by Sukawarsini Djelantik

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Sukawarsini Djelantik

Abstract

ndonesia entered the reform era after the fall of New Order government in 1998. This era was marked by economic and social-political crisis and unprecedented ethnic conflict. Riots and social unrests erupted in many part of the archipelago and caused numerous deaths, displacements, destruction of public and private properties. These ethnical and religious overtones suggested serious tensions cutting across several dimensions of relations between Indonesia's ethnic groups. Between 1997 and 2002, at least 10,000 were killed during ethnic violence throughout Indonesia. The reform era was also marked by the increased number of terrorists attack in several parts of Indonesia by making terrorism as the most serious security problem. Several bomb explosions since the fall of New Order government until the latest major bomb blast in Bali in October 2005, demonstrated that terrorism is becoming a continuous threat to Indonesians. The police investigation and media reports on previous terrorist attacks suggested that some of the terrorists are Sundanese, the inhabitant of parts of West Java province. This research will analyse contributing factors to the emergence of terrorism in this

Key words: terrorism, poverty, economic crisis, sundanese, ethnic conflict.

Introduction

Since the end of Suharto's authoritarian regime in 1998, there has been a dramatic increase in ethnic and religious conflict in Indonesia. During a transitional period into democratic country, fragmentation became the most critical issue facing by the state. Social unrest, autonomy and separatism, placing the crisis in the context of state evolution. Public resentment was expressed in many forms, from peaceful demonstration to physical struggle

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many forms, from peaceful demonstration to physical struggle aimed at independence. Jacques Bertrand argues that these conflicts were the result of constraints imposed by Suharto during his administration, which left the country unprepared for political and social change. Consequently, the very definition of the Indonesian nation and what it means to be Indonesian has come under scrutiny."

The appearances of social unrests have started since the beginning of 1990's. However, the authoritarian regime with strong support from the Armed Forces was capable to suppress the movements and placed Indonesia in a condition quasi peace. The most serious ethnic conflict erupted in 1996-1997 and 2001. These two waves of violence clashes between the Dayaks and Madurese in West and Central Kalimantan, led to the deaths of at least 1,000 people and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Madurese. In Maluku, at least 5000 people were killed in a war between Christian and Muslims that began in January 1999 and escalated during the following 3 years. In East Timor, approximately 1000 people were killed and 200,000 were displaced in violence against the civilian population, following a referendum in August 1999. In Aceh, a renewal of conflict between the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka or GAM) and the Indonesian Armed forces began in 1999 and intensified in the following years. At least 1800 people were killed in 2000-01. In Papua, the emergence of a civilian movement for independence (Organisasi Papua Merdeka or OPM) during 1999 and 2000 led to several people dead in clashes with the Indonesian Armed Forces "

Terrorism is one way to express its political dissatisfaction towards the government. As in guerilla warfare, terrorist use the population by bomb explosions indiscriminately to population who happened to be in a wrong time and in a wrong place. In transitional Indonesia everything seems uncertain for most population, resentment increased and made the state as the easiest terrorist target. Among other separatist movements. Islamiyah (JI) is believed the Jamaah masterminds of terrorists' attacks in several places that exploded since the beginning of reform era (1997-now). In order to establish an Islamic Caliph in Southeast Asia, JI have developed its networks in other Southeast Asian countries, especially in Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

Sundanese is the biggest ethnic group in Indonesia, or the majority inhabitants of the West Java province. West Java is also one source of JI activists, members, and suicide bombers. Based on the above background of increasing number of ethnic independence movement and fragmentation in Indonesia, this research will answer the question: "What are the contributive factors to the increasing number of Sundanese youth joining terrorists organizations like the JI"? In order to answer the question, this research analyzes supporting factors behind the insurgence of Sundanese terrorists. Because terrorism and radicalism to some extent are caused by misunderstanding and misinterpretation of Islamic teachings, the research will also analyze the role of Islamic boarding school (pesantren), as well as to examine the role of Kyai as informal leaders in the rural area.]

