regulations to fight terrorism, The Jakarta Post, 19/10/02*).

Quite similar representation also appeared in the following excerpts—

Kusnanto Anggoro, a political analyst with the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), said the adoption of a draconian Singaporean- or Malaysian-style ISA was not the right way to wipe out terrorism in the country.

"I think the problem is not whether we have an ISA or not, but the fact that we don't have a comprehensive counterterrorism policy," he said on the sidelines of a seminar on human rights protection...

***

Ichlasul Amal expressed his deep concern that the adoption of an ISA would instead lead to human rights violations (*RI issues regulations to fight terrorism, The Jakarta Post, 13/08/03*).

Through these forms of reportage, *The Post* tended to combine its representation of how serious the Indonesian government dealt with terrorism and national security. Government policy on terrorism and national security appeared in the 2002, 2003 and 2004 news coverage. From the two news items above, *The Post* explicitly highlighted two aspects on this issue. The first was the issuance of regulations to deal with terrorism; and the second was the opposition to the regulations due to anxiety over the possibility of this regulations
being used to capture Islamic activists without any proof. The placement of the two news items at the front page and the use of straightforward English writing style indicate how *The Post* perceived these issues as pertinent for Indonesians and foreigners to know.

The representation of the issuance of regulations to combat terrorism indicates *The Post’s* support to and at the same time critical attitude toward the government’s seriousness to fight terrorism. Terrorism has become a global issue. Moreover, the Southeast Asia region has been accused of becoming the hot bed for terrorists. The capture of some of radical Islamists suspected of being connected with terrorist activities in some Asian countries-- Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia--and the fact that Muslims are dominant in the region has attracted global attention to the region. Therefore, how the governments of the Southeast Asian countries deal with the issue of terrorism will automatically become an international focus.

Through this representation, *The Post* wanted to show to its readers how the Indonesian government dealt with terrorism and national security following the Bali bombing and some terror attacks afterward. Nonetheless, this may imply the government’s reactive approach instead of a pre-emptive one. In other words, the implied meaning of this representation is the unreadiness of President Megawati Sukarnoputri’s government in preventing the acts of terror from occurring. The statement of Vice President Hamzah Haz in some occasions before the bombing that there were no terrorists in Indonesia indicates this. The reporting of his statement had somehow influenced public opinion as to whether terrorists really existed in Indonesia (Azra, 2006). Even until the Australian Embassy bombing in 2004, news media still reported the debate over the issue.

Apart from the representation of the issuance of the regulations, as described above, *The Post* also reported the debate surrounding the regulations. *The Jakarta Post* reported the views of a number of public commentators who were concerned that the new legislation would impinge on the rights of citizens and breach the spirit of the Indonesian Constitution. According to some academics, political analysts and Islamic activists, the regulations would allow the police to arrest people--Islamic activists in particular--accused of having links to terrorism. This issue had also attracted serious attention from *Sabili* news magazine as discussed in the next chapter. Thus, *The Post* warned the government to be careful in implementing the regulations, cautioning specifically against the breach of
human rights and the assumed innocence of non-violent Islamic activists. Moreover, The Post warned that the statement of Minister of Defence Matori Abdul Jalil that the Internal Security Act (ISA) could be used to prevent future terrorist attacks may invite conflict within the country. The issue above drew The Post’s serious attention through the publishing of an editorial entitled TNI and war on terrorism (20/08/2003). The last two paragraph of the editorial, which can be classified as the representation of The Post editorial stand, read as follows—

Terrorism has become a dangerous threat to the country's existence. Concerted efforts to eradicate its roots must be taken, but the threat of terrorism should not make us permissive regarding human rights abuses or undemocratic values, just because we are in a panic.

The eradication of terrorism does not and should not justify human rights abuses. The eradication of terrorism does not and should not go against the creation of a more humane, civil society. The two are not mutually exclusive.

It is still strong in the public’s mind how the New Order authoritarian regime, through its military agencies--Kopkamtib and Kopasus--had masterminded some kidnappings of political activists considered as threats to the regime (Bhakti et al., 2001). Some of them are even still considered missing until today.

The above representation can be classified to have adopted fair and balanced coverage as part of The Post’s role as a professional news media and a watchdog of the state. The principle of fairness appeared through not only the support of the issuance of the regulations, but also the warning given to government agencies of the consequences of the implementation of the regulations. According to the National Editor of The Jakarta Post, who preferred to appear anonymous in this study, when asked about The Post policy in reporting the issue above—

Kami berpegang pada kode etik jurnalistik dan meningkatkan kewaspadaan untuk tidak membuat berita yang gampang mengadu orang. Kami berpegang pada prinsip check and balance. Kami menulis berita sedemikian rupa bukan karena ada tekanan, tapi semata karena profesionalisme dan bagian dari
kebebasan pers yang sudah didapatkan dengan susah payah (*The Jakarta Post* Interview, 2006b).

[We hold on to the journalistic ethical code and exercise caution not to write news that may play one party off against another. We employ the checks and balances principle. We report the news in such a way not because of pressure from any particular group, but because of part of professionalism and freedom of the press that was gained through a long struggle.]

The two news items also indicate how the press is now free to report an issue that is basically criticizing the government. The strong editorial stand also appeared through the separation between the capital owner of *The Jakarta Post* institution and the editorial board to assure the high quality of news reporting. Within this new political atmosphere, *The Post* claimed that it was able to play its ideal role as the press, despite the fact that there may be some obstacles from other parties.

2. *The Indonesian authorities’ role in managing acts of terror*

The second issue that relates to the political perspective is how the government, through the police, military and intelligence agencies, managed the acts of terrorism. This issue had gained close attention from *The Post*. In every reporting of the three events, there were always several news items that specifically dealt with the issue. In fact, *The Post* issued editorials that principally blamed intelligence agencies for not acting as an early warning system. Through these representations, *The Post* intended to warn the government and related agencies that the acts of terror kept happening due to lack of coordination among government agencies responsible for national security. It also described what the government had done in managing the terrorist acts. News items and editorials exhibiting the issue of lack of coordination, for instance, appeared in the 2002 and 2004 reporting as follows—

...The first and foremost problem that comes to mind is that priority must be given to the collection and selecting of the available intelligence data in a coordinated manner...

Understandably, after President Suharto’s resignation in mid 1998, gradually the
elaborate security and intelligence system fell into disarray. To complicate the matter, President Suharto's successors, President B. J. Habibie and President Abdurrahman Wahid, kept changing the senior intelligence officers, within the military and at the national level, according to their own personal liking or their respective ideological slant. The separation of the National Police from the Indonesian Military (TNI) further slackened cooperation in intelligence gathering its evaluation between the two.

It is not too farfetched to imagine that feelings of hurt pride and envy have developed within the ranks of the TNI on seeing that the National Police are now in charge of domestic security, a domain of which until quite recently the TNI had a major share. So, again, it is not too farfetched to imagine that intelligence data obtained by the military intelligence directorate pertaining to terrorist activities in Indonesia is not readily shared with their colleagues at National Police headquarters... (Intelligence Failure, The Jakarta Post editorial, 15/10/02)

Lack of coordination among security officers has been blamed for what has been seen as a poor early warning system, which is one reason they were unable to prevent Thursday's bombing outside the Australian Embassy in Jakarta.

Legislators and an analyst on Friday urged the intelligence and the security offices to improve coordination in anticipation of more terrorist attacks. "The bombing outside the Australian Embassy is a wake-up call for us all. There is no institution coordinating security to anticipate such a horrific incident," said Irman G. Lanti, research director of The Habibie Centre (‘Poor Coordination’ allows bombing, The Jakarta Post, 11/09/04).

The Post also wanted to show its readers, who are mostly international expatriates, what the Indonesian government had done in managing terrorism and the terrorist attacks. The representation of government's attempts to manage the terrorist acts appeared as follow—

A number of districts in West Java, believed to be home to extremists advocating sharia (Islamic law), are now under tight surveillance to prevent the possibility of further terrorist attacks, says provincial police chief Insp. Gen. Dadang S. Garnida.
"The regions in West Java that we are monitoring are those where Muslims are overly fanatic. We are conducting surveillance in those areas," Dadang said on Saturday while accompanying President Megawati Soekarnoputri's husband Taufik Kiemas who visited fishermen in Gebangmekar village, Cirebon regency, West Java (Police to watch militants, The Jakarta Post, 25/08/03).

Based on the three news items above, The Post criticized the Indonesian intelligence authorities, who in The Post’s perspective, had failed to anticipate acts of terrorism. One of the reasons was lack of coordination among government agencies responsible for intelligence. In particular, The Post argued that the division between the Police and the military (TNI) had contributed to the poor intelligence and counter-terrorism skills. Since intelligence acquisition and processing had been a function of the military before its separation from the police, the latter organisation had been bereft of skills and capabilities in intelligence gathering. Consequently, although formal responsibility for internal security had rightly been allocated to the police, there was no transfer of intelligence knowledge that was previously handled by the military; the police capacity was undoubtedly weak in this area. Some terrorist attacks that occurred even until 2005 --the second Bali bombing-- were evidence of this. To complicate the issue, there are "grey areas", such as counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency, where the roles between the police and the military are poorly defined. The complexity of this issue was notified by the International Crisis Group in its report—

Intelligence is a difficult area, particularly in light of Indonesia’s terrorism problem. The intelligence functions of the police, military, and National Intelligence Agency (BIN) overlap, and coordination is not smooth. The government needs to work out an appropriate division of labour, probably through legislation, but in a way that ensures that all three maintain political neutrality, are subject to civilian oversight, and do not acquire powers beyond what is acceptable in a democratic society (ICG Asia Report No. 90, 2004).

Further, even in areas that are exclusively police responsibility, such as upholding law and order, police again evinced its weak capacity. This fact of divisional issue was clearly stated in one of The Post’s news items entitled Military ‘knows’ the bombers, police don’t
(25/10/2002) and its editorial *TNI and war on terrorism* (20/08/2003). In its editorial, *The Post* wrote its perspective of the issue as follows—

After announcing in 1999 the adoption of a new approach whereby the military would supposedly concentrate only on defence affairs, thus allowing the police to handle internal security and order, the TNI generals now realize their "mistake" in relinquishing their influential political functions. They also argue that the country's problems are too huge to be entrusted only to the police. Whereas in the past TNI complained about limited personnel in numerical terms compared with that of the archipelago, TNI is now complaining it is underutilized, in the words of Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono...

We strongly supported TNI's move to quit politics because the country needed a strong military force to defend its sovereignty. Soeharto misused the military to maintain his 32-year rule. To convince the nation of its strong political will, then military chief Gen. Wiranto changed in 1999 the name of the Indonesian Armed Forces (ABRI) to TNI, and the police were separated from TNI...

We strongly suggest TNI fully assists Police in boosting their effectiveness by sharing its know-how, including its intelligence networks and capacity, because in this field the police are left far behind the military. It is for the interest of all, including the military, that we have a strong and effective police, although in the short term it may affect the military's dominant role...(*The Jakarta Post*, 20/08/2003).

Through the editorial column, which is essentially the news media’s opinion on an issue reported in the corresponding edition of the newspaper, the way *The Post* criticized government intelligence agencies was by reporting opinions of news sources relevant to the issue, such as political analysts, academics, and legislators. This reporting technique was very popular during the New Order era as one of the ways to criticize the authoritarian regime without afraid of being banned (see Oetama, 2001; Prayudi, 2004).
As the following article indicates, *The Jakarta Post* found evidence of the police's poor intelligence capability in the force's own admission of culpability, particularly in not anticipating future attacks—

During the press briefing, National Police Chief General Da’i Bachtiar also publicly apologized for the incident. “We are sorry, we tried our best but still the incident happened,” he remarked. *(Govt vows united action in fighting terrorism, The Jakarta Post, 15/10/02)*

*The Post’s* reporting of terrorism and the government's handling of the terrorist events demonstrates a clear social division between reporting during the pre- and post-Suharto periods. The capacity of *The Post* to report on terrorism in such a free and frank way is evidence of the Reformasi's provision for the freedom of the press. *The Post* clearly demonstrates a Fourth Estate function in its representation of terrorism: not only is terrorism a criminal act, it is an issue of social policy. Governments are now scrutinized for their actions, their agencies and their policies. Terrorism becomes a social issue for news outlets like *The Post* which can now speak as a form of civil and social protector against the excesses of criminality on the one hand and government deficiencies on the other.

It is noteworthy that *The Post* dared to criticize the government agencies’ incompetency in managing terrorism. During the authoritarian New Order regime, the use of covered, polite and euphemistic reportage style and the dominant use of government news sources had become the characteristics of the Indonesian press; whereas during the reform era, more open and free reporting style are new characteristics of the Indonesian press as part of democracy. According to the editorial secretary of *The Jakarta Post*—

> We employ professional journalism practice by taking no sides to any parties. Our duty as a press institution is to educate society to realize which is right and which is wrong. And in relation to terrorism, the press plays a crucial role to show to the public what the authorities have done to assure this thing won’t happen again in the future” *(The Jakarta Post Interview, 2006a)*.

The condition that the Indonesian press faced in this reformation era as shown by *The Jakarta Post* is similar to Stuart Hall (1999, p.4) statement in his book *News Culture* as follows—
Press freedom is part of the realization of the democratic function...by fostering a public engagement with the issue of the day, they are regarded as helping to underwrite a consensual (albeit informal) process of surveillance whereby the activities of the state and corporate sectors are made more responsive to the dictates of public opinion.

Thus, The Post strictly represented the lack of coordination among government agencies, exhorting the government itself to take more seriously its role in human security and public protection. Within the aegis of this criticism, The Post argued that the government sought to excuse itself on the grounds that it was in transition; in effect, however, the new democratic government could not abdicate its role as community protector and would need to work hard to prevent further attacks.

Nonetheless, The Post also reported the investigation process undertaken by the Indonesian police in coordination with the help of investigators from Australia and other countries to uncover the perpetrators of the terror attacks. This was done through the reporting of interviews with the police as well as press conferences that were frequently held by the police media centre. Most of The Post headlines on this issue are statements made by the police such as RI, Australia form joint team to probe Bali attack (17/10/02), Police announce breakthrough in Bali probe (01/11/02), (the Bali bombing); JI linked with Marriott blast (09/08/03), Police confirm Asmar’s JI ties (the JW Marriott hotel bombing); 10 suicide bombers at large: Police (12/09/04), Police release photos of bombing suspects (16/09/04), Police arrest eight over embassy bombing (17/09/04) (the Australian embassy bombing). News items exhibiting current situation and the progress of police investigation, for instance, are as follows—

Police say the ongoing investigation into the JW Marriott Hotel bomb attack is pointing towards the involvement of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) regional terrorist network.

National Police chief Gen. Da'i Bachtiar said on Friday that police had a list and photographs of suspects linked to JI, the Islamic-based network believed responsible for the devastating Bali bombings.
Da'i, speaking prior to meeting the House of Representatives' Commission I on defence, pointed to similarities between the Marriott and Bali bombings.

The similarities included the explosives used, the fact that the bomb was triggered by a mobile phone and that the terrorists had removed the engine and chassis numbers from the car used as a bomb, as they had done in Bali... (JI linked with Marriott blast, The Jakarta Post, 09/08/03)

The National Police announced on Thursday that they had arrested at least eight people allegedly linked to last week's deadly blast outside the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, which killed 10 people and injured over 180 others.

National Police chief of detectives Comr. Suyitno Landung Sudjono confirmed the arrests of only seven suspects in East Java, while a police source said another one was nabbed in Jakarta.

"This is part of our efforts to establish a link between terror suspects in West, Central and East Java. We hope we can capture both Azahari bin Husin and Noordin Moh. Top, once we trace their network," said Suyitno.

The source and Suyitno said the police also arrested three people in Sidoarjo, three others in Madiun and two others in Magetan... (Police arrest eight over embassy bombing, The Jakarta Post, 17/09/04)

*The Post* constantly reported the progress of the investigation process of the three bombing attacks. Within *The Post*’s perspective, the representation of the police investigation is as important as the representation of lack of coordination among government authorities so that its readers could be well-informed of the progress. Through this representation *The Post* expected its readers to be aware and critical of the investigation progress so that the police seriously handled the bomb attacks. It is this kind of reporting that *The Post* claimed to have operated within a principle of fair and balanced reporting based on the professional standard of journalism, as stated by its national editor (*The Jakarta Post* Interview, 2006b).

Another implied meaning of the news representation above is that the readers were expected to become aware of the fact that terrorism did exist within the country and the
perpetrators had lived among society. Further, this issue would increase society’s caution toward any suspicious things that may lead to acts of terror. The disclosure of some facts where the perpetrators had rented houses in villages and urban areas and made them the base from which they develop their terror plan indicates how the perpetrators attempted to use society as the cover up for the acts of terror.

