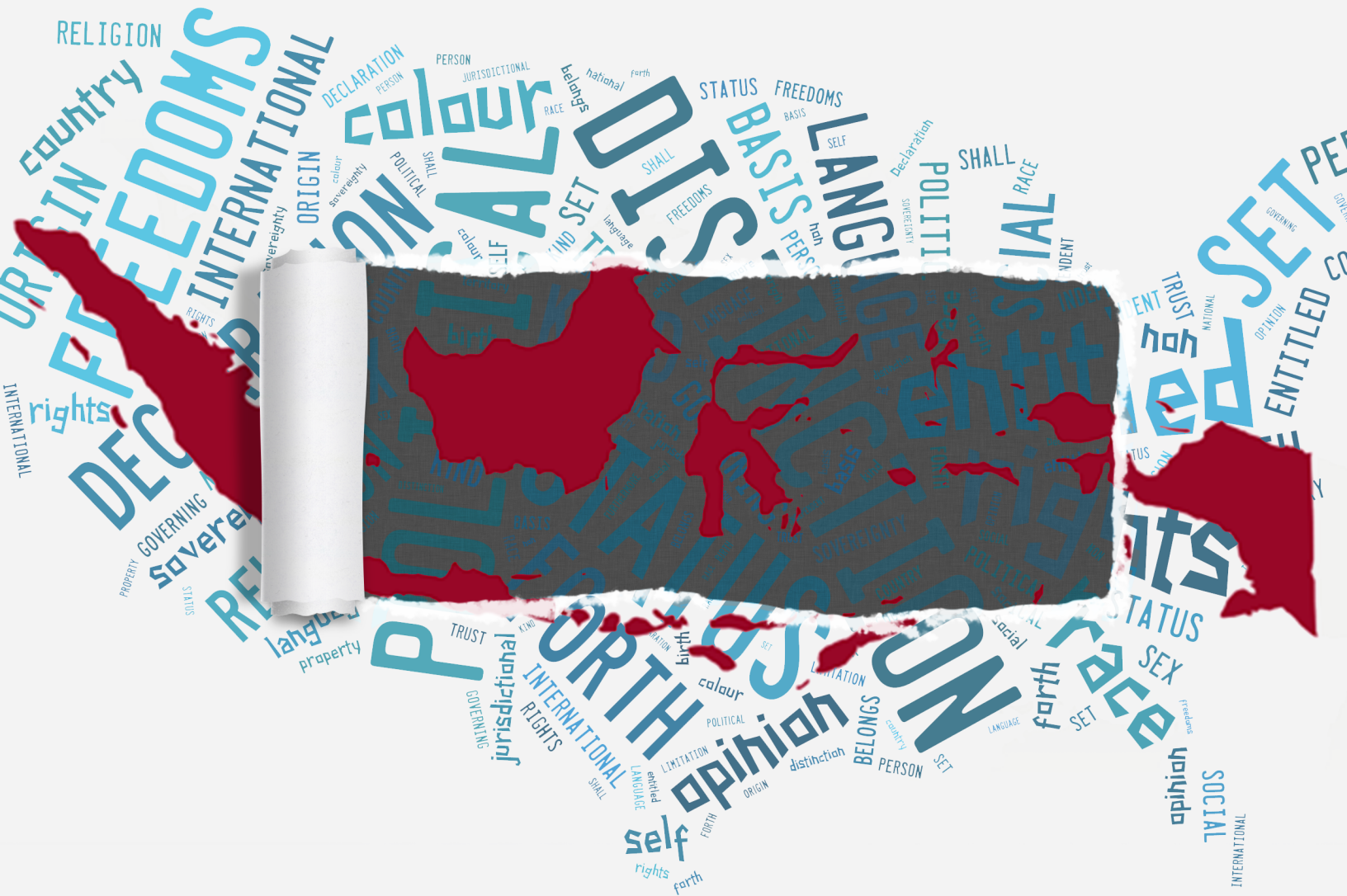


Shia Ethnic Cleansing in Indonesia



2012- 2013

Established in 2011, Shia Rights Watch (SRW) is the world's first independent organization dedicated to define and protect the rights of Shia Muslims around the world. SRW is a non-governmental, not-for-profit research entity and advocacy group headquartered in Washington D.C., U.S.A. Shia Rights Watch aims to draw the international attention where Shia rights are violated; the aim is to give a voice to the oppressed and hold oppressors accountable for their crimes. S.R.W. achieves its objectives through strategic investigations supported by targeted advocacy in order to bring about informed action.

Vision

Freedom of religion for all

Shia Rights Watch envisions the world with peace for all humans, regardless of their religion, gender, race and origin. There should be regulations in every country to support every religion. We believe Shia Muslim as religion should be recognized in every country and any discrimination should be brought to light. God has given us all the freedom of religion and the rights to live in peace.

Mission

No Shia above the law and no Shia Below the law

Shia Rights Watch is dedicated to protect the rights of Shia Muslims worldwide. We investigate violations against Shia communities in order to raise awareness against injustice. We promote the change through research and publications. Our reports and articles are submitted to the governments and international organizations, and we continually monitor media outlets to ensure coverage of Shia rights violations. Shia Rights Watch stands for victims of prejudice, and supports activism in order to prevent discrimination, support political freedom, and protect people from inhumane conduct. We enlist the local public and international communities to support the cause of human rights for all.

The Purpose of SRW

Shia Muslims face constant oppression throughout the world solely based on their faith. In some countries, Shia Muslims have been the target of repeated persecution for centuries as evidenced in the well-documented expansion of extremism of the Wahhabi movement. We believe the underrepresented Shia Muslim population need a human rights organization that highlights the violations against them, while giving their call for help a louder voice.

Staff Organization

The organization began with the collaborative efforts of volunteers with a common interest in advocating international human rights. The momentum created by the increasing number of volunteer and activism allowed for a formal development of the foundation of Shia Rights Watch. Currently the organization has more than 100 active members working in various locations worldwide. The responsibilities of members range from gathering news and information to publishing reports and articles in order to advocate change. We are proud of the religiously and ethnically diverse group of activists who are working together towards a common goal.

Methodology of SRW

We believe that information is the most valuable resource in the investigative process. From the organization's inception, we have focused on gathering information through various media: interviewing witnesses, family members of the victims and victims themselves; on-site collection of resources; analyzing reports from various national and international organizations; meeting with non-governmental and religious organizations, leaders, and journalists; and creating information networks in a wide range of social sectors.

Based on the information collected from the above sources, different types of human rights violation have been identified. These violations include but are certainly not limited to:

- *Violation of right of living;*
- *Arbitrary arrest, unfair trial, and illegal detention;*
- *Psychical & psychological abuse: torture, rape, and sexual assault;*
- *Illegal confiscation of private property;*
- *Demolition of Religions centres;*
- *Employment discrimination;*
- *Education discrimination;*

Reports, Publications, and Distribution

Whether it is terrorist bombings of sacred shrines, torture and unjust detention of people, discriminative legislation or intimidation of school children for their sectarian beliefs, Shia have been victimized in most the world. In countries where the press is tightly controlled, most of these cases go unnoticed. Shia Rights Watch tells the stories of injustices and atrocities in order to give a voice to the marginalized Shia victims.

Journalists investigating topics regarding the Middle East will benefit from SRW's focus on the Shia communities since they are crucially important sectors in Middle Eastern society. For instance, In order to fully examine the ongoing atrocities committed against protesters of the Arab spring, it is necessary to know about the embedded Shia struggle. In areas where Shia have been formerly discriminated against more subtly, the Arab Spring opened a door for more blunt persecution. Cases reported in other parts of the world, such as in South Asia, describe violence and intimidation which reflect fluctuating trends in sectarian hostilities, fueled by various political issues, including terrorism. SRW's aim is to be able to report the crimes affecting Shia in every part of the globe.

SRW has investigators on the forefront who communicate directly with the victims and monitor multilingual news media outlets. SRW networks with national committees, international human rights organizations, as well as religious scholars of Shia communities. SRW's members comprise of people with diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds united to defend the of human rights. This international network provides invaluable information to commentators and journalists of the media who are seeking to explore the impact of events on the Shia communities worldwide.

2012 -2013

SRW

Shia Ethnic Cleansing in Indonesia



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INDONESIA



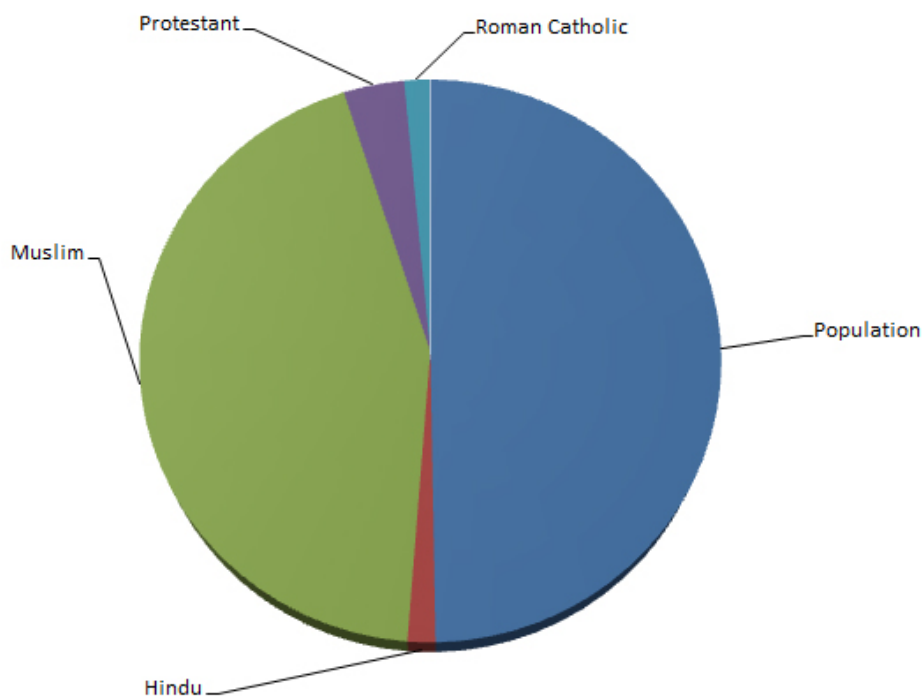
Background

The Republic of Indonesia is a country in Southeast Asia consisting of an archipelago of 17, 508 islands which lie between the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean. The larger islands are Java, Sumatra, and Borneo. Indonesia is bordered by Malaysia, Timor-Leste, and Papua New Guinea. About 6,000 of the islands are inhabited.

Indonesia has a total population of 237.6 million, 88.1% of which are Muslim according to Pew Research Center.¹ The religious makeup of the islands is as follows: 88.1% Muslim, about 7% Protestants, 3% Catholics,² and 3% Hindu.

The President, Susilo Bambang, is head of state, head of government, commander-in-chief of the Indonesian National Armed Forces, and the director of domestic governance, policy-making, and foreign affairs. The president and vice president are elected every five years, and appointed as council of ministers.

TOTAL POPULATION OF 237.6 million
MUSLIMS = 88.1 %
PROTESTANTS = 7 %
CATHOLICS = 3 %
HINDU = 3 %



1. <http://features.pewforum.org/muslim-population/>

2. <http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=0>

Religion in Indonesia

Indonesia has the world's largest Muslim population. The majority of Muslims in Indonesia are Sunni. From the 400,000 Ahmadiya Qadiyani and Ahmadiya Lahore Muslims, Shia Muslims are the largest minority in the country. There are a significant number of Christians, Buddhist, and Hindu in Indonesia as result of colonization and interaction with Dutch, Portuguese and Chinese. The constitution of Indonesia provides for freedom of religion. The government generally claims respect to this right; however, it has placed sanctions on religions it considers "deviant". Cases of discrimination, and neglect to persecute discriminatory offenders, on the part of the Indonesian government have been reported.³

The Indonesian Attorney General's office hosts an Islamic board called Bakor Pakem, which is dedicated to investigating alleged religious offenses.⁴ According to the 2004 Public Prosecution Service Law, Bakor Pakem has the responsibility to provide "oversight in respect of religious beliefs that could endanger society and the state." Bakor Pakem normally sits under the intelligence division of the public prosecution office, and works closely with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the police, the military, local governments, and religious establishments.

Despite the initial purpose Bakor Pakem is where discriminations and violations to freedom of religion take place. Bakor Pakem has been extremely influential in pressing the government to ban religious groups. It can be said that Bakor Pakem's recommendations resulted in the banning of the Ahmadiyah faith. Bakor Pakem's interactions also led to the prosecution of Alexander An, an administrator of the "Minang Atheist" Facebook group in Dharmasraya. Bakor Pakem also played a role in initiating the prosecution of Andreas Guntur, the leader of the spiritual group Amanat Keagungan Ilahi, who was sentenced to four years' imprisonment in 2012 by the Klaten court, Central Java, for blasphemy for alleged unconventional Islamic teachings. Also, on January 4, 2012, Danang Purwoko, a member of the Bakor Pakem, called to ban the teaching of Tajul Muluk, a Shia scholar, and charged him with blasphemy.⁵

Indonesia is a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which provides in article 18 that:

"Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching. ... No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice."

The Indonesian government has permitted Bakor Pakem to question and actively pursue the prosecution of religious figures for blasphemy, which means that the discrimination toward minorities

3. <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2010/148869.htm>

4. <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/07/12/indonesia-shia-cleric-convicted-blasphemy>

5. <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/07/12/indonesia-shia-cleric-convicted-blasphemy>



People cover their mouths as a sign of protest during a rally in Jakarta on August 15th, 2010, demanding the government do more to protect freedom of religion and to punish hardline groups which have attacked minority faiths. Shia Muslims are among the groups which have recently come under pressure in Indonesia despite the country's history of tolerance and pluralism.

[Supri/Reuters]

Shia in Indonesia

The Majority of Muslims in Indonesia are Sunni. The official census done by the Indonesia government reports the population of the Shia is up to one million. However the Indonesian educators find the number unreal and believe there are several million Shia in the country.⁶ Many members of the Shia community are practicing their faith in secret to protect their lives and families. After the recent violence in their communities, it is not longer possible to ask the Shia to identify themselves.

The history of Shia Muslims in Indonesia started in the fourth century. Among the first Shia in Indonesia are the grandchildren of Ali, the son of Imam Jaffar al-Sadiq (Shia's 6th Imam). Many of the men married the princess-daughters of the kings in the area, to the extent that some of the men obtained a very high position in the monarchy. The city of Acheya in north Somatra was once the center for Shia in Indonesia, and it is from there the Shia faith spread across Indonesia. The city of Kowal has a very high Shia population; shortly after Indonesia gained independence, the government established a university in Kowal and called it Shia Kowal University.⁶ However, the system changed dramatically.

Shia Muslims in Indonesia have suffered discrimination and persecution at the hands of the government in recent decades. In February 2006, a statement was issued condemning Shia Islam as heretical. This statement was signed by 40 Sunni clerics and four police officers in Nangkernang village, Omben district, Sampang regency. In two meetings, Shia clerics were told to return to "real Islam" but they refused to do so.⁷ Many Sunni in Indonesia consider their religion to be the "true Islam," and consider any deviation from it to be heretical. Shia Muslims are at increased risk of attack and are being pressured by anti-Shia groups to convert to Sunni Islam.⁸

Discrimination Against Shia Individuals and Communities

Human Rights Watch issued a report in July 2012 highlighting the case of Tajul Muluk, a Shia cleric who is facing two years in prison for blasphemy. Muluk was reported to have told students that the Quran is not the original text for Muslims. Despite his denial of this accusation, his trial continued.⁹ Shia Rights Watch and Human Rights Watch called for the Indonesian government to drop all charges and release Muluk, who was detained because of his Shia faith. However, he was charged with blasphemy and unpleasant misconduct on April 24th, 2012.



In 2011, many instances of intimidation and harassment against Shia occurred, including the disruption of the Shia holy day of Ashura by Islamic militants. It is reported that militants blocked the road for more than

6. www.alulbayt.com/home/ShiaAroundWorld/4.doc

7. <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/07/12/indonesia-shia-cleric-convicted-blasphemy>

8. <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ASA21/002/2012/en/acb52342-038c-4be6-adb9-cd58ce2c2adb/asa210022012en.html>

9. <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/two-killed-as-hard-liners-attack-shia-school-group/540458>



50 Shia residents and prevented them from attending the Ashura ceremony. Shia leader Iklil al Milal asked the police to end the threat but no action was taken.¹⁰ The government is turning a blind eye to flagrant cases of discrimination and violence against Shia in Indonesia.

On April 10th, 2011, an unknown group of men attacked a Shia cleric's home in Sampang, Madura Island, East Java. Although police intervened before harm was done, this incident demonstrates the potential for anti-Shia attitudes to escalate into violence. Ten days later, in Bangil, East Java, thousands of people gathered to demand that Shia organizations be banned in Indonesia. Habib Umas Assegaf, the leader of these protesters, stated that if Shia organizations were not banned, he would bring more people out to the streets.¹¹

On December 29th, 2011, 500 Shia residents were displaced when Sunni militants burned houses and a Shia Islamic school in the Nangkernang hamlet. Authorities only arrested one of the attackers and asked Shia clerics Tajul Muluk and Iklil al Milal to leave the village.¹²

Another incident in August 2012 involved school aged children. Around 30 Shia, most of them children, were traveling from Nangkernang village on the island of Madura, bound for Bangil in East Java. The children in the group studied at a Shia boarding school in Bangil and had returned to Sampang, their hometown, to celebrate Idul Fitri (end of Ramadan Holy Month) with their families. Shortly into their trip, they were attacked by unknown men, preventing them from continuing the trip.¹³ Again, the government and police neglected the case.

On August 26th, 2012, an attack on Shia in Sampang in East Java left two men dead and dozens of houses burned. 2,000 police were sent to guard the area after 500 villagers carrying machetes, supposed to be Sunni extremists, attacked the town and caused great damage. At around 11 am, the group struck at villagers returning from Ramadan holiday, throwing stones and gas bombs, and stabbing young Shia Muslims with their weapons. Two people, a fifty-year-old man named Hamama and another man named Tohir, were killed in this attack, and many others sustained injuries. As many as 40 Shia homes were destroyed, including that of Tajul Muluk. Although President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono declared that justice would be brought to the culprits, no action was carried out.¹⁴ Moreover, the only suspect arrested for these attacks has been set free.¹⁵

In the week of this attack, Umi Khulsum, a witness to the scene, claimed to have requested police supervision and protection of children in the area. Umi says this request was ignored, and eight police showed up hours after the incident.¹⁶

Hendardi, the chairman of the Setara Institute, a human rights organization, declared that this instance was a premeditated attack on Shia Muslims. He called for the East Java Police Chief to be removed for his lack of protection for the people of Sampang. Hendardi emphasized the necessity of "dealing with the extremists who had repeatedly committed attacks against the

10. <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/07/12/indonesia-shia-cleric-convicted-blasphemy>

11. <http://jafrianews.com/2011/05/07/wahabism-pressurizing-shias-of-indonesia>

12. <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/two-killed-as-hard-liners-attack-shia-school-group/540458>

13. <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/two-killed-as-hard-liners-attack-shia-school-group/540458>

14. <http://www.humanrights.asia/news/urgent-appeals/AHRC-UAC-164-2012>

15. <http://www.abna.ir/data.asp?lang=3&id=291137>

16. <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/two-killed-as-hard-liners-attack-shia-school-group/540458>

Shiites,” according to the Jakarta Post. ¹⁷

Additionally, the Indonesian government is attempting to relocate Shia citizens to Sampang, Madura, East Java. Muhaimin Hamama is a fifteen-year-old Shia whose father was killed in the August Sampang attack. His family had no other option but to stay in Sampang. One of his father’s attackers was a neighbor, and Muhaimin’s family is still facing threats from anti-Shia attackers. Ahlul Bait Indonesia (ABI), a Shia group urged the government to take action to stop this discrimination from continuing, rather than simply avoiding violence by relocating Shia. ABI also condemned the East Java branch of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), which declared the Shia sect heretical. ¹⁸ The coordinator of the Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence said to the Jakarta Post, “Relocation has never been a solution to their problem. Instead of relocating the refugees, the government must punish those responsible for prosecuting the Shia Muslims,”. ¹⁹

Most recently, Shia refugees, taking shelter at a sports center after the destruction of their homes, were forced to sign statements saying that they were willing to convert to the Sunni school of thought. Kontras Surabaya coordinator Andy Irfan said that the Shia were forced to sign such statements on Nov 1, 2012. The statement says the Shia followers were willing to return to “the right path”. ²⁰

On 18 November, the local authorities cut off water supply to the complex and on 22 November they halted food supplies. The Shia refugees are forced to pay for utilities using their limited funds. ²¹ Rohah, a 21-year-old housewife, sold her gold ring for only \$30 so she would be able to buy food and water; others sold cows and goats. ²² Shia not only lost their home and security, they also have to skip shower and meals in order to survive. The Indonesian authorities have gone beyond violations toward Shia population.

Shia Educators are Concerned

Shia educators are extremely worried for the security of their students, as Naila Zakiyah said to the Andre Vltchek and Rossie Indira, bloggers and authors who visited Indonesia after the burn down of the Shia village in August 2012. Zakiyah teaches at Al Mahadul Islami, a Shia school. She complains that there is a Sunni school across the road called Al Anwar and they “broadcasted their sermon twice a week. They had their loudspeakers directed towards [The Almahadul Islamic] school. They were shouting that Shi’a teaching is misguided, and that our blood is *haram*.” ²³

Andre Vltchek and Rossie Indira report talking to the AL Anwar school’s board, Mr. Atoilah. He told them that “The teaching of Shi’a deviates from Islamic teaching; therefore we have so many essential differences. The Shi’a minority once promised that they will convert to Sunni, but they lied to us... And so it seemed that we couldn’t talk to them in a subtle way, anymore. If they don’t want to convert, then we have to use violence. In our opinion, they are *kafir*. We will not be at peace with them until we die, even if our lives are at stake. They have already insulted Islam! If the police do not take action against the Shi’a, we will resort to violence.” ²⁴

The governmental neglect to bring justice to guilty parties is a major component in the problem of discrimination in Indonesia.

17. <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2012/08/27/2-dead-sunni-shiite-mayhem-madura.html>

18. <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2012/09/01/shia-followers-diss-relocation-demand-security.html>

19. <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2012/09/08/shiites-relocation-not-option-says-human-rights-watchdog.html>

20. <http://shiarightswatch.org/asia/indonesia>

21. <http://www.amnestyusa.org/sites/default/files/uaa33612.pdf>

22. <http://dawn.com/2012/12/10/indonesian-shias-persecuted-as-heretics-live-in-limbo>

23. <http://www.counterpunch.org/2012/11/02/shia-blood-is-haram>

24. <http://www.counterpunch.org/2012/11/02/shia-blood-is-haram>

Violations of International Bill of Human Rights

The government of Indonesia has violated many key provisions of the International Bill of Human Rights, specifically the following articles:

Article 1: *All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.*

Article 2: *Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty*

Article 3: *Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.*

Article 7: *All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.*

Article 8: *Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.*

Article 10: *Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.*

Article 11: *(1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defense.*

Article 12: *No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honor and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.*

Article 13: *(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.*

Article 17: *(1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.*

Article 18: *Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.*

Article 19: *Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.*

Violations to Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

The right to freedom of religion or belief is guaranteed in Article 18(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Indonesia is a state party. The Article provides that:

“Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom...either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.”

Indonesia has an obligation to ensure the right to life, security and freedom from torture and other ill-treatment as a state party to the ICCPR. Under Article 2(1) of the ICCPR, such protection must be provided without discrimination, including on the basis of religion. The duty to protect human rights is also explicitly drawn up in the National Police Act (Law No. 2/2002) which provides that the function of the police includes maintaining security and social order, enforcing the law and providing protection to all citizens.

The Indonesian authorities have failed to apply the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement by forcibly displacing Shia community, including Principle 28, which states that:

“The government has the primary duty and responsibility to establish conditions, and to provide the means, which allow internally displaced persons to return voluntarily, in safety and with dignity, to their homes or places of habitual residence, or to resettle voluntarily in another part of the country.”²⁵

Violations to Indonesian Religious Freedom Law

The Indonesian Constitution guarantees freedom of religion to its citizens. Although the government generally claims to enforce this right, only six major religions are recognized in Indonesia. The majority of the Indonesian population is Sunni, and thus enjoys religious freedom, but the Shia minority faces legal restrictions and attacks. The government’s lack of support for Shia Muslims under attack and intimidation by anti-Shia groups and militant violates the tenet of religious freedom. The government also failed to draw upon its constitutional authority to stop discrimination in legal and political fields. Discrimination against Shia when issuing marriage or birth certificates or identity cards is also a violation of religious freedom. As in the case of Tajul Muluk, the Indonesian government has condemned individuals for heresy. According to religious freedom law, expressing one’s religion cannot be considered a crime.

The actions of extremist groups who attack Shia homes and villages and the government not protecting Shia are obvious violations of religious freedom in this country. Shia were deprived of their homes and in many cases lost their lives because of their faith. The violation goes as far as to demand the Shia Muslims to convert to a different faith in order to gain security. Shia rights violations in Indonesia have increased dramatically and this is clear evidence that the government is not doing its part to enforce international and domestic laws in order to spread peace.

25. <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ASA21/002/2012/en/acb52342-038c-4be6-adb9-cd58ce2c2adb/asa210022012en.html>

Conclusion

Indonesian government has violated many International and domestic laws by not supporting Shia Muslims citizens and even forcing them to relocate or convert. Many sources reveal that Saudi Arabia is trying very hard to isolate and attack Shia minorities in various societies. Professor Azyumardi Azra, a director of the Graduate School of State Islamic University in Jakarta stated that “Since the early 1980s, Saudi Arabia with their *Wahabbism*, using some Indonesian alumni from Saudi Arabia, has tried to destroy Shi’a teaching”.²⁶ It is also reported that Indonesian military forces have received funding and support from Saudi Arabia to persecute Shia Muslims.²⁷

Discrimination at the national as well as local level contributes to a hostile climate for Shia in Indonesia. The actions of Islamic extremist groups and the Indonesian government and police violate Shia human rights and religious freedoms. The recent human rights, especially Shia rights, violations in Indonesia should be stopped before further damages are done.

Recommendations

In order to promote freedom of religion and protect the rights of Shia in Indonesia, Shia Rights Watch urges the government to:

- * Stop anti-Shia activities and respect basic human rights of Shia regarding their religious freedom
- * Increase protection and guarding of areas in which anti-Shia attacks have occurred
- * Investigate instances of anti-Shia attacks and bring justice to culprits
- * Free and drop charges against Shia scholars such as Tajul Muluk and prevent similar cases from happening in the future
- * Put a stop to anti-Shia fatwas and religious documents
- * Abolish the Balor Pakem
- * Rebuild the homes and ensure security and education for Shia of the area

We have contacted the Embassy of Indonesia in Washington DC. But there has yet to be a response . the content of the letter is available in appendix page.

26. <http://www.counterpunch.org/2012/11/02/shia-blood-is-haram>

27. <http://islamizationwatch.blogspot.com/2009/08/indonesia-terror-attacks-funded-from.html>



No: 521

Date: January 22, 2013

The Honorable Dr. Dino Patti Djalal
Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia
The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia
2020 Massachusetts Avenue Northwest
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Honorable Ambassador,

We are contacting you on behalf of Shia Rights Watch to express our concerns regarding the recent Shia rights violations in Indonesia.

The sources revealed that the Relocated Shia community is asked to change their religion so they can return to their homes.

As you know between 160 to 200 Shia, including about 50 children, have been living in inadequate conditions at a sports complex in Sampang district on Madura Island since August 2012 when they were displaced after their village was attacked and burned down by anti- Shia group of around 500 people. The mob attacked the community with sharp weapons and stones and injured and killed many Shia Muslims.

In late December, the local authorities halted food supplies and medical services. Some of the children in the shelter have fallen sick over the last few weeks.

In January, Instead of ensuring the security of Indonesian Shia Muslim, East Java provincial police have withdrawn the officers who had been protecting the community.



No: 521

Date: January 22, 2013

And now, the Indonesian authorities have given the Shia until March 2013 to convert to “Indonesia’s majority religion Sunni Islam” if they wish to return to their homes.

In May 2012, during its Universal Periodic Review at the Human Rights Council, the Indonesian government reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring the protection of freedom of religion and to address cases of religious intolerance. However Shia Muslims still face harassment, intimidation and attacks. Also those who commit acts of violence against religious minorities are rarely punished.

It is important to note that the right to freedom of religion or belief is guaranteed in Article 18(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and Article 18 of the International Bill of Human Rights to which Indonesia is a state party.

We believe that Indonesian government is neglecting the basic human rights of Shia and worsening the situation by forcing them to convert.

Shia Rights Watch believes it is Indonesians government responsibility to

- Ensure that the community is granted immediate access to essential services such as food and health services
- Help Shia build their homes that were damaged or destroyed,
- Guarantee the voluntary and dignified return of the Shia community to their homes,
- And investigate, report, catch and punish those violates human rights in this country.

Director of Shia Rights Watch
Mustafa Akhwand

Shia Ethnic Cleansing In Indonesia



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