The main assumption to the increase in the number of Sundanese terrorists is the economic development policy that increased poverty. However, our research suggests that poverty is not a major factor of terrorists' insurgence. Research has been conducted in four villages where the Sundanese terrorists came from, démonstrated other contributive factors to the insurgence of terrorism, such as:

- The long history of the DI/TII insurgence movements based in Tasikmalaya/Garut region.
- Islamic teaching in villages had increased radicalism among its followers.
- The role of mass media and problems of political communication.

To approach the above purposes, interviews were conducted with a population from different backgrounds: youths, formal leaders (village level government leaders), informal leaders (kyai, uelema, and other religious organizations), especially those strongly opposed to the government. The local population consisted of santri (pupils of Islamic schools), the government apparatuses in the village level, and security personnes. Information was gathered through observation, interviews, focus group discussion, and participatory research.

Research locations were chosen from areas with special characteristics: undeveloped, historical basis of the rebel movement, strong Islamic Wahabian culture, and areas known as

terrorists' safe havens and breeding places. To examine the correlation between poverty and terrorism, the first category consists of the southern parts of West Java that are considered less developed compared to the northern parts. The areas are also remote, isolated, having poor infrastructure and public facilities, as well poor road access to major cities. Geographic consideration is necessary to support or to challenge Abadie's previous research and concluding statement that certain geographic characteristics may favor terrorist activities. As suggested by Abadie, failure to eradicate terrorism in some areas of the world has often been attributed to geographic barriers, like mountainous terrain or tropical jungle. Large countries like Indonesia tend to generate centrifugal resources, include disaffected minorities and accumulate grievance.

The second category is based on historical reasons, or areas with a history of rebellion, e.g., the center of DI/TII movement in the Garut and Tasikmalaya region. The third category covers areas with a marked Wahabian culture, e.g. Cianjur and Garut. The fourth category covers the areas considered as terrorists' breeding places and safe havens. Areas difficult to access for offering safe haven to terrorists groups, facilitate training and provide funding through other illegal activities, such as the production and trafficking of cocaine and opiates. Based on these categories, the research was conducted in four districts: Southern Garut, Southern Cianjur, Southern Sukabumi, and Banten Province. The population of the province of West Java and Banten is predominantly Muslim (95%).

Terrorism as a major Security problem in Indonesia's Reform Era

As previously stated, the downfall of President Soeharto after 32 years in power led Indonesia to transform into a democratic country. However, this transformation followed by various security problems, among others, terrorism is the most significant. Indonesian public was shocked by 13 bomb explosions, almost simultaneously in several cities in Indonesia on Christmas Eve, 25 December 2000. In the following year (2001), 81 bombs exploded, 29 explosions took place in Jakarta. The most significant one in terms of number of victims and international coverage was the first Bali bomb blast on October 12th, 2002. The tragedy repeated in the following year when a suicide bomber exploded the lobby of the

J.W Marriott Hotel in Jakarta in August 2003, in front of the Australian Embassy in 2004, and the second Bali bomb on October 1st, 2005.

The Jamaah Islamiyah (JI) as the terrorists' masterminds and perpetrators is still considered to be the most dangerous terrorist organization. A report by the International Crisis Group (ICG) connects Indonesian terrorists with Al-Qaeda through the JI networks. According to the intelligent data from Singapore and Malaysia, Al-Qaeda emerged in Southeast Asia through the Al-Jamaah Al-Islamiyah under the leadership of Indonesian nationals Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Baasyir. Some analysts believe that JI is still actively recruiting suicide bombers, with the birth of the "new terrorist generation" to operate their next targets.

Terrorist operations required a complicated organizational structure; individual as well as group network and an excellent management of cell network. The system demonstrated that because the terrorists' actions needed human resources support, the recruitment continued to take place. The suicide bombers illustrated Al-Qaeda and Jamaah Islamiyah's stealth and resourcefulness in mobilizing people (operatives and informers) for maximizing collateral damage. However, the modern-day terrorist favors indiscriminate, mass killings, and extols committing suicide. As an unconventional war, terrorist action requires circumstances and principles of warfare. As stated by the JI activists, the end purpose is to strike a blow against the existing regime, and this is possible if other factors, such as the social system, could not be functioned.

Poverty and the Economic Development Policy

As mentioned earlier, with the purpose to examine the correlation between poverty and terrorism, field research had been conducted in the southern parts of West Java, the region that is considered less advantageous than the northern parts. Because poverty is strongly correlated with development policy, the research focuses on the government's development program and socio-economic issues. The main assumption is, terrorists activities are possible because of the support of several factors, e.g. social-economic disparity, the widening gap between the rich and the poor, poverty, pressure from the globalization process,

and ineffectiveness of public management policies which the terrorists used as safe haven.xiv

In previous public debates, participants have claimed that poverty generates terrorism. The notion is hardly surprising and consistent with the results of most of the existing literature on the economics of conflicts. Alesina et al suggest that poor economic condition increase the probability of political coups. **Collier and Hoffler show that economic variables are powerful predictors of civil war, while political variables have low explanatory power will Miguel, Satyanath and Sergenti show that in African countries, negative exogenous shocks in economic growth increase the likelihood of civil conflict. **Viii Because terrorism is a manifestation of political conflict, these results seem to indicate that poverty and adverse economic conditions may play an important role in explaining terrorism.

However, recent empirical studies have challenged the above view. Krueger, Laitin and Piazza find no evidence to support the suggestion that poverty may generate terrorism. In particular, the results in Krueger and Laitin suggest that among countries with similar levels of civil liberties, poor countries do not generate more terrorism than rich countries.xviii Conversely, among countries with similar levels of civil liberties, richer countries seem to be preferred targets for transnational terrorist's attacks. Alberto Abadie further challenged previous notions with the statement that terrorist risk is not significantly higher for poorer countries, once the effects of other country-specific characteristics such as the level of political freedom are taken into account. In particular Abadie challenged Collier and Huffier civil war and poverty theory by stating that lack of political freedom is shown to explain terrorism. Countries with intermediate levels of political freedom are shown to be more prone to terrorism than countries with high levels of political freedom or countries with highly authoritarian regimes xx Abadie researched countries like Iraq, Spain and Russia, and concludes that countries that underwent transition from an authoritarian regime to a democracy may be accompanied by temporary increases in terrorism. Motivated by the above argument and counter argument that poverty generates terrorism, this research will analyze the connection between the two in the context of the terrorists from West Java.xx

Four researched areas in West Java province in general demonstrated that the number of people living below the poverty line has increased significantly since Indonesia's economic crisis in 1998. Even though the New Order government is considered to have applied repressive security policy and authoritarian rule, however, people's economic conditions were much better. The unemployment rate was not as high as the period after the reform era and the price of basic needs are still reasonable. After being affected by severe economic and monetary crisis, life has become more difficult and little hope for a better future. People of lower income group have seen their purchasing power decreasing from time to time. The biggest blow came when President Yudhoyono increased the prices of oil, gas, and electricity. The most obvious impact is the increase of the unemployment rate that led to increasing number of people living below the poverty line. XXIII

In the researched village, unemployment rate among productive ages' population is extremely high. Even though they have jobs, however, they are still "semi-unemployed", as they are mostly working in informal sectors, e.g. as street vendors, ojeg (motorbike taxis), or laborers earning daily wages. The high unemployment rate and slow economic growth forced Indonesian laborers to search job overseas as migrant workers to neighboring countries (Malaysia, Singapore), or to the Middle-East countries (Saudi Arabia as the main destination). In receiving countries, male workers (Tenaga Kerja Indonesia or TKI) are usually employed as drivers or hard laborers in the construction sector, while female workers (known as Tenaga Kerja Wanita or female laborers) are preferred as domestic servants.

However, workers must provide the agent with a significant amount of money to be sent overseas. For those left behind, frustration has increased, especially with the current uncertain economic conditions. These conditions form a perfect breeding ground for the rise of radicalism. Here, the benefit out of becoming a jihadist is that it enables him or her to attain symbolic capital (social importance). This is particularly attractive for potential recruits who have experienced the "absence of possibilities" to have a meaningful life, or who feel that they have little social worth xxiii

West Javanese soil is considered as the most fertile in comparison to other provinces. However, agricultural sector is not

a major concern of the provincial government. Mismanagement in the agricultural sector, e.g. the production cost of rice being equal or sometimes higher than the sale price of agricultural products. had caused working in the agricultural sector to be less attractive compared to become hard laborer in major cities or being a migrant worker. As a potential source of income, fishery is not an attractive job to the Sundanese living in the southern coastal region. Fishermen in Cianjur and Garut are still using manual labor and lack modern technology equipment to support their income-generating activities. It is not surprising that the income from fishing is inadequate and could only cover the purchase of basic needs. Another potential area that has not been developed is tourism, especially ecotourism and cultural tourism. West Java is endowed with beautiful places, beaches, and rich cultures that show potential as a source of income. Unfortunately, they have not been developed to the economic advantage of the population.

As in other parts in Indonesia, West Java has been experiencing wide disparity between the rich and poor. Centralized economic policy and policy focuses more on infrastructures development have left behind concern for human resources development and other social and cultural aspects. People from the grass root level have become more marginalized in the economic system. Even though the government has several excellent policies and programmed to eradicate poverty, the implementation has been poor. As in other parts of Indonesia, West Java is seriously confronted with problems related to corruption, collusion and nepotism (KKN). As a national issue, the level of corruption among the West Javanese government officers is so high that it has almost become inherent to the culture. Therefore, even though Indonesia is entering the reform era, the practice of KKN that was widely known during the New Order government is still widely practiced despite changes of government.

As stated earlier, poverty is not the single factor that generates terrorism and radicalism. As demonstrated in researched areas, people with very low purchasing power to buy food and other essentials, are supposed to receive government funds by way of compensation for the rise of oil prices. However, some well deserving fund receiver respondents were excluded from the list. They also refused to question the government regarding

distribution policies and criteria of receiver. They applied the attitude called *nrima* and *pasrah*, considered that all happened to their life as a fate/ divine decree (takdir) from God while He is testing their faith.

Historical Factor; DI/TII Rebel Movement

DI is an abbreviation of Darul-Islam (the abode/domain of Islam), and TII is Tentara Islam Indonesia or the Indonesian Islamic Army. This rebel movement was founded at Garut and Tasikmalaya area in West Java by a charismatic *uelama* named Sekarmaji Marijan Kartosuwiryo on August 7th 1949. Originally the movement brings two main issues: the unfair share of economic development from central to the provincial government as well as challenged the dominance of Communist Party in President Soekarno's government.

The DI/TII rebellion began when Kartosuwiryo, as a Commander of the *Hizbu'llah* (the army of God), declared a Holy War against the Indonesian government under President Soekarno. Due to DI/TII aimed to establish an Islamic state, at first the organization aroused immense popular support among the Moslems Sundanese. The rebel movement disrupted the lives of thousands of villagers in the Priangan (part of West Java, includes Bandung, Garut, Cianjur and Tasikmalaya) area from 1947 to 1962, resulting in the deaths of 40,000 Indonesians (mostly Sundanese). The support of DI/TII movement spread to other Indonesian provinces, e.g. Central Java, South Kalimantan, South Sulawesi, and Aceh in Northern tip of Sumatra Island. The support is not in term of ideological support, also demonstrated by physical revolution.

The Indonesian government considered Kartosuwiryo as a rebel; however, some of his Sundanese followers regarded him as a hero and the nation's savior. A DI/TII follower stated as follows:

His contribution was more than Soekarno and other nationalist leaders. When Soekarno and the Republic's army moved its capital city to Yogyakarta after the Renville agreement^{xxv} Kartosuwiryo refused to follow and remain in West Java to defend the province taken over by the Dutch. He fills in the condition of vacuum of power in Indonesia". xxvi

Another statement on the role of Kartosuwiryo during the Indonesian struggle for independence was stated as follows:

When he learnt on the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (6 and 9 May 1945) from the radio, he followed up this development by socializing the formulation of Indonesian Islamic State. He arrived in Jakarta with Hizbu'llah army, gathered the mass to socialized formation, and introduce the proclamation concept of Islamic State.**

The reaction of Indonesian government was conducting a military operation with a main purpose to capture Kartosuwiryo and his followers. This operation took place for 13 years and ended after the Indonesian Armed Forces captured him at Rakutak Mountain in June 4th 1962. He was then sentenced to death on September 1962. **xxviii**

Even though the DI/TII movement officially dispersed, the followers and its families are remaining to keep the ideology and ideal to form an Islamic state according to Islamic Law (Syari). The government's economic and political strategy during the New Order era led to marginalization of those who perceived as "the DI/TII circle". New Order's President discriminately against this group. The same regimes also refused to provide development assistance. Economic supports and infrastructures development were given only to those supportive to Golkar (the major party during New Order government). The fact is, villages in Garut and Tasikmalaya area, were perceived as the center of ex-DI/TII followers, during New Order's era they mostly the supporters of Islamic Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan/The United Development Party). The implications to this discriminative development policy are the continuing marginalization and increasing resentment from these areas. The JI terrorist's activists believed as rooted from the DI/TII networks consisted of ex-members and family circle.

Islamic Teaching and Ideology

Another point to be considered in examining the characteristics of the West Javanese rural area is the role of pesantren (Islamic boarding school) and its Kyai (Islamic teachers). In the research region, the role of Kyai is most significant. As the most powerful and influential informal leaders, their statements are often considered to be unwritten law. In the pesantren, Kyai are authoritative and sole figures in religious

teaching as well as in the implementation of independent curriculum at the *pesantren*. The figures of *Kyai*, their charismatic appearance and knowledge of Islam led the *santri* (Islamic pupils) to have more faith in the *Kyai* rather than in the government. However, *Kyai* without deep understanding of Islam often resulted in misinterpretation of Islamic teachings, e.g. understanding of Jihad.**

However, their view of Islam, especially in regard to the relationship with the West needs to be discussed in correlation to the role of international media. As a main source of information, the population relied almost entirely on television news programs, while newspapers, radio broadcasts and other mass media are less popular. Television had undoubtedly played the most significant role in drawing perception of Sundanese population of international politics and their position against the West. In regard to terrorism, televised biography of terrorists and their actions are often counterproductive to the purpose of reducing terrorism. New recruits to terrorist outfits often join after they have viewed television news programs on terrorists' trials and testimonies.**

A poignant example of media exposure space was shown in the trials of the terrorists behind the first Bali bomb, Amrozi bin Nurhasyim and Abdul Azis alias Imam Samudra in 2003. They rejoiced in their death sentences, shouting: "Allahu Akbar!" (God the mightiest). Both terrorists used their highly publicized trials as a mouthpiece for inspiring potential recruits to the cause, as well as for gaining sympathy among ordinary Muslims. This is illustrated by Samudra's following comments: "In death we live peacefully and in death we draw near to God". Another comment is: "I'd like to say thank you to the prosecutors, which has demanded the death sentences". **XXXI** Imam Samudra was executed together with two other terrorists, Amrozi and Ali Ghufron alias Mukhlas, in Nusakambangan Island state prison, on November 2008.

The Role of Mass media and Problems of Political Communication

The present international political system is perceived as unsupportive to the interest of the Islamic states. Even before the 9/11 bomb blast in the US, resentment against the US was high in countries with a Muslim majority. **xx*ii** Sympathy for the Palestinians, were perceived as being victimized by the Israeli, are also high among the Sundanese.

- The respondents support, the 9/11 terrorist attack on WTC and the Pentagon. They believe that the US deserved to be destroyed since it is considered to be pro-Israel/Zionist. During the Israel-Palestinian war, the US and its Zionist's allies have intimidated the Palestinians, and then the Iraqis and the Afghan. They gave a call to wage jihad against the US and its allies.
- Osama bin Laden is an imaginary actor created by the US to discredit the Islamic world.
- Osama Bin Laden is considered as Islamic hero. He has even been compared to Robin Hood in terms of supporting the marginalized groups (Islamic/Muslim population and the Muslims living in developing countries).
- Support terrorists' attacks in Indonesia, especially bombing in Bali. Bali deserved to be the terrorists' target because it is considered to be a "maksiat" (sinful)**** place, and many American and Western tourists have been visiting Bali as holiday destination.
- The Bomb blasts in Indonesia were conducted by US and its Zionist allies. The terrorist attacks then were followed by accusation of Islamic groups to find the government's justification to suppress Islamic groups.
- The two most wanted masterminds of Indonesian terrorism; the Malaysian nationals Dr. Azahari and Noordin Mohammad Top are only Indonesian police's imaginary actors. The police needed to find scapegoats for damage done by terrorists', as well as to hide their incompetence to provide security. The terrorists behind the Bali bomb, such as Amrozi and Imam Samudra are the

victims of the police and the Indonesian government. Some respondents believe they must have been strongly forced by the police to admit their involvement.

- If they were being offered to join the jihad to Afghanistan or Iraq, they would be pleased to serve, as the best opportunity to pursue a so-called ticket to heaven. They believe as soldier of Islam (Hizbullah), they are promised paradise as glorious martyrs, while the one left behind would be recipients of a global Islamic state*** or of local bylaws based on Syariah (Islamic law).
- As found in the "last night video shoot" of the actors of the second Bali bomb, they believe that martyrdom operations are permissible in Islamic law.

The above opinions represent only a small percentage of the public opinion of Indonesian people. However, the statements are significant considering that a massive bomb blast only needed one suicide bomber as the operator.

Conclusion and Recommendation.

The Sundanese population is well known for being a peace loving and devoted Muslims. However, due to the above mentioned factors, some of Indonesian terrorists are Sundanese. Research in less privileged regions have suggested that poverty is not the only factor that generates terrorism. Other social-economic issues especially related to the government's development policy also foment increasing dissatisfaction among the population. The impact of globalization, especially related to the role of mass media is also responsible for establishing opinions on international and national politics. Last but not least is the role of informal leaders and Islamic teachings at the religious schools known as pesantren.

Based on the above discussion, the author recommends the following actions to be taken by the Indonesian government. First it should implement poverty eradication programs according to the region's specific needs and characteristics. Moreover, is necessary to reduce the feeling of injustice, the government needs to enforce law and equality before the law and to Reduce the level of KKN. Even though the present government is strongly concerned about those issues, the practice of KKN remained as massive as in the New Order era

The government should also pay more attention to education program and provide more job opportunities. Education program should not only focused on public school under the government's administration, but also give greater attention on the physical and quality development of pesantren. Majority of people in the rural area send their children to the pesantren as an option to avoid the relatively high cost of public school. The Department of Education, together with the Department of Religious Affairs, should make regular training and education programmed to develop the quality of religious teachers as well as provide courses on specific issue.

Last but not least, the government should reformulate the content of television programs. In our research sample television is the main source of information, entertainment and the formulation of public opinion. Currently, television programs mainly exhibit the life of upper-middle class people. Realistic views of the life of the majority of Indonesians needs to have more exposure. To minimize tension among inter religious groups; television also needs to display more moderate religious views.

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West Javanese is also referred as Sundanese. Sunda is part of West Java but not vice versa, because West Java is also consists of Cirebonese and Bantenese (before 2000).

*Wahabi Islam is a puritanical Saudi Islamic sect founded by Muhammad ibn-Abd-al-Wahab (1703–1792), which regards all other sects as heretical. By the early 20th century it had spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula; it still remains the official ideology of the Saudi Arabian kingdom. See www.tiscali.co.uk/reference/

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bidl"vxx

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Wahabi Islam is a puritanical Saudi Islamic sect founded by Muhammad ibn-Abd-al-Wahab (1703-1792), which regards all other sects as heretical. By the early 20th century it had spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula; it still remains the official ideology of the Saudi Arabian kingdom. See

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unsuccessful attempt to resolve the disputes that arose following the 1946 Linggadjati Agreement. In the terms of the agreement, the Netherlands agreed to recognize Republican rule over Java, Sumatra and Madura. The Republic would become a constituent state of the 'United States of Indonesia', which should be established by January 1, 1949 at the latest and form a union together with the Netherlands, Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles. The Dutch queen would remain official head of this union. The consequence of this agreement was Siliwangi, the Army Division of West Java, conducted a long march to move to Yogyakarta in Central Java. See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linggadjati Agreement, accessed on February 23rd, 2007.

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according to Islamic fundamentalist and jihadists' belief, Bali is a maksiat place because of it population is predominantly non-Muslim. Moreover, Bali is also a favorite tourist's destination and adapted Western cultures, e.g. many shops, caf, restaurants served alcohol.

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