3. Representing the views of the broader Indonesian citizenry

Despite the fact that the perpetrators of acts of terror claimed their acts in the name of religion, *The Post* had a perspective that no religions in the world should use terror. This is an ideological and moral perspective that distinguishes *The Post*—its policy framework, editorial and alignment with government and international legal frameworks. This understanding is another representation that *The Post* attempted to bring to the surface. This news media institution felt it was necessary to stress this issue in its reporting as a good deal of the international western-based media had, deliberately or otherwise, equated Islam with terrorism (see Lewis, 2005). By representing the Indonesian opinion of the terrorist attacks, *The Post* expected its readers, some of whom are foreigners and expatriates, to be aware of the notion that principally Islam has nothing to do with terrorism. It is part of the news media role to educate the public (Mc Quail, 2000). By presenting Indonesian citizens' perspectives and views on the terrorist attacks and terrorism more generally, *The Post* provided a voice for Islamic Indonesians, in particular, against the prevailing views of some areas of the international media. This was especially important for countering the view that equated Indonesia's Islamic community with terrorism.

*The Post* disagreed with some western news media that had shown bias in their reporting. Jerry D. Gray (2006), a former US Air Force and *Metro TV* and *CNBC* Asia Reporter, in his book entitled *Dosa-Dosa Media America (Sins of American Media)* uncovers some facts of how some American media institutions had changed from news media that report actual events to propaganda machine that supported the American president and his government, whether rightly or wrongly.

The perspective above was strongly stated by *The Post* editor-in-chief, editorial secretary and national editor that I interviewed. This empirical part of my research was used to
support my analysis of \textit{The Post}'s representation as can be seen below. In reporting news that contained potentially sensitive and divisive issues like terrorism that had been launched by radical groups in the name of Islam, \textit{The Post} editor claimed to stay neutral so that news media can professionally report the event (interview held in Jakarta, August 2006). Thus, \textit{The Post} felt it was its obligation to convey the news fairly so that its readers can see the facts more objectively. News items exhibiting the views of the broader Indonesian citizenry read as follow—

Leaders from different religions, calling themselves \textit{Gerakan Moral Nasional} or \textit{GMN} (National Moral Movement) pleaded on Monday for all people to refrain from linking the deadly Bali bombing with any religion, particularly Islam. \textit{GMN} spokesman Hasyim Muzadi told journalists after \textit{GMN} meeting at the \textit{Nahdlatul Ulama} office here that the bombing in Bali was a crime against humanity, which no religion condoned.

\textit{Muhammadiyah} chairman Ahmad Syafii Maarif issued a separate statement on Friday from his office in Yogyakarta, calling on the government and its security forces to take swift action to find the motives behind the bombing.

The moderate Muslim group, however, urged all parties, particularly the police, not to jump to any conclusions about the motive or the perpetrators of the bombing without providing credible evidence arrived at after a long investigation (\textit{Don't link deadly Bali bombing with religion:leaders, The Jakarta Post}, 15/10/02).

Similar representation had also been shown by \textit{The Post} in the 2003 and 2004 bombing attacks which are evident in the following news items—

\textit{Nahdlatul Ulama} (NU) and \textit{Muhammadiyah}, the country's two largest Muslim organisations, led a chorus of condemnation against the bomb attack on JW Marriott Hotel and called on people to remain calm.

They called on people to remain calm and ignore provocation and speculation about the tragedy. Both figures demanded the government "uncover the case and
the terrorist network behind the incident immediately, professionally and transparently”.

Both Hasyim and Syafii agreed that the Marriott bombing had nothing to do with Islam... (Muslim groups condemn blast, say Islam not to blame, The Jakarta Post, 07 August 2003).

Thursday's bombing at the Australian Embassy, which killed at least seven people, drew strong nationwide condemnation, with many saying the latest terror attack would further tarnish the predominantly Muslim country's image.

Muslim leaders and leaders from different faiths extended their deep condolences to the families and relatives of the dead and the at least 161 wounded victims, while urging the nation to unite to fight and root out terrorism. (Religious leaders condemn bombing, call for unity, The Jakarta Post, 10 September 2004)

The importance of this representation to The Post can be seen from the news items that can be categorised as long news (more than 12 paragraphs) and the inclusion of some news sources, mostly Islamic leaders and scholars that strictly and specifically emphasized that Islam was not a religion of terror or violence. By representing statements from religious leaders, The Post expected its readers to be aware that there was no intention of The Post to equate Islam with terrorism nor that Islam is identical with radicalism or violence. This is especially important for a news outlet whose readership includes foreign, English speaking ex-patriots living in Indonesia. As a broadsheet newspaper committed to balanced reporting, The Post gave voice to a more reasoned and thoughtful understanding of Islam and the ways in which radicalism differed from most Indonesian Muslims. Within the perspective of The Post, as stated in the press policies section earlier in this chapter, people don’t have to be Muslims to be radical (see Barton, 2004). The representation of this issue is also strongly related to The Post’s vision to develop understanding within a pluralist society. Consequently, as stated by Managing Editor of The Jakarta Post—

Kami menolak mereka yang melakukan kejahatan atas nama agama. Sebagai sebuah media berita independen dan bebas, kami merasa perlu melaporkan berita
[We refuse those who commit crime in the name of religion. As a free and independent news institution, we need to report news that would benefit society. Thus, in reporting news on terrorism we carefully use the words like ‘Islamic terrorist, fundamentalist, Jemaah Islamiyah’ as these words can be misleading.]
national political stability and sovereignty. The capture of Abu Bakar Ba’asyir in Surakarta following the Bali bombing and his eventual trial for violation of immigration law instead of involvement in terrorism indicated how the government authorities acted without sufficient proof (http://www.arsip.net/id/link.php?lh=UwIHBQYJAgcH). It is this kind of government action that had worried religious leaders and activists. Nonetheless, the religious leaders strongly supported the government’s attempt to discover those behind the acts of terror, as it is through this way that Indonesia, which is regarded as the most populous Muslim country in the world, can regain its reputation in the international world.

Interestingly, religious leaders also suggested western countries to examine their foreign policies toward Muslim or Islamic countries as shown in the news item Religious leaders condemn bombing, call for unity which read as follows—

It asked the United States, Australia, Britain and other countries, which are often targeted by terrorist, to exercise "introspection" as regards the possibility that their global policies could be misplaced.

"Feeling oneself to have a monopoly on truth and power will benefit no one except the terrorists," said the statement signed by acting NU chairman Masdar Farid Mas'udi (The Jakarta Post, 10 September 2004).

This statement relates to the fact that the three terrorist attacks had chosen western interests as their targets of acts of terror. By representing this issue, The Post attempted to warn western governments to carefully examine their policies that sometimes had marginalised the role of Islamic countries in the global world.

At the same time, through other news item entitled Public discourse best way to excise fundamentalism (15/08/2003), The Post also brought to the surface the issue of fundamentalism in Islam that sometimes had been misinterpreted by some radical Islamists, as in the case of Jemaah Islamiyah, to be the basis for their acts of terror. Through the reporting of this issue, The Post wanted to remind its readers that there were some groups who had radical understanding of religion. This radical understanding must be fought through dialog. To construct the representation of this issue, The Post quoted news source of a Muslim scholar and gave more space for the news source to share his opinion. News item exhibiting this issue is described as follows—
Public discourse best way to excise fundamentalism

...Young Muslim scholar Ulil Abshar Abdalla said the teachings and beliefs of fundamentalist organisations like *Jemaah Islamiyah (JI)* that condone murder in the name of religion must be fought through an open public discourse.

Members of fundamentalist groups must be allowed to speak their minds so moderate groups can counter their arguments, allowing the people to see that fundamentalism is wrong, he said.

"If we open a public discourse, we can show them and also the public that fundamentalist ideas are wrong," he said at a discussion on a proposed draconian security law.

He said Indonesia would lose if it chose to fight extremist groups using a draconian law like Singapore or Malaysia's Internal Security Act (ISA). With a draconian law like the ISA, fundamentalist teachings and beliefs would go underground, he said.

The best way to deal with fundamentalism is through open public debates, which can only take place if freedom of expression is guaranteed, he said.

... Ulil, nevertheless, warned that opening a public discourse on fundamentalism did not mean fundamentalist groups were free to commit crimes. "When a fundamentalist commits a crime, security officers must take legal action," Ulil said (*The Jakarta Post*, 15 August 2003).

Through this news item, *The Post* also emphasized the importance of dialogue to solve misunderstanding or to avoid conflict. However, it has to remember that within the perspective of some radical Islamic groups like *Jemaah Islamiyah*, the idea to establish an Islamic state and *khilafah Islamiyah* in the Southeast Asia region was its ultimate objective. *Shari’a* law was to govern the region. This Islamic Caliphate would stretch from southern Thailand, through the Malay Peninsula across the Indonesian Archipelago and into southern Philippines (ICG Asia Report No 43, 2002). And they were determined to achieve this objective through the use of violence. In their radical teaching, those who were
not members of this group were considered non-Muslims (kafir) and therefore robbing or killing them is allowed. They refused to abide by the law of a secular government. Thus, although the activities of Jemaah Islamiyah had been seized by the governments of Southeast Asian countries and some of its leaders had been in custody, the threat remained strong as this organisation had a regeneration process that enabled young members of JI to become its future leaders (ICG Asia Report No. 63, 2003).

Apart from the representation above, The Post’s attempt to report the issue of fundamentalism and Islam was crucial in relation to the news media’s role to educate society. Before and even after some terrorist events occurred in Indonesia, the debate over whether terrorist groups existed in Indonesia and claimed their acts in the name of Islam remained strong. Thus, within the perspective of this news media institution, it is important to open a dialogue on this issue so that Indonesian Muslims, within their moderate perspective of Islam, could understand that there were Muslims with a narrow understanding of the teachings of Islam who lived among them. According to The Post Managing Editor,


[It is one of the ways to show our responsibility to society. We represent the issue because it is based on the facts, and those facts are important for the society to know. In our understanding, once we have been able to show our responsibility to the public, then the role and function of the news media become stronger.]

Thus, it can be concluded that the representation of the third issue was The Jakarta Post’s attempt to play its role as the news media where it did not only portray how the government dealt with issue of terrorism, but also portrayed the fact that terrorism existed in Indonesia. Through this representation, The Post wanted to educate society to become
aware of the existence of radical groups that had misused Islamic teachings to justify their acts of terror.

**Conclusion**

As the news media institution published by four competing media publishers, *The Jakarta Post* has turned into a quality, broadsheet newspaper with a distinctive Indonesian perspective to counter the highly unbalanced western dominated global traffic of news and views. In relation to the representation of terrorism, the Post carefully reported the issue. With strong editorial stand, the Post had taken no sides and presented a balanced perspective in accordance with its editorial policy and the standards of the Fourth Estate. For *The Post*, terrorism represented a significant political and social crime that needed to be punished in accordance with rule of law and the new standards of social and legal responsibility emerging out of the Reformasi.

In accordance with these perspectives, *The Post* sought to unhinge the connection between terrorism and Islam that had been propagated through specific areas of the western media, a perspective to which *The Post's* readership would have been certainly exposed.

The news representation of three terrorist events in *The Jakarta Post* had been constructed mostly around a distinctive, secular and democratic political profile. This can be seen from the representation of government policy on terrorism and national security, how the Indonesian government managed the acts of terror and how the Indonesian society accepted the facts that terrorism did exist in Indonesia. In general, *The Post* showed its support toward the issue of regulations to combat terrorism, but at the same time warned the government to carefully implement the regulations as these may against human rights and the 1945 Constitutions. On another issue, *The Post* criticized a lack of intelligence coordination among government authority agencies that had lead to the acts of terror to occur. Conflict of intelligence and counter-terrorism roles between the police and the military (*TNI*) became the main focus of *The Post's* criticisms. Meanwhile, the last representation of the issue indicates how the Post had brought to the surface the issue of the existence of terrorist in Indonesia and the importance of dialogue on the issue of fundamentalism and radicalism in Islam.
The Post represented the issues above through open, straightforward and critical reporting style which are new characteristics of Indonesian press in the era of ‘reform’ (Reformasi). In this sense, The Post contributed directly to Fourth Estate functions of effective, secular governance in accordance with the pluralist ideals of the Indonesian Constitution and its supporting framework, Pancasila. Through these representations, The Jakarta Post had been able to show its social responsibility to the public. This daily newspaper had become a medium for, as introduced by Jurgen Habermas, a communicational public sphere through which all citizens have access and freedom to express and publish their opinions about matters of critical social and political interests.
CHAPTER VIII
TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF
SABILI REPRESENTATION OF TERRORISM

Introduction

The previous chapter discussed how *The Jakarta Post* has represented issues of terrorism to its target audience, a burgeoning foreign community of English speakers living in Indonesia. *The Post* has played a central role in articulating the perspective of the Indonesian public on the issue of whether terrorism is a major problem in Indonesia, as well as in portraying how the government has managed issues of terrorism.

This chapter analyses representations of terrorism in *Sabili*, a leading Islamic news magazine in Indonesia. Like *The Post*, *Sabili* is shaped by its own distinctive editorial, cultural and market base. With very strong connections to Islamic clergy and a faith-driven audience, *Sabili* generates a very different ideological and ethical-cultural perspective from *The Post*—particularly in terms of religious issues and Islamic based terrorism. The analytical framework used in this chapter places news representation firmly within the political context of the reform era and seeks to inquire how this may have affected the editorial policy of the *Sabili* magazine and its reporting.

This chapter comprises two sections. The first section outlines the profile and editorial policy of *Sabili* news magazine. A detailed discussion of the historical background of the *Sabili* media institution is pertinent because of its potential to affect *Sabili's* current editorial policy in representing news on terrorism. The second section outlines how the meanings of terrorism have been constructed in *Sabili* and represented to the public as news.
Sabili: the profile and editorial policy

The profile

Sabili is an Islamic-oriented bi-weekly news magazine that offers its readers news that represents all aspects of Islamic life 'properly and fairly' (Sabili Company Profile, 2006). The publication of this news magazine was precipitated by the Tanjung Priok massacre. On 12 September 1984 the Indonesian military opened fire on a large group of Muslims protesting the imprisonment of their Kyai (Islamic scholar) and 3 of his disciples, detained for objecting to the idea of the Pancasila as the sole guiding principle of the Indonesian government. At this time many Islamic organisations were under the strict control of the government and military. Events at which many Muslims would be present had to be reported to the police and military and the content of the events was restricted to issues of how to be a devoted Muslim; Islamic political discussions were strictly prohibited. These conditions triggered some Islamic youths to conduct new ways of *dakwah* (missionary work) to represent the correct understanding of Islam. One avenue through which the dissemination of such *dakwah* was achieved was the news media. The most prominent publication, which was later named *Sabili* (the Path), was published approximately one year after the Tanjung Priok tragedy.

According to Abul Fida, the first editor-in-chief of *Sabili*, there were four philosophical precepts which underpinned the naming of *Sabili*. First, *Sabili* represented the simultaneous *dakwah* (missionary) movement. Secondly, the movement was directed to *Allah* (Muslim God). Thirdly, *da’i* (Islamic proselytizer) must have *hujjah*, strong arguments with clear concepts, in the *dakwah* (missionary) movement. Fourth, *Sabili* must be the leader in the process of *dakwah* (*Sabili* Company Profile, 2006).

Nonetheless, due to lack of funds and unprofessional news media management, *Sabili* had to stop its publication for nearly two years. It was not until 1988 that this news magazine was relaunched with better management and funds. At the end of 1992, it received a written warning from the government due to the publishing of a letter from one of its readers which was classified as having the potential to trigger a conflict involving *SARA* (*Suku, Agama, Ras and Antar--golongan* or Ethnic, Religion, Race and Inter--group). The calling of its editor-in-chief to *Kejaksaan Tinggi* (the office of the counsel for the prosecution), which was a way for the government to place the editor-in-chief behind bars, ended in the temporary closing of this Islamic news magazine.
In its first editorial meeting in mid 1998, soon after the fall of the New Order and the emergence of many new news media, Sabili reformulated its position, vision and mission. It positioned itself as a publication concerned with the development of Islam and Muslims and sought to attract a wide readership. Under the banner of ‘media for all’ Sabili aimed not to differentiate between the political as well as religious orientations of its readers. Its vision was to become an ‘information controlling and Islamic society advocating media’ (Sabili Company Profile, 2006).

Sabili’s vision is to show that Islam is a religion that inspires social consciousness and is relevant to people’s aspirations of openness, pluralism and democracy. Nevertheless, the aspiration to view events from an Islamic perspective is the main foundation of its journalistic practices. Its news reporting is strongly informed by the principle that it must become a facilitator for the unity of Islamic community through islah (harmony), ukhuwah (brotherhood), tasamuh (patience) and rahmah (compassion). At the same time, Sabili is strictly against anything that is clearly wrong and misleading. ‘Critical, sharp and smart’ has become the motto for its news writing (Sabili Company Profile, 2006).

According to the readership survey conducted by AC Nielsen during the period 2002-2003, Sabili occupied the third position with 476 thousand readers, ahead of Tempo which was at the tenth position with 264 thousand readers. Meanwhile, the educational background of its readers shows that it is dominated by readers with a university education background (34%), followed by senior high school (30%) and junior high school (25%). As the most populous Islamic country in the world, news magazines with an Islamic perspective such as Sabili have great potential to continue to grow in Indonesia.

Editorial policy

In comparison with other mainstream news media such as The Jakarta Post, Kompas and Tempo news magazine, the editorial policy of Sabili is deeply rooted in religious faith. As a news magazine with an Islamic perspective, Sabili clearly places itself as news media that defends the interests of Islam and Muslims. Sabili’s reporting of news is 'global', at least in as much as its interests go beyond the Indonesian state to a broader Islamic world view and world issues. As long as the news story concerns Muslims, as in the case of Muslims in Palestine, Sabili will report the news in the interests of Islam and in order to defend Muslims. In this sense, Sabili is strongly influenced by Wahabbism and a sense in which
'Jihad' or 'Islamic struggle' crosses the borders of nation states. While not advocating violence specifically, Sabili supports the notion of an Islamic struggle against the forces that would oppress Muslims.

Thus, in reporting on terrorist events associated with Islam, Sabili took a clear position to defend Islam and to show that Islam is not synonymous with terrorism or a religion teaching violence. This position was evident in the choice of news sources and the way the news magazine reported terrorist events in Indonesia. Sabili also stressed that it did not in any way endorse terrorist activities; rather, its reporting was merely concerned with clarifying the fact that Islamic terrorists had misunderstood the teachings of Islam. In doing so, Sabili employed a professional journalistic standard. In this sense, Sabili became a key player in what Jeff Lewis (2005) calls 'language wars'—those mediated and rhetorical disputes over the meaning of terrorism and political violence and the ways in which Islam, specifically, was being represented and publicly discussed.

In reporting on radical groups that had adopted Islamic values to justify their acts of violence, Sabili tended to explore the arguments behind the radicalism. Consequently, in its reporting of issues of terrorism, Sabili included interviews with Islamic scholars in order to explain why Islam was not synonymous with radicalism or violence. From Sabili’s perspective, following the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the U.S. there had been a systematic attempt to present Islam as a dangerous and violent religion. Therefore, as a medium for Islamic advocacy, Sabili felt it was its obligation to defend Islam and address this misrepresentation. Thus, Sabili did not defend the Islamic radical groups themselves; rather, it attempted to explain how these groups had misunderstood Islamic teachings. However, the clear editorial position of Sabili did not affect its commitment to reporting the facts. As the editor-in-chief of Sabili stated:

*Kebenaran dalam berita sangatlah penting. Kita harus memunculkan fakta daripada opini. Sabili akan dengan tegas memberitakan sebuah peristiwa jika faktanya benar, terlepas dari resiko majalah akan ditutup. Sebagai sebuah majalah dengan perspektif Islam yang berkomitmen pada kebenaran, penulisan berita Sabili didasarkan pada etika Islam dan juga kode etik jurnalistik* (Sabili Interview, 2006)
[Truth in news is very important. To do so, we must present facts rather than opinion. Sabili will undoubtedly report the news if the facts are true, despite the risk that the magazine will be shut down. As a magazine with an Islamic perspective that is committed to the truth, Sabili's news reports are based on both an Islamic ethic as well as a journalistic ethical code.]

As the leading Islamic-oriented news magazine in Indonesia, Sabili positioned itself as a kind of watchdog of government. If it considered that government policies ignored the interests of society, Muslims in particular, it would criticize them. Thus, how the Indonesian government dealt with Islamic terrorism became a major concern to Sabili. The analysis of Sabili's representation of terrorism is examined in detail in the next section.

**Sabili Representations of Terrorism**

Radicalism in Islam has a tendency to arise when global politics, economy, social and cultural factors contribute to an increase in pressure or marginalisation of the minority groups and their religion. Within this complex set of conditions, radical Islamists attempt to uphold resistance (Gunawan, 2006, p. 63) and often this process of reaffirming religious identity leads to a growth in radicalism. To some extent, some radical Islamists have misused Islamic values to justify their acts of terrorism. This condition can be used to explain the chain of terrorist acts that occurred in Indonesia.

An analysis of the representation of terrorism in the Sabili news magazine will elucidate the complexity of reporting terrorist events in a country where most of its citizens are Muslim. The extent to which Sabili's perspectives of radical Islam and terrorism are framed by the social and political context in which it reports is discussed at length in this chapter. The 9/11 terrorist attacks on the U.S. significantly affected Sabili’s reporting by shifting its focus to countering the western dominated, global media's marginalisation of Islam. The U.S. led global 'war on terror', precipitated by the events of 9/11 and informed by the idea of a fundamental incompatibility between Islam and the West, markedly changed the
global political landscape. Islam as civilization was perceived as a new threat to the Bush government. As Huntington states (1998)—

> It is the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation-states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflict of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics (pp.22-49).

Bush’s statement of intent to launch a ‘crusade war’, which was later revised as ‘operation infinite justice’, was followed by the introduction of a policy of war against so-called ‘Islamic terrorists’ (Abuza, 2003). It is within this context that *Sabili* felt it was necessary to protect Muslims from being accused as terrorists and to provide a more positive representation of Islam.

*Sabili* focused on three major issues in its news reporting of Islamic terrorist issues: (i) The American government's attack on Islam in Indonesia, (ii) The existence of *Jemaah Islamiyah* as a radical group that had adopted acts of terrorism to achieve its goals, (iii) The issuance of the Indonesian Terrorism Act and the capture of Islamic political radicals. This is signified by the intense reporting of these three interrelated issues and the use of an in-depth, investigative reporting. The magazine's focus on these issues is strongly related to *Sabili*’s objective as a news magazine advocating Muslim interests. The following analysis of the reporting of these three issues is divided into sub headings.

1. *The American government's attack on Islam in Indonesia*

The 9/11 terrorist attacks on the U.S. provided the basis for Bush to declare a 'war on terror' (see Tuman, 2003). To some political analysts, this new U.S. foreign policy aimed to marginalise Islam's role in the international world. The double standard policy of the U.S. government toward the Israel-Palestine conflict and the attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq had become clear evidence of this (*Sabili*, No. 8/Vol. X/2002).

Thus, when terrorist attacks occurred in Indonesia, some Islamic scholars and activists warned of the possibility of involvement by American intelligence agencies. This issue was
...looking at the type of the bomb and the impact of the blast, many people, especially political analysts, suggested that the perpetrators of the bomb attacks involved foreign parties. They sensed it had a strong link to the terrorism issue that was campaigned by America to all over the world, including Indonesia.

A political analyst of the University of Indonesia, Prof. Dr. M. Budyatna gave his comment, “It is possible this was engineered by foreigners so that there would be a strong reason for them, especially America, to attack hard-line groups considered to be terrorists”...

According to information received by the head of the Islamic Defender Front (FPI), Habib Riziq Shihab, a press release from the American embassy was issued after intelligence was passed on by the CIA. There was only one American victim of the Bali bombing. This was well out of proportion to the number of American citizens that were in Kuta, Bali at the time of the bombing...

The mooring of a number of foreign warships especially from the United States in the Benoa Sea, Bali several days before the Bali bombing had invited suspicion among Balinese...Soon after the ships moored, they sterilised the area within 500 metres from the ships...According to Yasril, foreign intervention was meant to weaken Indonesia’s bargaining position in the international world.

It is difficult to ignore that the bombings in Bali and Manado were foreign interventions to marginalise and attack Muslims, especially those who were accused as terrorists... (*We are under attack*, *Sabili*, No. 8/Vol. X/2002).

Similar representation of the issue also appeared in the 2003 and 2004 reporting as follows—

Former Director of Coordinating Agency for National Intelligence (Badan Koordinator Intelejen Nasional or BAKIN) AC Manullang states,”The Marriott Hotel bombing strongly relates to international interests that attempt to create chaos situation in Indonesia. The goal was to create an image of unsafe
Indonesia. They create an opinion as if Al-Qaeda network exists in Indonesia and that Islam equates to terrorism. This is similar to what the US, Israel and Western European governments did toward Iraq” (Islam condemned, Islam accused, Sabili, No. 3/Vol XI/2003).

Since the Bali and current bombing events, I keep saying that these are scenarios of state of the art mastermind. Al-Qaeda or Jemaah Islamiyah were unlikely to have launched the bombings. There might be possibility, but were unconsciously sacrificed and used by those behind these big scenarios (Sabili’s interview report with Intelligence analyst, Soeripto, Uncover the mastermind, No. 6/Vol. XII/2004).

The representation of this issue appeared in 2002, 2003, and 2004 news coverage. Sabili used a strict and straightforward news reporting style. From the three news items above, Sabili openly portrayed the terrorist attacks as part of a global conspiracy orchestrated by Western (American) governments to shape global opinion that Indonesia in particular and Southeast Asia in general had become a terrorist haven. In particular, Sabili portrayed the scenario as an attempt to attack Muslims who were regarded as the new threat to Western democracy and values.

At the same time, Sabili also criticised the Indonesian government for its weak attitude toward the American government and its allies which tended to follow the interests of Western governments as a pre-condition for obtaining international aid. Consequently, any policies issued by the Indonesian government in relation to combating terrorism, from Sabili’s perspective, were likely to please Western governments but tended to ignore the interest of Muslims in Indonesia. To Sabili, the reporting of this issue was important to show how the Indonesian government had reacted to the terrorist events and how this reaction had negatively impacted on the life of Muslims in Indonesia.

The representation of this issue is closely related to Sabili’s vision as a media outlet advocating the interests of Muslims. In its company profile, Sabili positions itself as a publication for those who are interested in Islam or Muslims. According to its editor-in-chief,

_Paling tidak ada dua hal yang perlu dipertimbangkan dalam pemilihan berita._
Pertama adalah kepentingan berita terhadap umat Islam dan relevansi dengan visi dan misi kami. Kedua adalah bagaimana kami memberitakan isu tersebut melalui perspektif Islam, karena sebuah isu dapat diberitakan dari berbagai perspektif (Sabili Interview, 2006).

[There are at least two things that we have to consider in news selection. The first is the significance of the news to Muslims and the relevance to our vision and mission. The second is how we portray the issue through an Islamic perspective, as one issue can be represented in a number of different ways.]

In its representation, Sabili relied on a variety of sources—academics, intelligence analysts and legislative officers—which supported the editorial perspective of the magazine. Sabili’s perspective on this issue was based on the understanding that Islam never teaches violence and radicalism and that when examining the root cause of terrorism, other political, economic and social factors must be taken into consideration. This perspective was clearly represented in Sabili’s other news item entitled Terorisme musuh Islam (Terrorism is Islam’s enemy) (No. 3/Vol XI/2003) which said as follows—

Islam is a religion that teaches love and passion and is against terrorism...

To those who commit terror by killing, Islam adopts qhisash law which means those who kill must be killed. The goal is to eradicate terrorist networks at the root....

Terrorising with explosives, bombing public places and killing innocent people are destructive forms that Islam really hates.

Thus, if there were radical groups that had adopted acts of violence in the name of Islam, according to Sabili’s editor-in-chief,

Kedua, saya juga melihat ada beberapa upaya untuk meradikalisasi mereka melaluiprovokasi seperti dalam kasus terorisme. Kami menemukan fakta ada upaya kelompok tertentu memprovokasi dan meradikalisasi mereka melalui beragam cara. Mereka diprovokasi, diberi senjata dan disusupi intelijen yang menjadikan mereka lebih radikal (Sabili Interview, 2006)

[We must not only see their radicalism, but we must be critical to see the root or causal factor of their radicalism. Usually their radicalism is caused by their dissatisfaction with government policies. It seems that the government has not been too sensitive to them. In the case of the Islamic Defender Front (FPI), they radicalised by destroying cafes because, from the perspective of FPI followers, the government has ignored and let these kinds of places ruin the morals of the young generation.

Secondly, I also see that there have been attempts to radicalise them through provocation as in the case of terrorism. We found the facts that there have been attempts by certain groups to provoke and radicalise them through a variety of forms. They are provoked, armed and infiltrated by intelligence agents, which have made them become even more radical.]

In relation to the changing practices of the press in Indonesia, the representation of this issue, as in the case of The Jakarta Post, again shows how the press is now free to report news that is critical of the government. The reporting of this issue was carried out using a professional, critical and smart style which promoted the interests of Muslim. In reporting on the issue of America's attack on Islam in Indonesia, Sabili sought to balance the coverage of Western media that tended to marginalise Islam. At the same time, it could play its role as the instrument for the unity of Islamic society and provide a better understanding of Islam to the public. To Sabili, this role was vital as Muslim had entered a potentially destabilising period following the terrorist attacks in the U.S. and domestically. As an important contributor to the growing debate over the issue of whether there were radical groups who used terror in the name of Islam, Sabili felt it was its obligation to uncover the facts which received less attention by other news media.

2. The existence of Jemaah Islamiyah
Another important issue that became Sabili’s concern following the domestic terrorist events was the existence of Jemaah Islamiyah as the perpetrator of these attacks. This issue had also become the concern of the other news media outlets under study, The Jakarta Post and Tempo. The Jakarta Post, while not explicitly stating that JI existed in Indonesia, warned the intelligence agencies of radical groups that had misused religious values for their political interest. Tempo, which is discussed in the next chapter, also did not clearly identify the existence of JI in Indonesia. Instead, it reported the description of the captured bombing perpetrators (see Chapter IX). Contrary to these two news media, Sabili explicitly reported Jemaah Islamiyah. Sabili, however, discussed Jemaah Islamiyah within a context of Islamic teaching, and so the status of the radical organisation was represented in distinctly ambiguous terms.

Whether Jemaah Islamiyah really existed or not had become a significant issue following the Bali bombing and the JW Marriot Hotel attacks. To some political analysts and terrorism experts, JI did exist and had a loose organisational structure, whereas to others, the global attack on Islam in Indonesia had used the existence of JI as an excuse to fight Islamic activists. The debate over this issue had dominated Sabili news reporting following the terrorist events. Sabili strictly represented the issue of the existence of JI as an attempt to seize the role of Islam in the international world. This is evident in the following news—

Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, stated that there should be no parties that deny the fact that acts of terrorism did exist in Indonesia. “Terrorism is right there before our very eyes,” he said.

On the other hand, Vice President Hamzah Haz, when asked by press over the issue of Bali bombing, said that there was no al-Qaidah network in Indonesia. A similar statement was expressed by the Minister of Justice and Human Rights, Yusril Ihza Mahendra and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hasan Wirayuda.

Since the issue of terrorism was brought to the surface, no evidence has proved the existence of the al-Qaeadah network in Indonesia. America and its allies like Singapore had accused some Islamic figures in Indonesia such as Abu Bakar Ba’asyir, Habib Rizieq Shihab and others of involvement in international terrorism. The accusation, however, was never proved... (We are under attack, Sabili, No. 8/Vol. X/2002).
Jemaah Islamiyah had suddenly become a frightening name to America. Like al-Qaidah, this name had been considered dangerous and must be put into the terrorist network list that the world must fight against.

...Just a few hours following the Bali tragedy, the American government directly pointed a finger at the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) network as the likely perpetrator. From the perspective of Western intelligence, JI is part of the al-Qaida network in Southeast Asia that is against western countries, especially America.

Some figures denied the existence of JI. “As far as I know, there is no Jemaah Islamiyah group in Indonesia,” said Deliar Noer...A similar opinion was given by the general secretary of the Indonesian Islamic Leaders Assembly (MUI), Prof. Dien Syamsudin. “There is no Jemaah Islamiyah in Indonesia. I have also received information that there is no Jemaah Islamiyah in Malaysia,” said Din. He regretted the Indonesian government's rushed actions and the tendency to follow the interests of imperialist America.

How is the concept of Jemaah Islamiyah understood according to Islam? Umar bin Khathab said, “There is no Islam without followers (jemaah), there is no jemaah without leadership (imamah), no imamah without obedience (taat) and no obedience without oath (baiat).”...Jemaah is one of the right ways to simplify differences within individuals. Within jemaah, individuals with similarities are united... (Stand for Jemaah Islamiyah, Sabili, No. 9/Vol. X/2002).

In the first news item above, Sabili stressed the inconsistency of the Megawati government in dealing with the issue of terrorism. This inconsistency was represented through the conflicting statements made by the Coordinating Minister of Politics and Security and the Minister of Defence vis-a-vis statements from the vice president and the Minister of Justice and Human Rights. Before the bombing, Vice President Hamzah Haz always denied there were terrorists living in Indonesia. Even after the Bali Bombing attack, the vice president reminded the public not to easily jump to a conclusion regarding the issue. On the other hand, Matori Abdul Jalil, the Minister of Defence, immediately accused Al-Qaidah of the bombing. This situation had given a bad impression of Megawati government's performance in dealing with the domestic terrorist issue and resulted in her poor showing.
in the 2004 presidential election. Also, she had failed in handling her tension with the former coordinating minister of politics and security Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono prior to the election. The International Crisis Group, in its report *Indonesia Briefing* on October 2002, gave its statement as follows--

Before 12 October, President Megawati’s re-election in 2004 seemed certain. Her popularity had steadily eroded but few could think of any alternative... But the president’s performance after the Bali bombings appalled many within her own party. Some diplomats and foreign business executives noted with approval that she went to Bali in the immediate aftermath of the bombings, held three cabinet meetings in as many days, and issued the anti-terror decree. But Indonesians saw no effort on her part to direct policy or to bring her unruly cabinet into line to convey the image of a united government with a sense of purpose. One commentator said she had shown no emotion when she spoke of the bombing, no sense that she was angered at the devastation or touched by the loss of life, although she undoubtedly was.

Although the Megawati government eventually took affirmative action over the attacks, a rushed decision by government officers to combat terrorism, from *Sabili’s* perspective, was the result of pressure by the American government as part of its purported attack on Islam in Indonesia, as discussed in the previous section. The implied meaning signifies how this news magazine warned the government not to be dictated easily by Western governments, for example through the accusation that some Islamic leaders in Indonesia were involved in international terrorism.

Thus, principally *Sabili* denied the existence of *Jemaah Islamiyah* as a terrorist organisation not because of its support of terrorism but that it believed that it was part of the American government's strategy to destabilise Islam in Indonesia and capture Islamic activists. This scenario can parallel the situation under the New Order government in the 1970s. As *Sabili’s* editor-in-chief explained—

*Kita pernah mengalami saat dimana umat Islam diadu domba. Tahun 1970an, pemerintah Orde Baru melalui Bakin telah memanipulasi beberapa pemimpin Darul Islam untuk melakukan serangan atas nama agama yang dapat dianggap...*
We had an experience where Muslims were played against each other. In the 1970s, the New Order government through its intelligence agency, the Coordinating Agency for Intelligence (Bakin), had manipulated some former leaders of Darul Islam to launch some attacks that were considered threats to national stability and security in the name of religion. This resistance was eventually eradicated by the military through the capture of some of the Islamic activists. The aim of this movement was to legitimize the government’s use of violence toward those who were considered threats to national stability.

In the second news item, Sabili denied the existence of JI in Indonesia by questioning reports from Western analysts such as Inside al-Qaeda: Global Network of Terror, written by Rohan Gunaratna. In his report, Gunaratna suspected the possibility of some Islamic groups like Islamic Defender Front (FPI) and Indonesian Mujahidin Assembly (MMI) to have been approached by Al-Qaeda. In addition to criticising Western terrorist analysts Sabili felt it was necessary to explain the meaning of Jemaah Islamiyah itself to avoid a misunderstanding of the concept. This article was considered crucial to ensure that both the Islamic community as well as others should not degrade the concept by associating with a radical group whose existence was still questioned.

The editorial position and the news representation that Sabili had taken over the issue cannot be separated from the intense exposure of foreign news media which tended to generalise Islam as a violent religion. Sabili, for instance, had included in its No. 3, Vol. XI edition the statement from The Strait Times (a Singapore newspaper) that the Bali Bombing and J. W. Marriott Hotel attacks were launched by Jemaah Islamiyah. The issue of the existence of Jemaah Islamiyah was raised as a result of the confession of the late Omar al-Farouq. Through news item entitled Singapura, maling teriak maling (Singapore,
a thief that screams a thief) and *Gaya media jualan ‘teror’* (Media style in selling ‘terror’); *Sabili* reported that Singapore was the first country that accused Ba’asyir as the leader of *JI*. *Sabili* included the statement of senior minister Lee Kuan Yew which was quoted by *the Strait Times*. *Sabili* portrayed this issue as a provocative act from Singapore. Thus, through its reporting *Sabili* attempted to counter the unbalanced reporting of foreign news media that tended to marginalise Islam.

To construct its own distinct representation of the issue, *Sabili* adopted two news reporting strategies. Firstly, it reported the many conflicting statements of government officers. This was intended to represent the unreadiness of the government in managing terrorism. Secondly, *Sabili* interviewed a great number of Islamic figures and scholars.

Its distinct representation of the issue also strongly relates to the vision and mission of this news media institution. As stated in its company profile (2006), *Sabili*’s vision was to be the ‘information controlling and advocacy media for Muslims’. Two of its six mission statements were ‘to keep the faith and unity of Muslims and to support Islamic law’ and ‘to present Islamic teachings completely based on Al-Quran and Sunnah’, although *Sabili* also realised that different Muslims perceive Islam differently.

In relation to the development of the press, the representation of this issue by *Sabili* indicates a change in the way news media criticised government. During the New Order authoritarian regime the typical way of criticising government was called “criticising with a compliment”, in which the press manoeuvred between the poles of limitation and prohibition (Prayudi, 2004, p.102). In the era of reform, the press was free to criticise government as long as it was done in accordance with the press code of ethics and Press Act (Astraadmaja, 2001).

From *Sabili*’s point of view, the approach taken over the issue of the existence of *Jemaah Islamiyah* was an attempt to defend the interests of the public, in particular the Islamic community. Thus, there was no anxiety that there might be pressure from the community or other parties on *Sabili* as a news media institution. *Sabili* encouraged their readers to be suspicious of the whole idea of *Jemaah Islamiyah*’s existence as a terrorist organisation as they feared that an acknowledgement of such an organisation would precipitate serious government abuses against Muslims—the sort of excesses that were experienced during the
New Order period. *Sabili's* editorial board feared that even a democratically elected government might exceed its authority, using the existence of *JI* as an excuse for rounding up politically active Islamists who had no association with violence, terrorism or *JI* specifically.
3. The issuance of the Terrorism Act and the capture of Islamic activists

One of the issues that surfaced following the Bali bombing was the need for regulation so that the Indonesian government could take legal action and at the same time would not be seen to have violated human rights. There were high tensions following the issuance of the Terrorism Act. Some supported this government move as a way to legally combat terrorism, whereas others warned the government not to misuse the Terrorism Act to capture those who were considered as a threat to the existing government. This fear of government misuse was based on past history, particularly under the New Order government through Komando Operasi Pemulihan Keamanan dan Ketertiban or KOPKAMTIB (the Operation Command of Security and Order Restoration), where many Islamic leaders considered a threat to the government were imprisoned. Just like The Jakarta Post, this had become another important issue that was represented in the Sabili news magazine.

Since the Bali bombing, Sabili paid serious attention to the two correlated issues as described above. From the perspective of Sabili, the issuance of the Terrorism Act would certainly lead to the capture of Islamic activists. Further, Sabili was concerned that the issuance of this new legislation was due to external pressure from Western (America) governments as a requirement for receiving international aid. This analysis was represented in a number of Sabili news items such as follows—

...“The Islamic movement will face a difficult era,” said an Islamic leader, Ihsan Tandjung. Some parties stated that with the issuance of the Anti Terrorism Act, the dark period between the state and Indonesian Islamic community would return to the vague period as in the early 1980s. “It could even be darker than when Indonesia was controlled by Soeharto-Benny Moerdani under which gross human rights violations occurred, such as the Tanjung Priok tragedy in 1984,” said the Sabili news source.

On this issue, the Secretary General of the Indonesian Mujahidin Assembly (MMI) Irfan S. Awwas said, “the issuance of this act will be a serious threat to the Islamic movement in Indonesia in the future. This is because the security apparatus can sentence people merely based on unsubstantial evidence from
intelligence. If this is the case, we will return to the Kopkamtib era as in the New Order in the past.”... (Conspiracy to destroy Indonesia, Sabili, No. 9/Vol. X/2002).

Still relevant to the issuance of the Antiterrorism Act, Sabili emphasized on the impact of the implementation of the act as follows—

...Without an arrest warrant, they ‘kidnapped’ Sofyan and took him to a car parked in front of his office. Sofyan’s family found out of his existence after receiving the arrest warrant a few days letter...

The arrest of Sofyan was one of the negative impacts of the implementation of Antiterrorism Act No. 15/2003. Based on this Act, the police was allowed to capture a person based on an intelligence report. Also, this act allowed authorities to arrest a person suspected of involvement in a terrorism network without the accompaniment of a lawyer (Questioning the revision of the Antiterrorism Act, Sabili, No. 4/Vol. XI/2003).

Ida Kurniati never thought that she would be treated roughly by the authorities. In the early hours of Thursday morning (31/3), four well-built officers knocked at her door and directly questioned her over her husband Jibril’s whereabouts...without showing any papers they searched the house of this Islamic activist...they took some pipes, a mobile phone and some other belongings.

‘Terror’ went on. On Monday (3/8), authorities returned to Ida’s home. This time they came with even more personnel...“Frankly I was surprised and shocked. Moreover some people thought that my husband was really a terrorist,” said Ida...

Ida’s experience was typical of the way the police made arrests of Islamic activists. It was common that the police treated the activists inhumanly (Eradicating terrorism with terror, Sabili, No. 6/Vol. XI/2003).
*Sabili* thus presented an explicit stance on the Antiterrorism Act, presenting an emotive description of the true effects of the application of the Act on Islamic activists who were not necessarily terrorists. In constructing this representation, *Sabili* expected its readers, which consisted of young Muslims, members of Islamic movements and professionals that wanted to return to the true Islamic values, to be critical in approaching the issue of the Antiterrorism laws.

Principally, *Sabili* did not object to the issuance of the Antiterrorism Act, but rather it was the potential misuse of the Act that it criticised. By questioning the revision of some chapters that may potentially violate human rights, *Sabili* criticized and at the same time warned the authorities of the discontent held by many Indonesian Muslims with the new legislation. As a magazine with an Islamic perspective, it was deeply concerned that this Act would be systematically used to capture Islamic activists in the name of preventing further terrorist acts.

The capture of some Islamic activists had also invited criticism from a number of Islamic figures, namely the former chairman of the *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (Welfare Justice Party) and then chairman of the Peoples Consultative Assembly (*MPR*), Hidayat Nur Wahid who said that “the capture of activists followed by torture and the framing of them as terrorist suspects is a form of terror to marginalise Islam. This kind of terror will later diminish the democratization process in Indonesia” (*Sabili*, No. 6/Vol. XI/2003). The issue of the imprisonment of Islamic activists also invited massive demonstrations in cities such as Jakarta, Yogyakarta and Solo in Central Java. The Indonesian Islamic Propagation Assembly (*Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia* or *DDII*), Islamic Network for Community (*Jaringan Islam untuk Umat* or *Jamiat*), Indonesian Mujahidin Front (*MMI*), Islamic Defenders Front (*FPI*), Indonesian Islamic Scholars Assembly (*MUI*), and Islamic Brotherhood Forum (*FUI*), along with the wives of kidnapped Islamic activists, rallied on main streets and in front of police headquarters. They criticised the misuse of the Antiterrorism Act as a vehicle to imprison Islamic political dissidents instead of combating terrorism. *Sabili*’s editor-in-chief gave his argument for their representation of the issue as follows,
The issue of the revision of the Antiterrorism Act became crucial to our news magazine as mainstream media gave little attention to it, although they warned the government to carefully deal with the issue. Mainstream media-such as Kompas, Tempo, The Jakarta Post—tended to focus their news representation on the investigation process and the handling of the victim’s based on the reason that these issues were related to the image building of the Indonesian government in the international world. On the other hand, we noticed that there were other aspects that the authorities need to notice in the war against terrorism. Therefore, as a news media with an Islamic perspective, we strictly criticise the revision of the Antiterrorism Act that principally aims to capture Islamic activists. We perceived there was a hidden agenda from the authorities. Consequently, the news representation of the capture of Islamic activists was open and critical.

The representation of these two correlated issues is also interesting in relation to the development of democracy in Indonesia in which every person or organisation can voice their aspirations freely and openly. The era of reform and the unstable conditions during the early period of reform impacted on the way the government handled this sensitive and divisive issue. The swift issuance of government regulation to deal with terrorism followed by revision of some of the chapters one year afterward signifies the un-readiness of the
former Megawati government in managing terrorism. Consequently, criticism of the government's handling of the issue from Islamic figures and activists, as well as by Islamic news media, increased substantially during this period.

News media with a distinct Islamic perspective such as Sabili then represented this issue according to their editorial policies. Compounded by the phenomenon of freedom of the press and the capture of some Islamic activists, Sabili represented the issue through an open and critical reporting style. It criticized the government through the publication of interviews conducted with politicians, legislative members, academics and Islamic leaders. With its clear position as the media outlet which cared for Islam and Muslims, it sought to counter negative reporting of Islam. Nonetheless, as stated by its editor-in-chief,

\[Sabili berupaya mewujudkan hal ini melalui pelaporan berita yang professional berdasarkan standard etika jurnalisme. Kami akan melaporkan tanpa ragu jika memang sebuah fakta dan kami tidak takut dibredel. Sebagai sebuah media berita Islam, kami berpegang pada prinsip kebenaran. Kami melakukan hal ini agar pemerintah mendengar, memahami dan mempertimbangkan saran-saran kami (Sabili Interview, 2006).\]

[Sabili attempted to achieve this through professional reporting based on an ethical standard of journalism. We will report without any hesitation if it is a fact and we are not afraid of being banned. As an Islamic news media, we hold on to the principle of truth. We do this in order for the government to listen, to understand and to consider our suggestions.]

Besides the representation of the two correlated issues above, another issue that Sabili considered important to represent was the impact of the capture of Islamic activists on their families. In its No. 5/Vol. XI/2003 edition, Sabili gave main coverage to this issue. It represented this issue from a humanitarian perspective. To achieve this perspective, Sabili interviewed the families of imprisoned Islamic activists. By reporting on this issue, which was primarily abandoned by the mainstream press like The Jakarta Post and Tempo, Sabili presented a different view of the impact of the new Antiterrorism Laws. This can be seen from one of the news items as follows—
Amir is Tamim’s son, an Islamic activist kidnapped by the authorities on 14 August 2003. Since the kidnapping, the family's condition has deteriorated, especially his wife, Ummi Amir. For several days, his mother did not stop crying...Since the arrest of Tamim, his family felt very stressed. They felt as if the authorities were continuing to spy on them.

According to Sabili’s news source, the authorities had asked the principal not to employ the terrorist’s wife. All teachers were asked to stay away from Ummi Amir. In the end, Tamim’s wife, who had only been working in the school for a month, was ‘dismissed’ from the school. “I am confused what to do now whilst at the same time I have to buy milk for my son...,” she said.

Sadly, Tamim’s wife had to separate from Amir. She left him with her parents. “During a long trip, I kept crying for leaving Amir. I promise to get him back,” she said... (Activists kidnapped: listen to their family’s scream, Sabili, No. 5/Vol. XI/2003).

The representation of Tamim’s family story above was only one among other stories that Sabili presented in the news items. In order to strengthen the representation, Sabili constructed this meaning through the implementation of feature writing. According to Keeble, “news features tend to contain more comment, analysis, colour, background and a greater diversity of sources than news stories and explore a larger number of issues at greater depth...In particular, their introduction, where the overall tone of pieces is set, tends to be more colourful and varied in style than that of hard news” (1994, p. 244). Thus, through feature writing, Sabili attempted to influence its readers to also feel what the families of kidnapped Islamic activists had felt.

Here Sabili presented both explicit and implicit meanings. Explicitly, Sabili portrayed the impact of the arrest of the Islamic activists on their families. It criticised the way the security apparatus arrested suspected Islamic activists without any warrant. If compared to other national news media, namely The Jakarta Post and Tempo, it can be said that Sabili was the only news media that placed any special attention to this issue.

Implicitly, Sabili's representation of the issue encouraged the authorities to consider the impact of arresting people suspected of involvement in terrorism on their families. As in
the case of the capture of Abu Dujana, suspected to be the secretary of JI in mid 2007, the arrest was carried out in front of his wife and children. The arrest process itself was preceded by an explosion and was broadcast to an international television network. Sydney Jones, the director of International Crisis Group, raised serious concerns over the procedure of such arrests. In an evening lecture at the University of Melbourne in 2007, she said that “the arrest of suspected terrorists, which involves violence and is done in front of their children, will only create a trauma for the families. For the children, it may create a stigma that they must continue the struggle of their parents as part of what they call jihad.”

Conclusion

As a news magazine established under the authoritarian New Order regime Sabili has developed into a media institution highly critical of government. With its vision of being an ‘information controlling and Islamic advocating media’, Sabili clearly places itself as a news media that defends the interests of Islam and Muslims in Indonesia.

In its representation of terrorism that had been associated with Islam, Sabili took a clear position to defend Islam and to show that the religion was not synonymous with terrorism. Its press coverage focused on three main issues: the American government's attack on Islam in Indonesia, the existence of Jemaah Islamiyah as a radical group that had adopted acts of terror to achieve its goals, and the issuance of the Antiterrorism Act and the subsequent capture of Islamic activists.

In general, Sabili looked at the bombing events as forming part of a western (American) government led conspiracy to shape global opinion that Indonesia in particular and South East Asia in general had become a terrorist haven. Implicit in this representation was Sabili’s criticism of the Indonesian government for its weak attitude tendency to follow the will of western (American) governments in return for international aid.

Sabili also denied the existence of Jemaah Islamiyah as a terrorist group and this was evident in many of its news reports. In reporting the issue Sabili did not give its support to this radical group, rather it saw that the impact of labelling JI as a terrorist group was detrimental to Islamic activists and Islam in Indonesia in general. Further, it also warned
the government and public of the possibility of the issue to create conflict within Islamic society as was the case when the New Order regime adopted Islamic marginalisation tactics of its own. The final issue *Sabili* represented was the enactment of the Anti-terrorism Act. It principally criticised the implementation of the Act as a violation of human rights. It was concerned that the Act would be systematically used to capture Islamic activists. In representing the issue *Sabili* gave attention to the impact of the arrests on the families of Islamic activists. This kind of news coverage was largely ignored by the mainstream press in Indonesia.

In sum, *Sabili’s* representation of the issue of terrorism as shown in this chapter was based on a distinct editorial vision and mission. In its news reports *Sabili* tended to interview sources which supported its editorial views and which explained how Islam was not identical with radicalism or violence. A primary objective of this study has been to show how *Sabili’s* representation of the terrorism issue, compared for example to that of *The Jakarta Post*, indicates a contrasting portrayal of the issue between the Islamic orientated press and the mainstream press.
CHAPTER IX
TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF
TEMPO REPRESENTATION OF TERRORISM

Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the Sabili news magazine's representation of terrorism. As a news magazine with a distinctly Islamic perspective, Sabili clearly functions as a social apologist for the interests of Islam and Muslims. Thus, in representing the news on terrorism in Indonesia, Sabili is highly suspicious of western (especially American) governments and their media, which Sabili believes are responsible for generating negative views of Islam and Muslims across the world. As Lewis (2005; Lewis and Lewis, 2009) have noted, there is a tendency in the western media to identify the terrorist attacks of Jemaah Islamiyah with a more generalised 'problem' with Islam itself. While this tendency is by no means homologous or monolithic, it is certainly clear that 9/11 and the Bali bombings panicked many government officials and media outlets into a discourse that equated Islam with politically motivated violence (Timan, 2003; Lewis, 2005). Not surprisingly, news magazines like Sabili objected to these modes of representation, presenting an alternative vision of Islam, as they criticized the western media and governments.

This chapter analyses Tempo's representation of terrorism. With a more secular, liberal-democratic and critically expansive reporting style, Tempo has become a leading news magazine in Indonesia. Even after the banning of this magazine in 1994 by the New Order regime for four years, Tempo was able to continue to develop a reputation as one of Indonesia's leading news publications, particularly through its public renaissance in 1998. From this historical lineage, the representations of terrorism in Tempo are set within a broader context of the relationship between the media and government. This chapter,
therefore, examines *Tempo's* representation of terrorism within a broader dynamic of political changes that occurred in the era of reform and the organisational context that has clearly influenced its editorial policy.

This chapter comprises two sections. The first section outlines the profile and editorial policy of *Tempo* news magazine. The discussion of the profile of *Tempo* provides an historical background of the news media institution that had affected *Tempo’s* editorial policy in representing news on terrorism. In the second section, the chapter outlines how the meaning of news representation of issue of terrorism in *Tempo* news magazine has been constructed.

**Tempo: the profile and editorial policy**

**The profile**

*Tempo* was first established in the form of magazine in 1971 by some young journalists: Goenawan Mohamad, Fikri Jufri, Bur Rasuanto, Christianto Wibisono, Yusril Djalinus and Putu Wijaya. *Tempo’s* mission was to provide guidance in the process of enhancing people’s freedom of thought and expression and to build a civil society that appreciates public knowledge, intelligent debate and difference of opinion (*Tempo’s* Company Profile, 2006). Established in the New Order era, *Tempo’s* professional practice of journalism gained high praise from its readers, but was disliked by the regime due to its critical reporting style (Hanazaki, 1998). A range of warnings and threats, either from the state or military agencies was common during this period. As editor-in-chief of *Tempo*, Bambang Harymurti, said, “A staffer’s conviction to a story may often be challenged, but never crushed. If a story deserves to be told, it will be printed regardless of the consequences” (*Tempo’s* Company Profile, 2006).

*Tempo* is best understood as a news publication which blends secular and liberal responsibilities within the fourth estate model with its specific religious and cultural context. In fact, *Tempo* is a weekly news magazine which appeals to middle-class and educated Indonesians. Written in the Indonesian language, the news magazine has a strong interest in supporting effective democratic and civil processes through clear and objective reporting. Unlike *Sabili*, which is set within a strong religious ideology, *Tempo* is different from *The Jakarta Post* whose readership is largely made up of internationals, English
speaking expatriates living in Indonesia. While *The Jakarta Post* has a strong democratic and secular journalistic framework, *Tempo* is set within a more distinctive Muslim community. *Tempo*, therefore, blends a secular journalist model with a strong sense of being part of an Indonesian Muslim community.

*Tempo*’s critical and liberal-democratic reportage, thus, had resulted in the banning of the magazine twice during Suharto’s New Order (1982 and 1994). The first ban (nearly for two months) was put for *Tempo*’s reportage on the issue of unrest in the *Golongan Karya* campaign (Hanazaki, 1998). This magazine was considered to have spread hatred among supporters of this Suharto’s political vehicle. The second banning, as has been discussed in chapter 6, relates to the reportage of the purchase of 39 ex German warships for the Indonesian Navy. *Tempo* reported that there were considerable tensions between the Financial Minister, Mar’ie Muhammad and the Minister of Research and Technology, Habibie. Within the perspective of Suharto, this reportage had played his ministers off against each other (Hanazaki, 1998). The last banning, along with the banning of two other news media, had triggered protests from the banned news media journalists and employees, students as well as academicians. Despite the fact that *Tempo* is clearly a product of the New Order, *Tempo* nevertheless presented independent points of view, often at considerable risk (Steel, 2005).

Whilst lodging a lawsuit to the state court against the Minister of Information’s policy, some ex *Tempo* journalists continued its journalistic work via the Internet. Since 1996, *Tempo*’s news online portal was launched for the first time through its web address [www.tempointeraktif.com](http://www.tempointeraktif.com). This strategy was brilliant in relation to struggle for the freedom of the press as well as *Tempo*’s vision to provide genuine press freedom and exchange of opinions. It was made possible as the government was not aware of the power of the virtual world and therefore gave less attention to this strategy (Sen and Hill, 2000).

At the end of Suharto’s presidency, the magazine made its return as a paper print magazine on 6 October 1998 and quickly regained its popularity. In order to expand its readership and go international, *Tempo* launched a Japanese edition of *Tempo interactive* in July 2000 and an English edition of *Tempo* magazine on 12 September 2000. To fulfil the need of its readers for daily news, the editorial board of *Tempo* published *Koran Tempo* (*Tempo* Newspaper) on 21 April 2001 with its general objective to report news critically and in the
'liberal' tradition, which informs the western democratic Fourth Estate model. As part of its commitment to become an independent news media institution, PT Tempo Inti Media tbk., which publishes the magazine, publicly listed the company, allowing its employees and public to own the company’s share so that no parties are dominant and may endanger Tempo’s editorial policies.

First published in 1971 with 20,000 copies, Tempo’s circulation has now reached 300,000 copies (2006), which is quite high for the Indonesian media industry. In relation to this issue, Tempo’s senior editor, Goenawan Mohammad, gave his comment—

There was no miracle responsible for our current readership numbers. Today Tempo is the most read publication of its kind. Tempo’s story of survival and success has something to do with its constant efforts to be highly reliable, both as a news organisation and a business enterprise (Tempo’s Company Profile, 2006).

Most of Tempo’s readers come from a higher educational background. Tempo has established a reputation for reliability and accuracy, presenting a strong ‘broadsheet' identity in the Indonesian market—that is, Tempo is regarded by most middle class and educated Indonesians as a serious news magazine.

Since making its return, Tempo has been generally identified as a weekly news magazine that is independent and presents news with high standards of professional journalism. Bolstered by three decades of experience, Tempo always becomes a leader in its field. Actuality, in-depth and accuracy in reporting will always become Tempo’s characteristics.

Editorial Policy

In many respects, Tempos’s editorial policy has many things in common with the other two newspapers and magazines discussed in this thesis. In particular, the policy seeks minimal interference in reporting, either from extraneous bodies or from owners or editors. However, unlike Sabili which is bound to an Islamic religious and cultural framework, Tempo’s critical and liberal-democratic reportage has become a strong characteristic of this magazine. Its form as a magazine has made it possible for Tempo to employ an in-depth reporting style. The editorial board of Tempo realized that in terms of timeliness, a weekly magazine is less pressured than a daily newspaper. With less pressure, Tempo had a greater
opportunity to generate more in-depth and investigative analyses of news events, issues and personalities. Thus, the reporting style, besides the editorial policy, differentiates Tempo from daily newspapers like The Jakarta Post, even though the Post had a similar mission of serious public reporting.

To adjust with the news magazine format, Tempo uses a feature writing style with the combination of soft news and feature stories. This writing style has become a characteristic of Tempo with the purpose to reach a wider audience and to involve them with the stories they read. Mary Gillepsie, feature writer of Chicago Sun-Times, said—

News writers love the rush they get when they run out and cover a breaking news story. Meanwhile a feature involves readers on the level of “This could happen to you”. You are teaching people something about themselves (as cited in Itule & Anderson 2003, p.124).

As a consequence of the adoption of this writing technique and in an attempt to influence the public, Tempo frequently uses figurative language (symbolism, metaphor) and three forms of persuasion: ethos (credibility), pathos (emotion) and logos (argument). This style of writing has been called 'literary journalism' and is a feature of the most detailed and thoughtful writing style (Sims, 2008).

Tempo has a principle that the public will only trust the media if it acts in the public interest and responsibly. Within the context of recent terrorist attacks, Tempo sought to present a balanced and fair account, covering both sides’ principles and perspectives. Bambang Harymurti, Editor-in-Chief of Tempo commented, “Tempo is also known in the industry for its ability to harness the creative energies of its staff within an environment of mutual respect, professionalism, and journalistic independence” (Tempo’s Company Profile, 2006). Within Tempo’s perspective, the public deserves the right to interpret the news freely. As Stuart Allan says, “Journalism is charged with the crucial mission of ensuring that members of the public are able to draw upon a diverse ‘market place of ideas’ to both sustain and challenge their sense of the world around them” (2000, p.49). It is clear from my interviews that the Tempo editorial board is aspiring to these high ideals and the Fourth Estate democratic model.

The same policy was also employed by Tempo in reporting how the government managed terrorist attacks in Indonesia. Despite a long history of being banned twice by the
government, *Tempo* attempted to stay neutral in reporting this issue. Very clearly, *Tempo's* relationship to the Indonesian state had been transformed by the *Reformasi* and the new democratic and free speech regime that now presides over the nation. However, this new framework does not liberate the state or the government from critical analysis: quite the contrary. If the *Tempo* journalists believed that the government had done nothing or tended to be slow to overcome an issue, it would criticize the government. On the other hand, *Tempo* gave credit to government or security authority when it was able to capture the suspected perpetrators. This was evident in the case of the capture of Imam Samudra, one of the 2002 Bali bombing perpetrators. In its No. 39/XXXI/25 Nov-1 Dec 2002 edition, *Tempo* used most of police news sources to describe the arresting process of Imam Samudra and in the end complimented the police, although at the same time reminded it not to be too complacent with its achievement.

*Tempo* was aware of its position as the leading news magazine in Indonesia which places it at the centre of public life. To *Tempo* news magazine, it was its responsibility to give expression to a richly pluralistic spectrum of information sources that helped to construct the context for the public to make judgement of the terrorist events (interview with *Tempo’s* journalist, name to be anonymous, 2007). Thus, there was no need for the media to take sides except on behalf of the interest of the public. This principle is in accordance with *Tempo’s* vision to be ‘a guide in the process of enhancing society’s freedom to think and to express their opinion as well as developing society that appreciates intelligence and difference of opinion’ (*Tempo’s* Company Profile, 2006).

Within the above understanding, certain issues like the relationship between Islam and terrorism in Indonesia and how the Indonesian government dealt with terrorism had become a central focus of *Tempo’s* interests and reporting. The analysis of *Tempo’s* representation of terrorism is examined in detail in the next section. It is focused on how the meaning of the issue of terrorism is presented and constructed in *Tempo* news magazine. *Tempo’s* interest in the issue is based on two arguments. First, after the 9/11 attack on the United States, many Indonesians believed that there was a global misperception of Islam being identified as a religion that teaches violence. This misreading of Islam, particularly as it was being generated through much of the western media (Karim, 2003), according to *Tempo*, needed to be clarified. This issue is represented through the textual analysis in the next section.
Secondly, *Tempo* felt it was its obligation to conduct news investigation in order to find the ‘truth’ about how it was that there were radical groups that justified their acts of terror in the name of Islam. According to the *Tempo* charter and editorial policy, this was an important part of the news magazine's social responsibility, particularly as Islam is the dominant religion in Indonesia (*Tempo* interview, 2008).

**Tempo Representation of Terrorism**

Terrorism has always been an issue with high news value to news. In Indonesia, this issue increases as the perpetrators of terrorism have used religion to legitimize their acts of terror. As Hoffman outlines—

> The combination of religion and terrorism can be cited as one of the main reasons for terrorism’s increased lethality. The fact that for the religious terrorist violence inevitably assumes a transcendent purpose and therefore becomes a sacramental or divine duty, arguably results in a significant loosening of the constraints on the commission of mass murder (1995, p.280).

The representation of the three terrorist events in *Tempo* news magazine is interesting in relation to the cultural, political as well as organisational contexts. As noted above, *Tempo* has a long history as a leading news magazine that reports news critically and in the 'liberal' tradition, which informs the western democratic Fourth Estate model. Its relationship with government, especially in the New Order era, when it was banned on two occasions, demonstrates how this news magazine takes its role seriously as a public information vehicle: *Tempo* seeks to report the news without fear or favour from governments, whatever their political persuasion. And terrorism is one among other issues that are considered crucial to public interest. Thus, *Tempo* felt it was necessary to report the issue as part of its responsibility to the public.

*Tempo* is widely known for its in-depth reporting style. In the case of the 2002 Bali bombing, for instance, twelve editions of *Tempo*’s news magazine were dedicated to report the development of terrorism in Indonesia that had been associated with Islam. Meanwhile, thirty two journalists were involved in the data and news gathering to give solid, actual and reliable information to the public.
Principally, *Tempo* tended to represent the issue through cultural and political perspectives. Based on these perspectives, it gave special attention to the following issues: (i) description of the bombings, (ii) the investigation process conducted by the police, and (iii) disclosure of the terrorist network. The choice of issues is quite similar to *The Jakarta Post* daily and *Sabili* news magazine, especially on the issues of the existence of terrorist networks in Indonesia and the police investigation of the bombing perpetrators. The emphases on these issues are reasonable considering the fact that there had been a debate within society and among government officials whether terrorist really existed in Indonesia (Azra, 2006). The representations differ, of course, as they are based on varying ideological and cultural premises. While *The Jakarta Post* focused on English-speaking expatriates and Indonesian internationalists, and *Sabili* deploys an Islamic focus and ideology, *Tempo* is more clearly on the Indonesian, educated middle-class' perspective, which blends a secular politics with a more generalised Muslim faith system.

*Tempo*'s emphases on these three issues are signified by the intense reporting of all the issues above. In particular, *Tempo* paid particular attention to the third issue: the identification of a terrorist network in Indonesia. Besides the three issues above, *Tempo* also examined the implications of the bombings for Indonesian politics and religion, as well as Indonesian international relationship especially with Australia. The analyses of the representations of the issues above are divided into subheadings to make it easier to understand.

1. Description of the bombings

As a magazine-style publication that is published weekly, *Tempo* didn’t adopt straight news as there is a delay in the information to the public. On the other hand, feature stories were dominant in its reporting. This was evident when *Tempo* reported the description of the bombings. *Tempo* portrayed the bombing as a tragedy to humanity where hundreds of innocent people died due to car bombings. This portrayal was represented through the following news items—

Victims were unavoidable. Medical assistants at the Hospital of Sanglah, Denpasar, counted, until the end of the day, 184 people died and another 382 people wounded. The number of victims could be more... “There were at least
400 people in Sari Club that night,” said Ni Putu Ayu Sila Prihana Dewi, a teller who was safe from the blast.

The blast that spread heat was horrible. On the corner of Sari Club’s yard, a burnt corpse was found attached to the iron fence. Volunteers had to carefully lift the body with a lever. When the body was finally removed, its ankle loosened. Next to it, we could still see the dark blue nerve. Some witnesses testified, at the front seat of a burnt Haagen Daz ice cream car, a male body was found in the position of holding the steering wheel. His body had turned into charcoal and his head came off from his body… (After nirvana burnt, Tempo, No. 34/XXXI/21-27 October 2002).

Similar representation also appeared in the reporting of the Australian Embassy bombing in which Tempo described the blast victims in detail as follows—

Parts of bodies were thrown 50 meters away from the point of blast. A hand lay on the street in front of Graha Binakarsa, 2 blocks away from the embassy. Part of the inner body was found in the yard of a government building. A horrible scene was found in front of the embassy: a head with...uh, it was too painful to describe. “Feels like a doomsday,” said Rendi, age 28. This hair stylist was 15 steps away leaving the security post after getting his visa. There was a torn wound in his leg (Bleeding morning at Kuningan, Tempo, No. 29/XXXIII/13-19 September 2004).

The description of the bombings was focused on the impacts on people close to the blast points. Focusing on the humanitarian dimension of the event, the introduction paragraphs were constructed in such a way to attract the readers to the issue presented in the news. Tempo’s news features introductions can be classified as narratives with twists at the end (Itule & Anderson, 2003). Before describing the conditions of victims, Tempo described the usual condition before the bombings or the sad condition after the bombings to build the ‘aura’ or ‘atmosphere’ of the stories. It was done through the views of its journalists and the statements of witnesses at the location. Through this representation, Tempo attempted to seek for its reader’s sympathy for the victims.
As most of the victims of Bali bombing were Australians (88 people), Tempo, quoting a Washington Post headline, named the tragedy Australia's September 11. Australian Prime Minister at that time, John Howard, said, “Brutal and insulting. This is obviously an act of terror.” While American President, George Bush said, “A cowardly act to create terror and chaos”. All these statements appeared in one of Tempo’s article entitled 9/11 for Australia (No. 34/XXXI/21-27 October 2002) to show how the international world reacted to the tragedy.

Different descriptions, however, appeared in the reporting of the bombing of the JW Marriott Hotel. Here, Tempo described the call received by The Strait Times newspaper in Singapore that claimed to be responsible for the bombing. This representation can be found in the following text of the news item—

It was only four hours after a bomb exploded at the JW Marriott Hotel mid day last Tuesday; the office of The Strait Times newspaper received a very important call. The caller, who claimed to be the member of Jemaah Islamiyah, said that Marriott bombing was a “bleeding warning” from JI to President Megawati and the Indonesian Police apparatus. “We will terrorize Indonesia and neighbours if they keep punishing our Muslim brothers,” said the caller (‘Bleeding warning’ became reality?, Tempo, No. 24/XXXII/11-17 August 2003).

The representation of the news above indicates how the bombing perpetrators attempted to obtain international attention. The caller attempted to link the Marriott bombing with the bombing in Kuta Bali that killed 202 people. The connection was easy to look for as when the bombing occurred, Amrozi, one of the main Bali bombing perpetrators and some other convicts were trial in Bali. They were threatened with death penalty. Two days after the blast, Amrozi was sentenced to death. Through this representation, Tempo attempted to show to its readers to critically look at the terror events as a sequential pattern between Bali and JW Marriott bombings. To support this representation, Tempo also quoted statements from political analysts like Sydney Jones.

The representation of the description of the bombings mostly appears on the first editions after the bombing events occurred. To construct the news, Tempo includes description, comment, analysis, background historical detail, eye-witness reporting and a wider/deeper
coverage of the issues and range of sources. The news angle is prominent, though not necessarily in the opening paragraph/s.

Further, the use of euphemism and indirect references was adopted to build strong and attractive news features. It is evident if we look at Tempo’s headline on the first news feature above. The use of the word ‘nirvana’, instead of Bali Island, has a deep meaning. Nirvana is the same as ‘heaven’ in Hindu teaching. Nirvana is the state of spiritual enlightenment in the Hindu and Buddhist religions, analogous to ‘bliss, eternity, or heaven’. Bali is well-known as the island of the gods, and Hinduism is the main religion of the Balinese. It has become the main tourist destination in Indonesia. The former Indonesian President Soekarno, whose mother was Balinese, saw the island as a unique window into the original culture of the archipelago; similarly entranced by the island, India’s president Nehru described it as the ‘morning of the world’ (Lewis, 2005, p.174; see also Lewis & Lewis, 2009).

Tempo explicitly highlighted the deadly impacts of the bombing. The descriptions of victims whose bodies were no longer complete and spread in many locations indicate the strong power of the explosives. The grief, horror and tragedy in the aftermath of the bombing were represented in the introduction paragraphs of the first news feature above. Further, short statements from victims and witnesses added the horrible context and horror to the story. The eye-witness accounts added also to the gravity and authenticity of the story. This was not simply the journalist's impression, but an actual account that provides for the audience a sense of deep truth and immediacy. Eye-witness reporting of this kind is an important journalistic strategy, as it adds the element of accuracy and a sense of genuine perspective that draws the reader into the actual event (Gaines, 2007).

Through the representation of this issue, Tempo wanted to emphasise that terrorism, which adopts method of violence, is both brutal and indiscriminate. Terrorism attacks non-combatant, innocent people, who become the victims of a vicious political violence. In Tempo’s perspective, no individuals, groups, or even states have the right to kill other people in the name of religion or whatsoever. Further, it attempted to invite public to unite and condemn these acts of terror.
These sorts of assaults on unarmed civilians—the primary mark of the terrorist attack—is configured as a form of random brutality by the *Tempo* story and its visual imaging. While not explicitly stated, there is a deep civic and political morality in the *Tempo* reports. Their sympathetic re-telling of the events emphasizes the innocence of the victims against the brutal politicism of the attackers. As its most somatic level, this violence is presented as unjust and ruthless, a politics which transgresses the rights and dignity of its victims.

Compared to *The Jakarta Post*’s representation, *Tempo*’s representation of the bombing tended to vary between events. It cannot be separated from *Tempo*’s format as a weekly news magazine where it employed an in-depth reporting in collecting information and feature writing style. The weekly format enabled *Tempo* to explore the emotional and psychological side of the events, often interviewing people and stimulating a more affective response in its readers. With a newspaper format, *The Jakarta Post* tended to adopt straight news writing style and therefore it was often more difficult to explore the events in greater detail or generate the in-depth responses that typified the *Tempo* reporting. Even so, *The Jakarta Post* attempted to gain sympathy from its readers by quoting comments of the events from citizens and condemnations from religious leaders, whereas *Tempo* did this through the detailed description of the impacts of the blast and the scattered parts of bodies. This evidence can be seen in Chapter VII.

In comparison with *Sabili*’s representation, a totally different representation appeared. With its strong Islamic perspective, *Sabili* tended to look at the events as a systematic scenario to marginalise Muslims in the political arena, whilst *Tempo* saw it more as an attack on all humanity. Although *Tempo* included the reporting from *The Strait Times* of the possibility of the role of *JI*, it did not immediately accuse the involvement of *JI* in the bombing. To this end, *Tempo* was seeking to blend its broader Fourth Estate and secular responsibilities with a more conciliatory tone that recognised that its readers were mostly educated Muslims whose own sympathies incorporated Muslim and well as non-Muslim interests.

Besides the description of the bombing that tended to emphasize on human tragedy, another issue that follow this representation is how *Tempo* looked at Indonesian government responsibility to protect its citizens from any threats. This was evident in *Tempo*’s editorial, “To say that acts of terror were difficult to stop doesn’t mean that we
must give up. Giving up to terrorism is wrong as it will only justify and increase the use of this misleading and evil way” (*Tempo*, 13-19 September 2004). Through this editorial, *Tempo* wanted to exhort the government to protect its citizens as well as foreign citizens that lived or stayed in Indonesia. In relation to this, a journalist of *Tempo* gave his comment—

> From *Tempo’s* perspective, the government should have taken serious measures to prevent the event from occurring rather than overreacting toward the issuance of travel warning. This is important to show the government’s strong determination to combat the terrorism network (*Tempo* interview, 2008).

This exhortation was necessary, because three bombing masterminds--in the period when events took place--were still on the run and were ready to launch another attack. Dr. Azahari was later shot dead in Batu, Malang, East Java in early November 2005. Noordin M. Top was recently killed in a raid by the anti terror police team in Solo, Central Java, in mid September 2009. Meanwhile, Dulmatin was recently shot dead in Jakarta in March 2010.

Besides the description of the bombings, *Tempo* also represents an ironical situation that occurred in the 2004 Australian Embassy bombing as appeared in the second news item above. This is because the bomb that exploded on September 9 in the ‘golden triangle’ area of Jakarta was at the same time when Chief of the Indonesian police, General Da’i Bachtiar, was trying to convince the People’s House of Representatives concerning security for the upcoming presidential election. The attack, however, can be regarded as an attack on the police who, for the third time since the Bali bombing in 2002, failed to protect citizens from acts of terror. *Tempo’s* representation of this issue appears in the editorial below.

The paradox of the event lies in two contrasting realities that occurred at the same time. In the building of the People’s House of Representatives, the police described the reality on safe condition and how the hunt for the mastermind of terrorism had been intensively done. On the contrary, outside the building, a suicide car bomb exploded in front of the Australian Embassy, the representative of a foreign government within the country whose sovereignty should have been protected by the security apparatus. The blast could be heard
up to the building of the People’s House of Representatives where the police had a meeting with the legislators. In its editorial, *Tempo* wrote this irony as follows—

Nine people burnt, torn and died from the explosion in Kuningan. Tens of people wounded, mostly because of the falling of broken building glass windows. That was the horrible reality that challenged another reality. The chaos that occurred afterward had spoilt the meaning of ‘safe condition’ stated by the Chief of the Indonesian police. The reality built through government words within the House of Representatives building contrasted with the reality within society. The result was a large credibility gap between a statement by the state apparatus and what actually happened (*Tempo*, 13-19 September 2004).

Through the representation of this issue, *Tempo* criticized the government’s commitment to combating terrorism, as terrorist attacks continued happening within the country. What makes it interesting is the way *Tempo* wrote the criticism. Adopting news feature writing and in-depth reporting styles, *Tempo* tried to take its readers to critically think about how the government claimed that the political condition was safe but at the same time bomb exploded.

In relation to the freedom of the press in the reform era, *Tempo’s* editorial policy remained unchanged. It has been showing its critical reporting style and in the ‘liberal’ tradition, despite the fact that *Tempo* has been banned twice during the New Order government. The main difference is that *Tempo*, as well as other news media industries, can freely report the news without interference from the government.

In sum, *Tempo’s* representation of the description of the bombings from the humanitarian perspective attempted to inform its readers and the general public that the use of acts of terror in the name of religion to obtain goals was unacceptable. Compared to *Sabili* news magazine of the same format, there is a difference in emphasizing the issue. Although both considered the humanitarian perspective in their reporting, *Sabili* brought to the surface the issue of families of the captured Islamic activists; whereas *Tempo* focused on the victims caused by the blast. *Tempo’s* representation of this issue strongly relates to one of its mission “to contribute to society of a multi-media product that gathers and delivers various opinions fairly.”
The representation of this issue also indicates that *Tempo* has principally played its role as the watchdog of the state. It is implemented through professional, reliable, and fair and balanced principles of journalistic practice. Uniquely, *Tempo* sometimes used news sources from the government to criticize the government by contrasting its statement with reality.

Unlike *Tempo*, *The Jakarta Post*, with its newspaper format, directly focused on the government policy on terrorism and national security. The emphasis on this issue is normal considering the fact that most of *The Post* readers are foreigners living and working in Indonesia. Further, as discussed in Chapter VII, *The Jakarta Post* seeks to provide an Indonesian perspective to counter the highly unbalanced western-dominated global traffic of news and views. Nonetheless, *The Jakarta Post* also showed its empathy with victims although this issue did not get much attention.

2. The investigation process conducted by the police

The second issue that relates to the political perspective is the investigation process. Whilst reporting this issue, additional and relevant issues had attracted *Tempo* to also report them in the same news features. They include the portrayals of bombing perpetrators and conflict between the police and the military.

The representation of this issue had been a big concern to *Tempo* as terrorist attacks nearly occurred every year since the year 2000. In each reporting of the three events, there were always several news features that specifically dealt with the issue, or the investigation process was always included in one among other issues in the main news features. Nonetheless, unlike *The Jakarta Post* daily which issued editorials that principally blamed intelligence for not acting as an early warning system; *Tempo* tried to be fair in reporting the issue. *Tempo* gave credit to the police if it had been able to identify and capture the perpetrators of the acts of terror, but criticised it when failed to do so. *The Jakarta Post*’s different representation from that of *Tempo* is reasonable considering the fact that most of its readers are foreigners working in Indonesia. Thus, how the security apparatus seriously managed the events became *The Post’s* attention. *Tempo*’s representation, on the other hand, is also interesting considering the fact that it had been banned twice and received several warnings from the government. This can be proof of professional and reliable journalistic practice as Leonardi Kusen, one of *Tempo*’s editorial board, said in his
interview, “We share Tempo’s success to a mature readership whose demand for fair, independent, and credible journalism remains true today, as it was since the beginning” (Tempo’s Company Profile, 2006).

The representation is evident in some of Tempo news features as follows—

*The police believe Amrozi is the Bali bombing perpetrator. But his relation with Ba’asyir and the international terror movement still needs to be proved.*

Amrozi is not an ordinary prisoner. According to the police, he is the main actor and one of the Bali bombing perpetrators that killed 186 people and wounded more than 200 people. The Police announced Amrozi as the suspect. He is the suspect of act of terror that the world considered as the most devastating event after World Trade Centre tragedy in New York, United States of America, 11 September last year.

From the suspect’s house, the police found some evidence. Among them were a plastic bag of brown bung, a plastic bag of white crystal, a plastic bag of white powder, a passport, a photo album, and a white Toyota Crown car with a license plate number G 8488 B. Further, the police also confiscated five tires and a car seat of L-300, a mini bus to be used to carry the explosive materials that destroyed Legian area… (*Amrozi Dicokok, Ba'asyir Tergeret? [Amrozi arrested, Ba’asyir next?], Tempo, No. 37/XXXI/11 - 17 November 2002*)

Quite similar representations also appears in Tempo’s 2003 and 2004 as follows—

According to the former Chief of East Java Police Force, it is possible that both Azahari and Noordin aka Isa are now in an area with the same culture. Moreover these two neighbouring citizens could have never lost their Malay accent. They could be easily detected they can’t speak Sundanese, which is commonly used by most of West Java people. According to Da’i, it is likely that these two people that became the patron of some convicted of acts of terrorism in Indonesia, have gone to Batam, Pekanbaru, or other area in Sumatra...
Azahari’s movement has been constricted. Some related suspects have been arrested. Remaining explosives, except those that have been exploded, have been “secured”—including those found in a rented house in Kebon Kacang. Security apparatus are still attempting to capture him through various ways: tracing cellular phone signals, spreading the pictures of the fugitive, exploring his arrested friend’s confessions, and also staring at his face on the notebook (*Tracing Malay bombers, Tempo*, No. 37/XXXII/10-6 November 2003).

The police, according to Da’i, have arrested some suspects that had gone together with Azhari before the bomb exploded in Kuningan. Da’i did not talk much concerning the arrest. “Our staff are still on the move,” he said. One thing was for sure, those arrested admitted having carried explosives to blow up the Australian Embassy. They also admitted that they had stayed with Azahari before the blast (*A bombing PhD from dark rooms, Tempo*, No. 30/XXXIII/20-26 September 2004).

Of the three bombing events, *Tempo* gave more coverage on the issue of the investigation process conducted by the police in the 2002 Bali bombing. This emphasis is similar to that of *The Jakarta Post*. Dominated by higher educational background readers, both news media readers tended to be critical of the issue. It is because the 2002 Bali bombing was the first bombing event that had killed many foreigners, especially Australians. Therefore, how the security apparatus dealt with this issue would invite international attention. The bombing also marks the shift of JI’s attack with its main objective to destroy western or related interests and to establish *khilafah Islamiyah* (Islamic entity) (Azra, 2006; ICG Asia report No. 43, 2002).

In the second news feature above, *Tempo* portrayed the difficulty the security apparatus faced to discover the mastermind behind the bombings. The help that came from some foreign intelligence sources indicates how the Indonesian government was not ready to manage terrorism. As noted in chapter VII, the Indonesian government explained the presence of terrorism in Indonesia as a historically regrettable phenomenon, but one which had been seeking strategically to control and ultimately erase from the nation. *Tempo* sought to give voice to the various opinions on Indonesian terrorism and the role of government, explaining that there were disjunctive and conjunctive views being expressed
through the local, national and international governance spheres. This portrayal demonstrates how the bombing had created chaos across these various spheres of reference, with any government agencies and community leaders seeking to accuse one another of failing to prevent such horrific acts and control the activities of terrorists in Indonesia. Tempo's reporting was designed to seek a logical pathway through this cacophony of accusations and urge the restoration of sensible policy discussions in order to restore public security. The reporting of all parties that commented on the issue also signifies how Tempo attempted to accommodate their opinions in the reporting.

In the first and third news features, Tempo described the success of the police investigation team in arresting one of the suspected perpetrators of the Bali bombing. This is interesting considering the history of Tempo and government relationships. It constructed the news feature by chronologically reporting the arresting process and how the police finally came up with the suspect's name. This reporting was meant to inform the public of the progress the police had made following the bombing. Tempo also wanted to show its readers, as part of the public’s right to know, what the Indonesian government had done in managing the terror attacks. As said in its company profile, Tempo is inseparable from the image of a weekly news magazine that is independent and presenting responsible and neutral news (Tempo’s Company Profile, 2006).

In line with the representation of the investigation process, Tempo also portrayed the profiles of the bombing perpetrators. In particular, Tempo gave special reporting to Amrozi, Imam Samudra, and Azahari. Even, sketches of their faces appeared as Tempo’s front cover (Amrozi sketch in No. 37/XXXI/11-17 November 2002; Imam Samudra sketch in No. 39/XXXI/25 November-1 December 2002, and Azahari sketch in No. 29/XXXIII/13-19 September 2004 editions). Each perpetrator was described with a different character, but similar general portrayal that they did not show regrets for what they had done, especially Amrozi and Samudra that had been arrested a couple of months following the Bali bombing. Amrozi and Imam Samudra, for instance, was described by Tempo as follows—

Amrozi was one of the mean characters. His face was far from looking like a monster, and some people even described him as handsome. His behaviour did not scare us as shown by Hannibal in a horror movie Silence of the Lambs. He
looked cheerful and carefree as if there was no burden in life, although tens of people that surrounded him knew the confession of his involvement in the savage bombing in Bali (The death way of Amrozi and Imam Samudra, Tempo, No. 37/XXXI/11-17 November 2002).

It seemed appropriate that Abdul Aziz (his real name) chose his alias as Imam Samudra. His calmness was as wide as an ocean (Samudra). When shown to journalists last Friday, one day after being arrested by the police, he appeared untroubled. Wearing a black t-shirt with a brand of a sport product from America, the country he hated, his gaze swept tens of people’s eyes and cameras that stared at him…

The ‘calm’ appearance of Abdul Aziz alias Imam Samudra alias Kudama and other aliases had invited controversial stories. “He confessed to have planned the Bali bombing,” said Chief of the Indonesian Police, General Da’i Bachtiar. Public could soon believe that Imam with a ‘cool’ face was a cruel terrorist; unlike when the police captured Amrozi, the playboy from Tenggulun, Lamongan, East Java… (Imam’s syahid knot, Tempo, No. 39/XXXI/25 Nov - 01 Des 2002).

The representation of the characters of Amrozi and Imam Samudera was constructed through the interview with the police and observation by Tempo’s journalists. Different representation of character appeared when describing Azahari. With the confession of Imam Samudera and Ali Imron, Tempo portrayed Azahari as follows—

To Azahari, Indonesia was seen as a bombing laboratory. Without hesitation, this ‘demolition man’ from Malaysia experimented with his bombs. Considered to be responsible for the Bali and JW Marriott Hotel bombings, he is now accused of masterminding the bomb exploded in front of the Australian Embassy. He got his PhD from Reading University, England, in 1990. Dulmatin, Ali Imron, and some others were suspected to have learned how to make bombs from Azahari. According to Ali Imron, Azahari patiently taught his students (Dr. Azahari’s death mixture, Tempo, No. 29/XXXIII/13-19 September 2004).
*Tempo* tended to represent the bombing perpetrators as common people with extraordinary capabilities. Their capability to plan and execute the bombings whilst still looking happy as if nothing tragic had happened (Amrozi) and looking calm (Imam Samudra) indicate their deep understanding but misleading concept of “jihad” (Martinez, 2003; Barton, 2004). Further, this representation could end the debate within society and among government officials on the issue of the existence of terrorism in Indonesia (Abimanyu, 2006, Azra, 2006). The representation of the existence of terrorism network is further developed in the next section of this chapter.

An interesting comment came from *Tempo*’s journalist—

I principally disagreed with the police statement that tended to always link terrorist events with those who had gone for wars in Afghanistan and Moro. Going for “jihad” (on the one hand) and striking terror in Indonesia (on the other hand) are two separate issues, especially if we see them from the legal perspective. If a person is accused of striking terror in Indonesia, we cannot automatically say that they do it because they have been to Afghanistan or Mindanau (*Tempo* Interview, 2008).

Through this representation, *Tempo* wanted to show to its readers that the faces of perpetrators were far than frightening as is the common stereotype. In fact, their physical appearance was just typical of any other Indonesians everywhere in the country. This representation is also a reminder for people to be aware of any strangers in their neighbourhood.

Besides reporting the investigation process and the portrayal of the perpetrators’ images, *Tempo* also gave attention to issues of conflict between the police and the military, and lack of coordination among intelligence agencies. Through these representations, *Tempo* intended to warn government and related agencies that the acts of terror kept happening due to lack of coordination among government agencies responsible for national security. This is evident as in the following text—

Instead of working together to solve the problem, the police and the military were against each other. A police officer at the Bali Police Forces admitted that
he did not get good response when interviewing a witness from the military. “There was a pressure from the military official not to prolong the investigation,” said the source. The Commander of Bali Military Police, Colonel Pranoto denied the accusation. He said, “What’s the use of the investigation if it only worsens the condition.” He in turn insulted the police work for being slow and careless. “The police have no sense of crisis,” he said (Tempo, No. 34/XXXI/21-27 October 2002).

Besides at the operational level, Tempo also portrayed the lack of cooperation at the coordinative level. This is represented through an interview with Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, who was the Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security at the time of the event, as follows—

In terms of Bali bombing, the Indonesian Intelligence Agency (Badan Intelijen Nasional or BIN) did not give any earlier data. But I do not like to say that BIN did not do anything. So far, BIN has been giving data of any threats of terrorism (Tempo, No. 34/XXXI/21-27 October 2002).

This unfortunate condition was also portrayed by the ICG in its report No. 90 (20 December 2004). Through this representation, Tempo criticised the conflict that occurred between the police and the military which may hamper the investigation process. It is possible that, as The Jakarta Post reported, the transitional process in Indonesia that included the transition of forces between the police and the military had been used by the terrorist group to launch the attack. Just like The Jakarta Post, Tempo had deep concern that the separation and bigger role of the police from the military may create obstacles, as in the investigation process of the bombing. Since the separation in 1999, the police have been given responsibility for internal security, whereas external defence remains the domain of the military (ICG Asia Report No. 90, 20 December 2004). Unfortunately, the division process was not followed with the enhancement of the police capacity which was shown by the slow response to the terrorist attack. The military, on the other hand, considered that counter-terrorism and intelligence should have been part of its role. This “grey area” has resulted in the increasing gap between the military and the police. And Tempo implicitly portrayed this issue through the above paragraph. It can be said that as part of its role as the fourth estate, Tempo played its social responsibility function toward
the state by criticizing the conflict that occurred between the police and the military. This is a strong indication that *Tempo* is prepared to criticise the government and government agencies as shown below.

Another important issue that *Tempo* critically portrayed and can be categorised in the investigation process was how officials or ministers within the governmental structure had blamed one another for what happened in Bali. News feature exhibiting this issue appeared as follows—

*Accusing one another in managing Legian*

*Hundreds of people died in Legian, Cabinet members quarrelled. Why did the government seem slow in handling the case?*

…In a cabinet meeting the following day, the issue of how to manage the tragedy was barely included on the agenda. In a meeting at the Presidential Palace attended by all cabinet members, a quarrel occurred between Vice President Hamzah Haz and some ministers whom he accused of not doing anything in managing the case.

Whilst showing a newspaper, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono said he felt offended by what Hamzah Haz had said. “Frankly, we are offended by the Vice President’s statement who said that we were only *NATO* (no action, talk only). We have worked hard, but why should we be put in an embarrassing position,” Susilo protested.

It was his colleague in politics and security, head of the State Intelligence Agency, A.M. Hendropriyono, who gave his comment. He also criticized Hamzah Haz’s statement in the newspapers. According to Hendro, a vice president should not have made such a statement.

Mega (President) who led the meeting remained silent. She did not do anything to ease the tension. That was why the tension rose when Hamzah replied to the two retired generals. This quarrel would have been unstoppable if Minister Jusuf Kalla had not advised Susilo not to be provoked by Hamzah’s answer.
Consequently, the meeting meant to find the solution on how to handle the bombing lasted for five hours. It finished at three o’clock in the afternoon. Fortunately, the meeting agreed that government would implement government regulation as the replacement of the act on antiterrorism... (No. 34/XXXI/21 - 27 October 2002).

Through this news feature Tempo explicitly criticized the Megawati government's incompetency in handling Indonesian terrorism generally and the Bali attacks specifically. It is signified by the quarrel between the vice president, who before the bombing had denied the existence of terrorists from radical Islamic groups in Indonesia, and the minister of defence and head of state intelligence agency. After the bombing occurred, he blamed the security apparatus-intelligence and the police for their failure to prevent what had happened in Bali.

The news feature above again proved the high quality of Tempo's in depth reporting as shown by the fact that its journalists were able to obtain information about the cabinet meeting. And, as one member of Tempo's editorial board said—

Its weekly news magazine format has made it possible for Tempo journalists to spend days, weeks, and even perhaps months, researching a compelling topic and then writing in depth. You could hardly see Tempo journalists attending a press conference. We will meet the source after or before the press conference to obtain different perspective as well as information presented in the press conference (Tempo interview, 2006).

The portrayal of the issue above was to give Tempo’s readers a description of how Megawati’s government was not experienced or capable of dealing with terrorism. This is evidenced in the Megawati government's poor response to the terrorist acts that had occurred in Indonesia prior to the Bali bombings: it was not until the terrorist violence struck international tourists and hence made world news that Megawati acted. The slow response of Megawati’s government to terrorist events had politically affected her image in the 2004 general election. Tempo even conducted public opinion poll at the end of 2002 regarding government performance in dealing with terrorism, and the result was not surprising with 70.14 % of respondents felt threatened with act of terrorism (Wahai aparat,
bekerjalah lebih giat [Hi apparatus, work harder], *Tempo*, 30 December-5 January 2003).

The research was carried out with the help of Insight, an independent market research. Most respondents, as *Tempo* interviewed, saw the intelligence agency had failed to act as the early warning system in detecting possible terror threat. Therefore, although the security apparatus had managed to catch the Bali bombing perpetrators, most believed that terrors would still occur.

*Tempo*, in its polling, also highlighted the anti-terrorist act which proved so ineffectual. It also worried that this act would be misused to arrest those suspected to have link with terrorist group. This issue is also highlighted by *Sabili* in its representation as discussed in Chapter VIII. To *Sabili*, the act was a way to capture Islamic activists. On the other hand, *The Jakarta Post* tended to look at the issuance of this act as a reactive instead of proactive government policy. Thus, it represented the unreadiness of president Megawati Sukarnoputri’s government in preventing the acts from occurring.

With the adoption of in-depth and investigative news gathering technique and the implementation of news feature writing, *Tempo* was able to detail the information both during the investigation process as well as the capture process of the bombing perpetrators. Considering its history with the New Order government, *Tempo* could have given small portion of reporting on the success of the police in capturing the bombing perpetrators. This is why *Tempo* has been regarded as one of the most read news magazine (AC Nielsen, 1999 and 2002) in Indonesia and has been the trusted news sources to many of its readers. Thus, *Tempo* is truly a news media institution that employs a professional journalistic practice. This issue of investigation process is also crucial to report so that the public and especially the international world knew to what extent the Indonesian government seriously managed these acts of terrorism and assured that this kind of event would not happen again in the future. That is why *Tempo* also reported the assistance the police received from the international community. It is represented in the news features entitled Aksi Para ‘Sherlock Holmes’ (*Act of ‘Sherlock Homes’*) and Pulau Sejuta Detektif (*Island of a million detectives*, No. 34/XXXI/21-27 October 2002).

In *Tempo’s* perspective, the reporting of the investigation process, as well as the arrest of the perpetrators of the bombing, were part of the public’s right to be informed. In times of confusion, uncertainty and threatened feeling, the public requires reliable information. As
in its editorial, *Tempo* warned the police not to give misleading information to the public with regard to the arrest of suspected perpetrators as follows—

> When the arrest of Amrozi was first broadcasted on television last Wednesday during daytime, head of public relations division of East Java Police Forces denied the news later in the afternoon...This denial was confusing as the arrest information came from the police news source.

> Nonetheless, since last Thursday afternoon, the arrest of Arozi and the determination of his suspect status were admitted by the Chief of the Indonesian Police, General Da’i Bachtiar, exactly the same as reported the day before...Some people suspected that this misinformation-misleading explanation to create certain effects had been purposively launched by the police. The goals of this technique were never explained. This misinformation, which principally equals to simply lying, could bring negative impacts to many parties, and could be embarrassing when exposed (*Tempo*, No. 37/XXXI/11-17 November 2002).

The representation of the investigation process as shown through the news features above represents the professional journalistic practice of *Tempo* news magazine. Why? It is because within the context of media-government relationship, *Tempo* has long history with the government where the news weekly magazine had been banned twice. Nonetheless, as described in Chapter VI, *Tempo* had taken a legal way to bring a lawsuit against the government. Apart from the fact that *Tempo* finally failed to win the case, this issue indicates how *Tempo*-as part of its vision to build a society that respect differences at opinion had professionally taken the issue to court instead of rallying on the street protesting the ban.

Furthermore, the three bombing events occurred within the dynamic of social and political conditions in the early reform era when Indonesia was still searching its new way to a democratic state. That was why public needed information sources that can be trusted and news media like *Tempo* became one of them. As stated in its mission, *Tempo* wants to be a news media that “is independent, free from capital owner and political pressures” (*Tempo’s Company Profile, 2006*).
It is what the Pew Centre for Civic Journalism called civic journalism, which is “a belief that journalism has an obligation to public life—an obligation that goes beyond just telling the news or unloading lots of fact. The way we do our journalism affects the way public life goes. Journalism can help empower a community or it can help disable it” (Itule and Anderson, 2003, p. 12).

Thus, compared to The Jakarta Post and Sabili, it can be concluded that Tempo tended to be neutral in reporting the investigation process as it reported not only the obstacles the police had to face in finding the bombing perpetrators, but also the success of the police in arresting suspected perpetrators. Nonetheless, as part of its role as the fourth estate, Tempo also criticized the government for not seriously managing the terror events and tending to be reactive instead of proactive. It is represented through the lack of coordination among government agencies. The next issue discusses the final issue that became Tempo’s main focus of attention to the portrayal of bombing events in Indonesia.

3. The disclosure of the terrorist network

The third issue relates to the disclosure of the 'terrorist network' in Indonesia. Sabili, as discussed in Chapter VIII, refused the existence of any radical Islamic group that had used terror. It strictly represented the issue as an attempt to present Islam as a dangerous and radical religion. Tempo, on the other hand, felt it was necessary to report the issue. Although placed as the third issue in this study, this issue received extensive coverage. It was featured in ten editions and more than a hundred news stories of Tempo news magazine, ranging from 2002 to 2004 bombing events. Some arguments can be proposed from the representation of this issue in Tempo news magazine. First, as the most populous Muslim country in the world, Indonesia has been accused by the international media (see for instance www.theage.com.au/articles/2003/08/11/1060588321912.html) and some study centres of being a terrorist haven (see for instance www.cfr.org/publication/9361). Secondly, some radical groups had used Islamic values to justify their acts of terrorism through the adoption of methods of violence to reach their goals. As the consequence, Islam had been associated with religion that legitimised violence (Ramakrishna & Tan, 2003).
As a news organisation that represents public interests and democratic values, *Tempo* felt it was its obligation to report news that was written fairly and with a balanced perspective. Through the representation of this issue, *Tempo* attempted to show to its readers the terrorist network that had been accused of having connections with Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda, the terrorist organisation that perpetrated the 9/11 attacks in America. Nonetheless, *Tempo* had avoided the use of the term ‘Jemaah Islamiyah’. Similar and careful reporting had also been shown by *The Jakarta Post*. Although agreed that there were radical Islamists that launched acts of terrorism, its editorial board had refused to use the term ‘Jemaah Islamiyah’. Thus, the Indonesian news media, at least the three media under study, had considered social context in their reporting.

Of the three bombing events, *Tempo* gave most coverage of the terrorist network to the post 2002 Bali bombing. This is principally because the Bali attacks escalated local terrorist activities and public interest in terrorism to an international level, implicating both western tourists and the outrage of international governments and their citizens. Therefore, *Tempo* employed in depth and investigative reporting to disclose the terrorist network. The investigative reporting had involved numerous *Tempo* journalists and correspondents from some places in Indonesia as well as in other countries such as Thailand and the United States. *Tempo* felt it was its obligation to report the news by maintaining a fair and balanced presentation. This is evident in news features as follows—

*Ngruki was a homeland to Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. From that place, he started his life as a hard line Islamic preacher.*

..The establishment of Al-Mukmin Islamic School (pesantren) originated from 30 minute noon prayer lectures at the Surakarta Great Mosque. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and Abdullah Sungkar usually preached in turn…

Since then, the Islamic school developed rapidly. At that time, the school had approximately 2,000 students from all over Indonesia. As the founder, Ba’asyir wrote a book that became a source of spiritual guidance in the school. The title was Tarbiyah Islamiyah and was used by the seventh year students. In the school, the students were taught the understanding of the necessity to uphold Syari’ah Islam (Islamic law) as the rule of life. “Upholding syari’ah Islam
nation wide is impossible without power. Studying akidah (at Al-Mukmin) means understanding the essentials of political Islam” said Muhammad Nursalim, a researcher of IAIN Yogyakarta who wrote a thesis about Al-Mukmin.

...Suspicion toward Sungkar and Ba’asyir came to its peak after the 1977 general election. Sungkar and Ba’asyir were suspected of intending to establish an Indonesian Islamic State (Negara Islam Indonesia or NII). It was said that Ba’asyir had joined Haji Ismail Pranoto, the leader of NII in Central Java. The issue, however, was denied by Ba’asyir... (*Journey of the second Ngruki, Tempo*, No. 35/XXXI/28 October-3 November 2002).

Another news feature described the history of Imam Samudra, the planner of the 2002 Bali bombing that had been sentenced to death by the Indonesian court, as follows—

Imam admitted that he learned *jihad* and military skill in Afghanistan for two and a half years. He learned how to use M-16 and AK-47 weapons and how to set mines. He went to Afghanistan after finishing his study at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (equals to senior high school) in Serang, Banten...

According to a source in the State Intelligence Agency, after returning from Afghanistan, Imam visited South Philippines in 1995. “He stayed in Abu Bakar camp for nearly a year” said the source. This camp was the biggest camp owned by Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). He then got acquainted with Al-Haj Murad, the commander of Bangsa Moro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF), a military wing of MILF.

Imam really had a full confident. He believed that he was untouchable. He even took his wife and children in the terrorist operation that he called *jihad*. The risk of death was put aside for the sake of syahid with heaven as the repayment. That was what Iqbal had done, his friend who carried the suicide bomb that destroyed Paddy’s Café. “It was the real peak of syahid,” said Abdul Aziz to the police officer who interrogated him (*Imam’s syahid knot, Tempo*, No. 39/XXXI/25 Nov - 01 Des 2002).
The news features above principally discuss two significant issues in relation to the disclosure of the terrorist network: pesantren (Islamic boarding school) and suspected bombing perpetrators. The focus on these two issues is largely related to the significance of the boarding schools as 'training grounds' for Islamic terrorists, particularly those associated with Abu Bakar Ba’asyir and Jemaah Islamiyah. It is clear that a number of Islamic boarding schools had freed them from the scrutiny of the New Order and had been teaching radical Islamic values and a strong sense of separationism (Barton, 2004; Lewis and Lewis, 2009). During the Reformasi, in the post-Suharto period, the boarding schools had become even more chauvinistic, and were publicly expressing their support for radical and militant forms of Islam.

Shuja (in TerrorismMonitor, 2005), in his report, identified five pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) including al-Mukmin in Ngruki, Sukohardjo in Solo, al-Muttaquien in Jepara (Central Java), Dar us-Syahadah in Boyolali (Central Java) and al-Islam in Lamongan (East Java). He claimed that the alumni network of pesantren graduates was an important element within the terrorist structure. The recorded confessions of perpetrators of Bali II suicide bombings in October 2005 indicate how young men of pesantren, with their narrow understanding of the meaning of jihad, believed that what they did was to wage jihad and that they would go straight to heaven after death.

By representing this issue, Tempo attempted to provide a background to terrorism in Indonesia and global politics, thereby contributing to the debates about terrorism and religion that had erupted in Indonesia. In doing so, Tempo did not explicitly state in its reporting the existence of a terrorist network in Indonesia. Instead, it described the tracks of those suspected of being the terror perpetrators and left to its audience to withdraw the conclusion after reading the news.

The two news features explicitly highlighted the pesantren Al-Mukmin in Ngruki, Solo, Central Java led by Abu Bakar Ba’asyir and the track of Imam Samudra who had been accused of planning the Bali bombing attack. By placing all the news features above as main cover stories for several editions, Tempo had been attempting to uncover the terrorist network. Nonetheless, Tempo was cautious about naming the group who launched the attack Jemaah Islamiyah. Even four months after the 2002 Bali bombing, in its end year
In the case of first news feature ('Journey of the second Ngruki') *Tempo* portrayed the internal condition of Al-Mukmin Islamic Boarding School (pesantren) established by the late Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. *Tempo* brought this issue to the surface because both founders and the school were believed to have taught radical understanding of Islam to its students. Furthermore, some perpetrators of act of terror were Al-Mukmin graduates. This condition had created an opinion as if this pesantren had produced terrorist graduates. Therefore, *Tempo* reported this issue as part of its role to fulfil the public’s right to know and to reduce uncertainty and anxiety within community. Nevertheless, *Tempo* tried to be neutral in its reporting.

Implicitly, however, *Tempo* did not find any direct link between the school and the so-called Jemaah Islamiyah. In a news feature entitled *Mengejar siluman* [chasing ghost ] (No. 35/XXXI/28 October-3 November 2002), *Tempo* described the difficulty the government faced in linking Ba’asyir with acts of terror, despite the fact that some western and Southeast Asian countries like Singapore and Malaysia believed that Ba’asyir had relation with *JI*. When eventually tried in 2003, Ba’asyir was charged with a subversive act to topple President Megawati, instead of acts of terror (Hasan, 2008).

In *Tempo*’s perspective, this representation was necessary to avoid misjudgement and generalisation of *pesantren* as a place for Muslim radicalisation. This is also true for the case of Abu Bakar Ba’asyir based on the principle of fair and balanced reporting, without having to get involved in the issue.

An interesting result came up from the interview that I conducted with one of the journalists who said—

In the New Order era, “establishing an Islamic/Syari’ah State” was a crime. Neither Sungkar nor Ba’asyir was prosecuted because of their criminal act, rather because of their political views. To me, it was a form of injustice from the police. They had become the victims of the state’s terror. There was a tendency that the police wanted to cover its incapability in resolving conflict by reducing this issue as an “Islamic terror” (*Tempo* Interview, 2008).
The representation of the second news feature signifies the fact that terrorists existed and lived among society. The reporting of Imam Samudra’s track, for instance, was published after the police was able to arrest the man based on the confession of Amrozi, the first Bali bombing suspect that had already been arrested. This representation was meant to inform the public that there were groups within society who had misused Islamic values (such as jihad) and had adopted methods of violence to justify their acts of terror. Samudra’s calm and confident appearance in front of journalists, but confessed to being the planner of the Bali bombing shocked the public who since the bombing were under uncertainty as there had been growing debate whether there were radical groups in Indonesia and its neighbours. Therefore, the governments of these countries needed to work together in combating terrorism (ICG, Asia Report No. 63, 26 August 2003; ICG, Asia Report No. 90, 20 December 2004).

In general, the textual analysis yields some interesting findings in relation to the Tempo’s representation of the disclosure of the terrorist network, which was meant to inform the public that terrorists existed and lived among society and had become an imminent threat to the national security of Indonesia that had just entered the era of reform. The detailed description of al-Mukmin Islamic boarding school and two suspected terrorists was to provide Tempo’s readers with information needed to make their own judgement. It was able to play its role as the story teller and stayed independent in the issue. With the form as a news magazine that is published weekly, Tempo had adopted in-depth reporting and written the news in the form of feature to give different way of news reporting.

Conclusion

Tempo’s liberal-democratic and critical reporting style has made it a leading newsmagazine in Indonesia. Its past history with the New Order government-Tempo was banned twice-indicates how the news magazine would report the news considered important to public, regardless of the consequences. In relation to the representation of terrorism, Tempo principally adopted fair, check and balanced, cover both sides’ principles. Actuality, in-depth and accuracy in reporting represent Tempo’s strong and independent editorial policy.

The representation of three bombing events in Tempo’s news magazine had been constructed trough cultural and political perspectives. This can be analysed from the representation of the description of the bombings, the investigation process conducted by
the police, and the disclosure of the terrorist network. Principally, Tempo’s representation of the description of the bombings from humanitarian perspective was meant to awaken its readers and public in general that no groups were allowed to use violence against other people to reach their goals. Through this representation, Tempo criticised the Indonesian government seriousness in combating terrorism as bombing attacks kept happening within the country.

Following the representation of the description of the bombings, Tempo gave attention to the investigation process conducted by the police. The selection of this issue was to inform public of the progress the police had done regarding the acts of terror. This was meant to create comfort ad safe feelings within society. In the last representation, Tempo carefully reported the suspected terrorist network, Jemaah Islamiyah. Tempo carefully used the term to avoid a judgement as if Islam-as the dominant religion embraced by Indonesian society-identical with terrorism activities. Tempo attempted to inform as well as to educate public that there were groups within society that had misused Islamic values for their acts of terror.

In sum, Tempo’s representation of terrorism had been delivered through a professional practice of journalism. It played the role as the story teller and stayed neutral from the conflict. At the same time, it can be said that Tempo had played its role as the fourth estate with its critical reporting toward the way the government managed the issue. Thus, Tempo’s vision to be ‘the guidance in the process of enhancing people’s freedom of thought and expression and to build society that appreciates smartness and difference of opinion’ was realised through the publication of reliable news media.
CHAPTER X
NEWS MEDIA AND TERRORISM: CONCLUSION

As this thesis has outlined, since its establishment as an independent nation, Indonesia has struggled with issues of sedition and political violence, including Islamist-based terrorism (Barton, 2004; Lewis and Lewis, 2009; Vickers, 2005). In its most recent incarnation, this form of religious-based political violence has become engaged in the processes of Indonesia's modernization and various forms of cultural expression—particularly through the modern media. This thesis began with the following research question—

How has the concept of 'terrorism' been shaped, generated and represented in three significant print news publications in Indonesia, particularly within a context of social cultural and political transition?

In order to address this question, the thesis examined the ways in which the media evolved in relation to two very significant and related social developments—first, the political and social changes associated with the Reformasi in the post-New Order period; and secondly, the social, political and cultural progression of Islam. As I have attempted to outline in this thesis, these 'macro' trends have clearly influenced both the socio-cultural conditions in which the media operates in Indonesia, as well as the more specific or micro activities of the respective media organisations and their editorial policies and professional staff. As I have outlined it in this thesis, therefore, the representation of terrorism is multi-layered and multi-faceted. There is no single and homologous conception of terrorism. Rather, 'terrorism' in Indonesia is not simply a single and simply defined act of political violence. It is a cultural practice and knowledge-based system that is constituted around the interaction of the media, broader cultural conceptions and specific acts of violence.

As numerous authors have identified in their discussions of terrorism and the media, terrorism is fundamentally a communicational and cultural phenomenon (Lewis, 2005;
Burke, 2007). Thus, militant organisations deploy various cultural resources in order to communicate their perspectives and objectives. The current study certainly confirms this claim within an Indonesian context as it is clear that the radical Islamist group and its various offshoots, *Jemaah Islamiyah*, perpetrated its violence in order to attract publicity and disseminate its political and cultural objectives. In this way, the Reformasi has enabled the release of particular expressive freedoms: for all its positive effects, the free media is also a vehicle for the release of terrorist perspectives and the dissemination of its political views.

Beyond this, of course, terrorism and political violence constitute a social and political threat to other members of the civic group. The anti-democratic sentiments of these violent groups constitute a direct challenge to democracy and the civil process—including the media and its freedoms. Terrorism is therefore a very important topic for the media to cover as it elicits considerable social dangers. However, as this thesis has outlined, the nature of these dangers is problematised through the relationship between terrorism and Islam, Indonesia's pre-eminent religion. With the incursion of broader and more global consternations over this relationship—particularly as it is played out in the 'war on terror—Indonesian society remains somewhat perplexed by its 'home-grown' religious radicalism, especially when it expresses itself in such horrendous acts of violence.

As this thesis has demonstrated, it is these complex relationships between democratic progressivism, Islam and radical religious violence that lie at the heart of the media's engagement with terrorism. This is especially the case with the 'serious' media, which attempts to perform its role as an agent of civil progress. As noted in these discussions, each of the news publications examined in this thesis has a distinct conception of the relationship between democracy, Islam and terrorism. This nuance is largely predicated upon the publication's respective ideological emphasis, readership and editorial policy. The research has demonstrated a continuity in the publications' commitment to social development; however, each of the publication's has its own distinct sense of what 'progress' might actually mean.

As the thesis has demonstrated, therefore, the 'meaning of terrorism' in any context, but specifically and Indonesian context cannot be simply reduced to a single definition. Each of these news outlets—*The Jakarta Post, Sabili* and *Tempo*—is prospering within the
reform context and the constitutional guarantee of press freedom. But each is using that freedom to advance a particular conception of social progress and the balance between religious values and the more secular duties of the state. While a detailed exploration of these issues lies outside the current study, it is clear that the implication of this balance between secularism and religion in Indonesia is critical for the nation's future and sense of social cohesion. This would certainly be a productive site for further research and exploration.

Terrorism and political violence more generally remains a threat to this cohesion. For the editors of Tempo and The Jakarta Post, the overriding issue is the role of government in managing political militancy of all kinds, though clearly there is an issue of religious extremism and its role in a modern Indonesian state. In this sense 'terrorism' represents a distinct obstacle to social progress. Having said this, both news publications were careful not to implicate the Muslim faith generally in the issues of terrorism. Indeed, both publications were interested in strengthening the civic institutions, including security agencies, in order to effectively combat terrorism and radical sedition. As Jemaah Islamiyah and its supports are decidedly anti-democratic (Barton 2004; ICG, 2003, 2007; Vicziany and Wright Neville, 2005), recognising only the authority of Allah, these news publications became increasingly conscious of the need to control the strength and social presence of such terrorist organisations. Having survived the turbulent and censorial period of the New Order, news media like Tempo, in particular, were extremely hostile to any perceived threat to democratic freedoms. Terrorism, in this sense, was represented as a more generic and pernicious social danger than was evidenced in the three attacks outlined in this thesis. That is, 'terrorism' was not simply an act of a very small group of religious fanatics: it was also a social danger that had deep historical roots in an anti-democratic, anti-secular and anti-modernist cultural disposition.

As noted in the preceding chapters, this distinction is very important. Both Tempo and The Jakarta Post resisted any temptation to equate the religious and political extremism of Islamist violence with Indonesia's religious culture. Rather, the anti-secularism and anti-democratic sentiments of organisations like Darul Islam and Jemaah Islamiyah were viewed as marginal to Indonesia's more progressive cultural politics and its pluralist constitution. The reporting of the three terrorist events focused on secular and governmental issues, more than religious issues. The news organisations recognised that
Indonesia's complex pluralism was precarious, requiring careful social management. The media, in this sense, has a crucial role in maintaining the fabric of this pluralist, and multi-religious cultural weave.

*Sabili*, which is focused specifically on the religious dimensions of news, was also concerned about Indonesia's social fabric. However, *Sabili* as the thesis demonstrates, is an Islamic news medium and focuses on religious issues and the promotion of the Muslim faith. As the research has shown, *Sabili* deferred questions about the terrorist organisation's links with Islam. When finally the identity of *Jemaah Islamiyah* was revealed, *Sabili* was concerned about the impact of the attacks on Muslim communities and on the connections that were being drawn between terrorism and Islam. To this end, *Sabili* was also performing an important civil duty, seeking to maintain social harmony through the power of the Muslim faith. *Sabili*, in this sense, had also broken the shackles of a censorial government and the oppressive effects of the New Order. *Sabili*' focus on the problem of linking terrorism to the faith was resonant of a great deal of social anxiety in the global community generally and in Indonesia in particular. In this sense, *Sabili* also performed an important civil role. It was not so much the protection of secularist government, but the protection of community that motivated much of the *Sabili* reporting of the terror attacks.

In the re-awakening of religious freedoms in the period of reform, media organisations like *Sabili* played a significant role in separating the extremism of terrorist organisations like *Jemaah Islamiyah* and the broader cultural presence and practice of Islam. As this study has demonstrated, *Sabili* distinguished political violence from religion, emphasizing that the former is about social disruption while the latter is about social cohesion and peace. As *Sabili* presented the issues and events, it emphasized continually that terrorism simply used religion to pursue its violent aims. For *Sabili*, then, terrorism is a form of political violence that is entirely anathema to the history and conventions of true Islam.

In conclusion, this thesis has demonstrated that terrorism in Indonesia is formed and represented through the interplay of cultural, social and political factors. As it is represented in the three print media publications studied in this thesis, terrorism is both a generic cultural condition and a description of particular acts of political violence. The media is directly implicated in this interplay of effects, and the ways in which 'terrorism' is presented as news to a media organisation's specific constituency. In the period of Indonesia's transition, these conditions and actions are particularly threatening. They
continue to endanger the nation's social progress and the very foundations of media freedom and sense of social and cultural progression.
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**Interview**


