



ajf TEMASEK FOUNDATION
Asia Journalism Forum

Reporting **Religion**

DILEMMAS OF PUBLIC DISCOURSE

All Rights Reserved. To cite or use the contents of this presentation,
please write to ips.publicaffairs@nus.edu.sg for permission.
The contents cannot be used without permission.



Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information



Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore

Mapping Islam in Muslim Southeast Asia



DR. SUZAINA KADIR
SPPSAK@NUS.EDU.SG

Key Points:



- **Islam in Southeast Asia**
 - Total Numbers
 - Defining Characteristics
- **Muslim Religiosity in Southeast Asia – New Data**
 - Pew Survey Data (2010)
 - Riaz Hassan's Study on Muslim religiosity
- **Making sense of the religious resurgence**
- **Implications for state-society relations**
- **Implications for administration of religion**

Muslims in Southeast Asia



| Country | % of Muslims | Total No. (approx) |
|-------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Indonesia | 88% | 204 m* |
| Malaysia | 55% | 12 m |
| Philippines | 4.6% | 4 m |
| Thailand | 3.8% | 2 m |
| Singapore | 14.7% | 457,435** |
| Brunei | 67% | 230,000 |

•*Based on 2010 Pew Report estimates

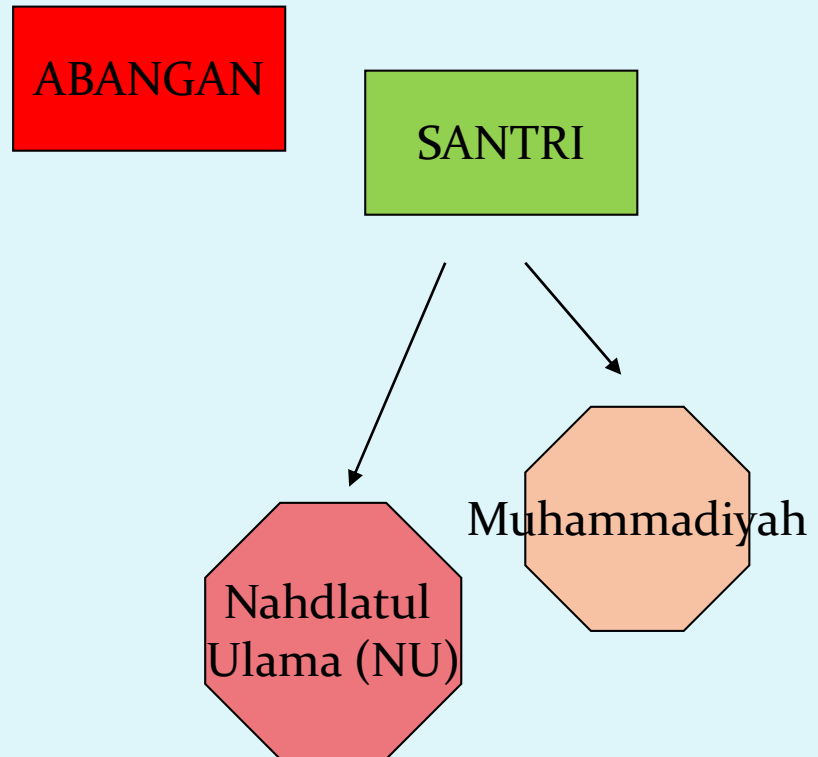
•** Based on 2010 Singapore Census

Muslims in Southeast Asia

- **Defining characteristics:**

- Heterogeneity
 - ✦ Islam is not native religion
 - ✦ Conversion process was gradual and not uniform
 - ✦ Colonial administration differed
 - ✦ Geertz's classification
 - ✦ Differences in Malay Peninsula
 - Kaum Tua (sufi-influenced) and Kaum Muda (reformists)

DIVERSITY IN INDONESIAN ISLAM



Muslim Religiosity in Contemporary Southeast Asia



- **2001-2002 survey of Islamic political orientation among Indonesian Muslims**
- **The Pew Study**
 - Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project on Muslim public's view on Islam's role in political life, their views on groups like Hamas and Hizbollah
 - Surveys conducted between April-May 2010
- **Comparative study of Muslim piety**
 - By Professor Riaz Hassan
 - Over 6000 respondents from Malaysia, Pakistan, Iran, Egypt, Indonesia, Turkey and Kazakhstan on their religiosity

Muslim Religiosity in Contemporary Southeast Asia



- The more recent findings all support that argument that religiosity and Islamic identity among Southeast Asian Muslims is quite high:
 - In the 2001-2002 Indonesian survey, 70.8% of respondents agree that the state should require all Muslim men and women to abide by Shariah law
 - ✦ 67% feel that an Islamic government is best for the country
 - In the Pew Survey, 95% of respondents from Indonesia think that it is good that Islam plays a large role in politics
 - ✦ 91% see Islam's influence in politics as positive
 - NB: Indonesian Muslims interpret Islamic law very broadly – majority disagree with *hudud* laws e.g. stoning, cutting of hands

Muslim Religiosity in Contemporary Southeast Asia



- Riaz Hassan's index of orthodoxy – “I know Allah really exists & I have no doubt about it;” “I believe that miracles happened the way the Qur'an says they did;” and complete believe in “life after death” and “devil really exists”
 - Malaysia: 55% scored a rank of 5 (highest)
 - Indonesia: 49% scored rank of 5 (highest)
 - ✦ Contrast with Turkey at 33% and Egypt at 39%

Muslim Religiosity in Contemporary Southeast Asia



- **Riaz Hassan question on whether you would agree that a person who says there is no Allah is likely to hold a dangerous political views:**
 - 84% of Indonesians agree
 - 71% of Malaysians
 - ✦ Contrast to 46% in Turkey and 37% in Iran
- **Riaz Hassan's index of adherence to obligatory ritualistic practices:**
 - 44% of Indonesian surveyed scored the high of 4, 49% scored rank of 3
 - 34% of Malaysians scored rank of 4, 47% scored rank of 3

Muslim Religiosity in Contemporary Southeast Asia



- “Evidence shows a robust religious commitment among Muslims, characterized by a strong commitment to Islamic beliefs and religious devotion, which is grounded in traditions of scripturalism...Islam plays a large role in the everyday activities of Muslims”
- “The religious commitment in Southeast Asia is characterized by ideological orthodoxy, strong emphasis on ritualism, devotionism, image of Islam grounded in sacred scriptures and personal religious experience”
- Adherence to formal faith has endured in Southeast Asia...

Islam in Contemporary Southeast Asia



- **Muslims are more conscious of Islam**
 - Islamic identity/practices are more evident in the public domain
- **Islamic political parties and social movements are a real presence**
- **Yet, heterogeneity among Southeast Asian Muslims has also increased**
 - More diverse ideological strands, competing for space and voice
 - A growing marketplace?

TRADITIONALIST
(Nahdlatul Ulama)

SALAFI

Islam Liberal

FUNDAMENTALIST
[WAHABI]
(Laskar Jihad)

ISLAMIST
A. KHOMEINI, ALI SHARIATI
B. HASAN AL-BANNA, SAYYID QUTB & MAUDUDI

Neo-Fundamentalist
(FPI)

Jihadist-Salafis
(JI, MMI)

Radicals
(Hizhbur Tahrir)

Moderates
(PKS, PAS)

IDEOLOGICAL STREAMS IN CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM SOUTHEAST ASIA

Explaining Islamic Resurgence



- **20th Century Islamic reformism**
 - Islamic modernism
 - The rise of wahabism
- **Global Islamic activism**
 - The activism of the Muslim Brotherhood
- **Modernization & industrialization**
 - Expansion of education
 - Urbanization and class restructuring
 - Crisis of identity among Muslims
- **Dynamics of state-government relations**
 - Opposition to authoritarian regimes
 - Political competition
- **State-directed Islamization**

Muslim Religiosity in Southeast Asia: Implications and Opportunities



- Muslim religiosity is here to stay
- Religiosity within a secular state framework
 - What is this?
- For Muslim majority countries, an integrated framework?
 - Integrated Islamic education as an example?
 - Islam in democratic Indonesia as an example?
- For countries with Muslim minorities (e.g. Singapore), there must be:
 - adequate acknowledgement of Muslim piety
 - adequate space for the marketplace of ideas to compete

The End



THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION