

MUSLIM'S MODERATE ATTITUDE IN BEKASI DISTRICT AND THE PROBLEM OF BUILDING THE MOTHER TERESSA CHURCH CIKARANG

SIKAP MODERAT UMAT MUSLIM KABUPATEN BEKASI DAN PROBLEM PEMBANGUNAN GEREJA IBU TERESSA CIKARANG

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Abstract

Catholics in Bekasi District don't have a permanent, licensed church building even though the number of Catholics in the Bekasi District is relatively large, around 12 thousand people. Building the Mother Teresa Church in Cikarang was unattainable. Although it had been proposed in 2015 with complete requirements under the existing regulations, the Bekasi District Government did not issue a permit. Through research with a qualitative approach, it was found that several factors can be categorized as supporting and inhibiting factors. The inhibiting factor is the unresponsive attitude of the Bekasi District Government and discriminatory administrative regulations. Meanwhile, the supporting factor is the moderate attitude of nearby residents who support the establishment of the Church. The delay in building permits for the Church has resulted in obstacles in worshipping Catholics and getting proper religious education. The attitude shown by the Bekasi District Government has violated the basic rights of Catholics to practice religious worship guaranteed in the constitution and statutory regulations.

Keywords: Mother Teresa Church, Religious Moderation, Discrimination, Right to Worship

Abstrak

Umat Katolik di Kabupaten Bekasi belum memiliki bangunan gereja yang permanen dan berijin, padahal umat Katolik di Kabupaten Bekasi jumlahnya relatif besar yaitu sekitar 12 ribu orang. Keinginan membangun Gereja Mother Teresa di Cikarang tak terwujud, meski ijin sudah diajukan sejak tahun 2015. Persyaratan lengkap sesuai ketentuan yang ada tidak menjamin, Pemerintah Daerah Kabupaten Bekasi mengeluarkan ijinnya. Melalui kajian dengan pendekatan kualitatif, ditemukan bahwa terdapat beberapa faktor yang bisa dikategorikan sebagai pendukung dan penghambat. Faktor penghambat adalah sikap Pemerintah Daerah Kabupaten Bekasi yang tidak responsif dan regulasi administratif yang diskriminatif. Sementara faktor yang mendukung adalah sikap moderat warga sekitar yang memberikan dukungan atas pendirian gereja. Terhambatnya ijin pembangunan gereja tersebut, berdampak pada adanya kendala dalam hal beribadah warga Katolik dan sulitnya mendapatkan pembelajaran agama sebagaimana semestinya. Sikap yang ditunjukkan Pemerintah Daerah Kabupaten Bekasi tersebut, telah melanggar hak asasi pengamalan ibadah keagamaan warga negara yaitu umat Katolik yang dijamin dalam konstitusi dan peraturan perundang-undangan.

Kata Kunci: Gereja Mother Teresa, Moderasi Beragama, Diskriminasi, Hak Beribadah

INTRODUCTION

Rejection of efforts to build houses of worship for certain religious groups by residents nearby occurs a lot in Indonesia. As a result, many people are worshipped not in proper places for worship but temporary buildings such as school buildings, shophouses, and road pavements. The problem with the construction of houses of worship that most often occurs is the construction of churches. This problem is an old issue that disrupts harmonious relations among religious believers in Indonesia (Ajiyastuti, 2018; Burhanuddin et al., 2019; Halim & Mubarak, 2021).

Ideally, the founders of the house of worship, the community, and the government will continue to play their roles based on their respective capacities, but then they are in a common ground. The church founders must show a generous spirit and integration with existing groups; the Muslim community acts as social control, while the government acts as legitimators (Halim, 2018).

The Wahid Institute, the Setara Institute, the Paramadina Foundation team and MPRK-UGM, the Moslem Moderate Society, and the Center for Religious and cross-Cultural Studies (CRCS)-UGM reported studies on religious freedom in various years. Based on the reports, the tensions that arise around the establishment of churches remain prominent. The issue of church building continues to disturb and often creates social pressures that can lead to conflict and violent resolution (Fauzi, Panggabean, et al., 2011), or the government relocates the Church to another location (Azm and Restu, 2020).

The delay in establishing places of worship, including churches, is not due to a single

factor but many factors. Burhanuddin's study stated that the obstacles to establishing places of worship were due to regional autonomy regulations that were discriminatory towards minority groups, such as strict regulations on permits to build houses of worship (Burhanuddin et al., 2019). In the CRCS study, many obstacles to church establishment occur due to certain groups' lack of communication, provocation, or intimidation (CRCS, 2011: 17). While in Mustolehudin's study, there are at least three aspects of residents' rejection of the establishment of houses of worship, namely: theological aspects, administrative aspects, and economic aspects (Mustolehudin, 2016).

The CRCS mapped the problem of church establishment into four categories: churches that did not have problems, churches that had problems but were later resolved, churches that did not have problems were later brought into question, and churches that from the start have not resolved their problems. Based on this category, one of the churches included in the last category is the Church of Mother Teresa Cikarang Bekasi District., In 2015, the Church applied for a building permit from the Bekasi government for the first time. But the committee did not get it until now (2001).

There has been no comprehensive study discussing the issue of the establishment of the Mother Teresa Church Cikarang Bekasi, so the information obtained tends to be partial, incomplete and does not explain what happened. A study is needed to comprehensively photograph the dynamics of the construction of the Mother Teresa church in Cikarang, Bekasi District.

Based on this thought, this study's objectives were determined: a) to find out the chronology

of the establishment of the Teresa Church Cikarang Bekasi District; b) to know what are the supporting and inhibiting factors for the establishment of the Teresa Church Cikarang Bekasi District; and c) to know the impacts caused by the delay in the permit for the establishment of the Teresa Cikarang Church, Bekasi District.

Many researchers have conducted studies on establishing churches that experienced obstacles, whether by individuals, groups or research institutions. The First is a study by Ihsan Ali Fauzi et al., 2011 which examined 13 churches that experienced and did not experience problems (7 Catholics and 6 Protestants). The study concluded that informal friendships could be an effective tool for issues that arise in church establishments (Fauzi et al., 2011). The Second is Rudy Hariansyah Alam's study related to the problem of building churches in Bekasi District, among others, HKBP Filadelfia, HKBP Setu, and the Mother Teresa Lippo Cikarang Church in 2015. The study revealed the mechanism and process for applying for permits and the conflict over establishing the three churches. The third study by Abdul Jamil Wahab et al. was conducted on 10 Protestant churches in 2019. The study concluded several obstacles to church establishment, including community rejection based on theological reasons, stereotypes and prejudices, and the existence of non-transparent licensing aspects, thus causing community resistance, social inequality, and unresponsive local government attitudes (Wahab et al., 2020).

All these studies have similarities and differences from this study. The similarity is that they examine the problems in establishing the Church, the supporting and inhibiting factors, and their impacts. The

difference is that the object of this study is more focused on exploring the background of the attitude of the community and the Bekasi District Government, which seems contradictory. The community tends to accept the construction of the Teresa Cikarang Church, Bekasi District, while the Bekasi District Government looks to reject it. This background has not been widely studied by previous research. This study will elaborate on the reasons for accepting or rejecting the Church's development so that an analysis can be carried out based on the theories used in this study.

Religion is a human right included in fundamental rights that cannot be reduced or suspended under any conditions (non-derogable). So, it is a necessity that the state has a constitutional obligation to protect religious freedom for every citizen. The Indonesian Constitution of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia recognizes the right to religion and worship, which is stated in Article 29, paragraph (2). It is said, "The state guarantees the independence of every citizen to embrace their religion and to worship according to their religion and beliefs."

Although establishing houses of worship is not synonymous with religious freedom, constructing houses of worship is one of the manifestations of the right to practice citizens' religious worship guaranteed in the constitution and statutory regulations. On that basis, the government needs to respect and ensure protection for every effort by religious communities who want to build houses of worship. The United Nations explicitly guarantees the security of residents' houses of worship. The right to build a house of worship is a manifestation of freedom of religion or belief, such as using and installing

symbols of religion/belief and observing religious/belief holidays (KontraS, 2012).

The Government of Indonesia has issued Joint Regulations of the Minister of Religion and the Minister of Home Affairs Number 9 of 2006 and Number 8 of 2006. It is known as PMB 2006. PMB 2006 regulates the Guidelines for the Implementation of Duties of Regional Heads/Deputy Regional Heads in Maintaining Religious Harmony, Empowering Religious Harmony Forums, and Establishing Houses of Worship. In essence, the Joint Regulation contains three main guidelines: first, guidelines on the duties of regional heads/deputy regional heads in maintaining religious harmony as an essential part of national harmony. Second is the issue of empowering Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama (FKUB or the Religious Harmony Forum, hereafter abbreviated as RHF). The third is the problem of building houses of worship.

However, even though there are regulations, the fact is that the problem of building houses of worship still occurs. Under these circumstances, the resolution of cases of the establishment of houses of worship must also require strategies and approaches based on an inclusive attitude in responding to differences in beliefs and being able to contextualize religious values without losing the principles and essence of their teachings. In this case, applying the paradigm of religious moderation is crucial to respond to obstacles to establishing houses of worship by certain groups in society. A moderate attitude toward religion can be a solution that can create harmony and freedom in carrying out religious life.

Normatively, in Islamic literature, the term “moderate Islam” is synonymous with “*Islam*

wasathiyah”, which refers to the word “*ummatâ wasathâ*”, which is contained in QS *al-Baqarah* [2]: 143. Some exegetes explain the meaning of “*ummatâ wasathâ*”. One of them means justice (*‘adl*). Justice is a goal that is highly emphasized in Islam. Through a justice attitude, the teachings of Islam imply compassion for fellow human beings without discriminating against ethnicity and religion.

The definition of justice here includes the notion of individual and structural justice. In the Islamic tradition, there are many events where Muslims call for resistance to injustice through various forms and existing media. Peace will not be realized without justice. Unfair treatment can arise because there is discrimination. After all, the birth of discrimination usually begins with one-sided thinking and is then followed by physical and psychological violence.

Religious moderation, commonly translated as ‘the middle way,’ is religiosity that focuses on the spirit of moderate and essential religious teachings. One indicator of religious moderation is tolerance. Tolerance is an attitude of giving space and not interfering with the rights of others to believe, express beliefs, and express opinions, even though it is different from what we believe. Thus, tolerance refers to an open, graceful attitude and gentleness in accepting differences. Namely, agreeing to disagree accompanied by respect, accepting different people as part of us, and positive thinking and trustworthiness toward other people are essential values in tolerance (Ministry of Religion’s Research and Development Agency, 2020).

In addition to religious moderation, this study will also look at the phenomenon of rejection of the establishment of houses of worship by certain groups through the concept of

Kebebasan Beragama dan Berkeyakinan (KBB or the Freedom of Religion and Belief, hereafter abbreviated as FRB). FRB norms have existed in the Indonesian constitution since 1945. FRB is also an established concept as part of Human Rights. So far, this concept is guaranteed in various international human rights conventions and the constitutions of the countries that have ratified it.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative method. This method was deliberately chosen to reveal the meaning behind the existing phenomena. Data was collected through interviews, observations, documentation studies, triangulation and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). Interviews as meetings to exchange information and ideas are carried out through question and answer so that the meaning can be constructed in a particular topic. This study conducted in-depth interviews with parties who understood the research problem. They are the construction committee of Mother Teresa Church, the officers of the Church secretariat, the Chair of the RHF Bekasi District, employees of the Ministry of Religion Bekasi District, religious leaders and community leaders in Bekasi District, and other parties who understand this issue.

The next stage is data analysis. In general, the researchers use the theory of Miles and Huberman to analyze the data. It divides into several processes: data reduction, data display or presentation, conclusions and data verification (Sugiono, 2012). This qualitative study used the case study method that emphasizes certain cases in the object of analysis. Robert K. Yin (1996) explains that there are three typologies of case studies,

namely: (1) explanatory case studies, (2) exploratory case studies, and (3) descriptive case studies (Bungin, 2007). Yin puts the three typologies based on the questions that must be answered in the case study. These are how and why questions and, to a certain extent, answers what questions. Thus, this discussion includes the chronology of licensing for the construction of the Mother Teresa Church, how it can be hampered, the supporting and hindering factors for permitting its construction, and the impacts.

RESULTS OF RESEACRH AND DISCUSSIONS

Chronology of Church Establishment Permits

Churches in Bekasi District have a plot of land with an area of 7,500 M2. The land was purchased by the Diocese of the Catholic Church of Jakarta from the developer PT. Lippo Cikarang. The land was deliberately bought and earmarked to establish Mother Teresa's Church. Since 2007, the construction committee has been trying to complete the permit to construct houses of worship. The committee is trying to achieve the construction permit following the existing provisions, namely the requirements listed in the 2006 PBM. The committee has pocketed a list of names and ID cards of 90 users of houses of worship and support from 60 people from nearby residents. Both requirements have been approved by the local official, namely the village head.

Then, the church construction committee submitted to the local RHF a letter of recommendation. In 2014, RHF Bekasi District, chaired by Sulaiman Zachawerus, issued a written recommendation letter for church construction permit Number:

138/RHF/K-VIII/2014, August 2, 2014. In the following year, 2015, the construction committee also received a written recommendation letter from the Ministry of Religion, Bekasi District, which Shobirin signed as the head of Kankemenag Bekasi District with the number Kd.10.16/I/BA.04/2949/2015 dated July 08, 2015. In 2015, the committee applied for a permit to construct a church house of worship from the local government of Bekasi District along with the above requirements.

By the provisions in the PBM 2006, it should have fulfilled some of these requirements. The Regional Government of Bekasi District can issue a church building permit. But, Catholics in the Cikarang, Bekasi District, have not been able to worship at the Church because the construction has not yet received a permit. Finally, they worshipped in the school building belonging to the Trinity Foundation for years. The location of the building is right next to the land where the Church is planned to be built.

Every Saturday and Sunday, Catholics in Cikarang City and its surroundings visit the school building belonging to the Trinity Foundation located on Jalan Majapahit. The arrival of Catholics to the school building was not for the school or the parents' meeting but for carrying out weekly services. They cannot hold services at the Church because it has not yet received a construction permit from the Regional Government led by Neneng Hasanah.

Before being elected as Regent of Bekasi District, Neneng Hasanah Yasin once came to the Catholic church congregation asking for vote support from Catholics in the Regional Head Election of Bekasi District in 2017. At that time, She said, "we understand

the problems you are experiencing, for that choose me, if I am elected, I will solve the problem of this church". After being elected as Regent, she never kept her promise. Even when the Church submitted a letter of recommendation and a building permit never got a response or reply. She also never wanted to reply to a letter requesting a hearing submitted by the Church (interview with AT, 55 years old, in Cikarang Bekasi, October 30 2021).

Neneng Hasanah Yasin participated twice in the regional elections and was elected Regent. Firstly, she became Regent in 2012 in partnership with Rohim Mintareja. Then in the 2017 election, paired with Eka Supria Atmaja, she was re-elected. For the second time as Regent, Neneng only lasted until 2018. The Anti-graft Commission arrested her due to Meikarta licensing bribery case.

After her arrestment, the deputy regent, Eka Supria Atmaja, was inaugurated by the Governor of West Java, Ridwan Kamil, on June 12 2018, at Gedung Sate, Bandung, to become Bekasi district regent. Eka will continue the remaining term of office from 2017-2022. Eka's leadership did not last long. On Sunday, July 11 2021, Eka Supria Atmaja died after fighting against Covid-19. Eka was confirmed positive and underwent treatment at the hospital on June 1, 2021. Furthermore, Dr H. Dani Ramdan, who previously served as Head of the West Java Province BPBD Service, was inaugurated by the Governor of West Java Ridwan Kamil as the District Head of Bekasi.

When Dani Ramdan officially took office, the Church building committee conveyed to the Ministry of Religion the administration of church permits which had not been resolved for a long time. For this reason, on

Monday, September 6, 2021, at 16.00 WIB, the Head of the Bekasi District Ministry of Religion Office, H. Sopian and several officials at the Bekasi District Ministry of Religion Office carried out a coordination visit to the Mother Teresa Cikarang Parish Church Development Committee. It is the follow-up to the permit to establish the Mother Teresa Cikarang Parish Church, submitted in 2015. Head of the Ministry of Religion, Bekasi District, Mr Sopian, were greeted directly by the Father of the Parish Church, Father Antonius Suhardi Antara, with several development committees. As a result of the meeting, the Bekasi District Ministry of Religion will coordinate with the Bekasi District Government regarding the permit application for the construction of the Mother Teresa Cikarang Parish Church.

Thursday, September 16, 2021, at 2.00 pm in the Regent's Meeting Room, a Discussion Meeting on the Licensing Process for the Construction of the Mother Teresa Cikarang Parish Church was held. The meeting was chaired directly by the Regent of Bekasi, Dr H. Dani Ramdan, MT, and attended by the Chair of the RHF Bekasi District, Head 1 of MUI Bekasi District for Religious Harmony, Chair of the Parish of Mother Teresa Church Development Committee, the head of the Bekasi District Ministry of Religion: Mr Sopian, the Community Guidance of Catholic Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion West Java and from the Bekasi District Government Elements. In this meeting, it was stated that:

1. The Committee for the Construction of the Mother Teresa Cikarang Parish Church has received a recommendation from the Bekasi District Religious Harmony Forum (RHF) Number: 138/FKUB/K-VIII/2014 dated August 2,

2014;

2. The Committee for the Construction of the Mother Teresa Cikarang Parish Church has received a Recommendation from the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Bekasi District Number: Kd.10.16/I/BA.04/2949/2015 dated July 8, 2015;
3. The chairman of the MUI, led by KH. Amin Nur has given his blessing to the Committee for the Construction of the Mother Teresa Cikarang Parish Church after fulfilling the requirements according to the provisions;
4. After fulfilling the administrative requirements under the applicable regulations, the 2015 Mother Teresa Cikarang Parish Church Construction Committee has applied for a permit for the construction of the Mother Teresa Cikarang Parish Church to the Bekasi District Government, only until now, there has been no follow up on the letter;
5. The responses regarding the application for the permit for the construction of the Mother Teresa Cikarang Parish Church from a United Body of Nations and Politics, Cipta Karya, and the Bekasi District Government's One-Stop Investment and Integrated Service Agency are:
 - a. The permit for the construction of the Mother Teresa Cikarang Parish Church has not been issued until now simply because it has not met the technical requirements;
 - b. The land area to be built by the Mother Teresa Cikarang Parish Church is included in the master plan in the Lippo Cikarang area. Thus, it cannot be used for the construction of houses of worship, as stated in the Bekasi District Regional Regulation

Number 9 of 2017 concerning the Delivery of Housing Infrastructure, Facilities and Utilities. , Flats, and Commerce in Bekasi District.

6. The meeting agreed upon the solution so that the Mother Teresa Cikarang Parish Church could be constructed on the land. The Development Committee had to propose to PT. Lippo Cikarang changed masterplan from commercial land to social facilities land, then PT. Lippo Cikarang conveyed the changes to the masterplan to the Bekasi District Government;
7. The Bekasi government stated that it was ready to process the permit for the construction of the Mother Teresa Parish Church if the committee had met the technical requirements.

A few days after the meeting, the construction team for the Mother Teresa Church managed to complete all the provisions in point 6 above, even though it seems discriminatory because it is not applied to the construction of houses of worship for other religions. After that, an unexpected thing happened, the Governor of West Java Ridwan Kamil inaugurated Akhmad Marzuki as the deputy regent of Bekasi on October 27 2021. Akhmad Marzuki was appointed as the Acting Regent of Bekasi until 2022.

Supporting Factors

Several factors played a role in supporting the establishment of Mother Teresa Cikarang's Church, one of which was the moderate attitude shown by the Muslim community around the Church. At the beginning of the Church, a construction permit was discussed at the MUI Bekasi District, Chairman of MUI KH. Amin Nur stated that as the

majority community, Muslims must not oppress other religions nor make it difficult to establish houses of worship for other religions. Based on the meeting results and the MUI Chairperson's statement, it became a consideration for RHF Bekasi District to provide recommendations for the construction of the Mother Teresa Cikarang church (Interview with Atthoillah Chair of RHF Bekasi District, in Bekasi, October 30, 2021).

In some cases, the delay in church construction is due to the community's rejection on theological grounds. Some people think that giving an agreement to build a church means agreeing to falsehood and disbelief because they believe that Islam is the only true religion. However, this is not the case. Bekasi residents generally have a moderate attitude toward religion and do not object and give their approval. In addition to normative reasons for the laws and regulations, they also have moderate religious considerations. One spiritual leader believes that, although we only believe in one truth, Islam. Islam teaches a tolerant attitude towards other religions (interview with MS community leader, in Bekasi, November 2021).

Despite long-standing good relations between the Church and individuals outside the Church, certain groups disagree with its establishment. On behalf of the Ukhuwah Islamiyah Forum (Fukhis) and FPI coordinated by Qosim Nurseha came to demonstrate in front of the District Ministry of Religion Office. Bekasi. They also went to the house of the head of the RHF Bekasi District and demonstrated there. The demonstration demanded the cancellation of the recommendation letter from the Head of the Ministry of Religion and RHF. The

rejection of some community members for the construction of the Church was based on the theological reasons they understood.

There are several legal opinions in Islamic literature due to various conditions, whether or not the establishment of non-Muslim houses of worship is permissible. Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah divided the area into three clusters: cities built by Muslims, cities conquered by Muslims by war, and cities conquered by Muslims peacefully. If a city is built or controlled by the Muslims through war, then the dhimmi (non-Muslim people living in the territory of a Muslim country) may not build new houses of worship. Still, if a peace agreement controls a city, then the Ahlu 'ahdi (non-Muslims under protection) can establish churches and synagogues (Jauziyyah, Juz 2, 1997: 669).

The Hanafis believe that establishing churches (Christian houses of worship) and synagogues (Jewish houses of worship) in Muslim areas is prohibited, except for rehabilitation or repairing existing and damaged buildings. Concerning the construction of new houses of worship, new churches and synagogues may be established in rural areas outside the city (Jauziyyah, Juz 2, 1997: 694). It is not allowed in cities because the city is a place for religious symbols.

The Malikis believe that non-Muslims are not allowed to build the Church in a land that the Muslims built or ruled by war. But if they were conquered peacefully, the Church could stand, and they could build a new church. Meanwhile, the Hambali group thinks it does not justify the construction of new churches and synagogues or damaged buildings. The opinion of the Shafi'i group is similar to the idea of the Maliki group above (Jauziyyah, Juz 2, 1997: 696).

On that basis, in Islamic history, there are several practices where the Islamic government, on one occasion, took over the Church or did not allow it, and on another occasion, permitted to build churches. For example, Coptian churches were allowed to be established in the capital city of Cairo. Besides, there are many historical records written by Christians and Muslims about the establishment of a new church, including: a) during the reign of Abdul Malik (685-705), a magnificent church stood in Edessa, b) still under Abdul Malik, a church was also founded in Halwan, c) during the reign of al-Walid (705-715), a church was founded in Antioch in 711, d) during the reign of Yazid II (720) a church was built in the village of Sarmada in Antioch district, e) Iraqi Governor Khalid al-Kasri (724-728) founded a church in Iraq, f) a church was also founded in Nisibis in 759, g) Abu Sirjah church was also erected in old Cairo in a former old Roman fort, h) during the reign of al-Mahdi (775-785) a church was built in Baghdad, i) during the reign of Harun al-Rashid (786-809) a church was rebuilt in Baghdad by the residents of Samalu, besides that in the same year a church was built in the city of Basra, j) at the time of al-Ma'mun (813-833) authorized the construction of a church on a hill in al-Muqattam, a hill near Cairo. There are still many other churches that were established with the permission of the Islamic government, such as Burah (Egypt), Trakit (Baghdad), Fusat (Egypt), Jiddah, Fustat, and others (Arnold, 1981).

As already mentioned, the opinions of Islamic jurists regarding the establishment of houses of worship of other religions are indeed different. There are opinions from the most accommodating to those that tend to be intolerant. However, if studied carefully, the idea of the Islamic jurist is more because

of the existing social context. First, the conditions of the early development of Islam were coloured by conflict and war so that those who lost the battle became prisoners, and their wealth became *ghonimah* (spoils of war). Second, there is a locus context, namely the Islamic territory, especially the two holy cities, Mecca and Medina, which do not allow non-Muslims to become residents. In determining Islamic law, the context greatly influences establishing a legal decision. The rule for building churches in Indonesia cannot be equated with the law in the Holy Land, the Arabian Peninsula, or the Islamic State.

The results of the 2019 *Nahdlatul Ulama* National Deliberation in Banjar determined that non-Muslims in Indonesia had the status of equal citizens. It is in line with what the Prophet Muhammad had done by making the Medina Charter to unite the people of Medina. The Medina Charter emphasizes that the entire population of Medina is one sovereign nation without discrimination (mediaindonesia.com, 2019). Thus, non-Muslims in Indonesia do not have the status of *dhimmi* infidels or *ahlu'ahdy* infidels, so they have the same rights and obligations as Muslims, including the right to build houses of worship and other basic rights.

This opinion is a moderate attitude regarding the establishment of houses of worship in the context of the Indonesian state. One of the characteristics of religious moderation is being fair. Every believer of religion would want to own and want the establishment of a house of worship. The establishment of houses of worship is the need for religious people to be able to carry out worship by permitting them to build places of worship for other religious groups. Muslims have

shown a fair attitude and do not discriminate against these different religious groups.

Inhibiting Factors

Constraints on permits for establishing places of worship are generally due to public refusal. However, in constructing the Mother Teresa Cikarang Church, licensing problems arise from the local government, which does not provide building permits. The government should have the duty to protect the community's rights in exercising freedom of religion/belief. Still, in the case of the Mother Teresa Church, it never wanted to give a construction permit without an apparent reason (interview with BK Church construction committee, in Bekasi on October 30, 2021).

The District Government has not granted the permit to construct a church building. Bekasi Regent Neneng Hasanah Yasin until he was caught by the Anti-graft Commission in the Meikarta licensing bribery case in 2018. Deputy Regent Eka Supria Atmaja was inaugurated by the Governor of West Java Ridwan Kamil on June 12, 2018, as Regent of Bekasi District, replacing Neneng Hasanah Yasin. Eka will continue the remaining term of office from 2017-2022. However, on July 11, 2021, Regent Eka died because of Covid-19. The Regent's leadership was entrusted to the Regent of Dani Ramdan.

The replacement of the regional head gave new hope. Dani Ramdan was willing to discuss the construction of the Mother Teresa Church and resolve existing problems. Dani Ramdani is also helpful in providing building permits after the technical requirements related to changes to the master plan are met. But unfortunately, Acting Regent Dani

Ramdan was later replaced by Akhmad Marzuki as Acting Regent of Bekasi. After the Regent's position transfer, the church construction party had to start again from the beginning to approach the Regent Akhmad Marzuki so that the building permits could be issued.

Through the inauguration of Akhmad Marzuki, Acting Regent Dani Ramdan resumed his duties as head of the West Java BPBD. Due to this incident, the church construction permit process again encountered problems. Although that doesn't mean it's a failure, it must go through a new approach with a new official, namely Akhmad Marzuki. In addition to the requirements stipulated in the PBM 2006, the Development committee also has technical requirements, namely a permit to change the master plan from the developer PT. Lippo Cikarang that the land has now changed from commercial land to social facilities, so a church house of worship can be built on the ground.

Impact of Not Issuing Church Construction Permits

The total number of Catholics registered in the Church is 12,000. Until now (November 2021), Bekasi District has no Catholic church other than Mother Teresa's Church. Catholics came to worship at the Trinity Foundation school building on Saturday afternoon, Sunday morning, and Sunday afternoon. They had no other choice of Church, so the school building was packed with congregants. The schedule for services at the end of the week at Mother Teresa Church is arranged for three generations: Saturday afternoon, Sunday morning, and Sunday afternoon.

Before the Covid-19 Pandemic, the number of worshipers was 1,500 in each Sunday

morning worship meeting. Meanwhile, in the Saturday and Sunday afternoon worship services, the congregation reached 700-1,000 people. During the pandemic period (March 2020 to November 2021), the number of worshipers is limited; only 160 people are allowed at each worship meeting on Saturday and Sunday.

Based on the description above, the citizens' right to carry out worship according to their beliefs is neglected. Residents of the Bekasi District, who are Catholic, cannot establish the Mother Teresa Church Parish. The obstacles faced are not from the community but the Regional Government by not providing the building permit. It is ironic. Based on the state constitution, the government should guarantee the freedom of every citizen to practice their beliefs based on their religion and worship based on their religion and beliefs. The establishment of houses of worship is part of the practice of religious values, so it involves the right to faith and worship. The Bekasi local government should be able to provide the building permit under existing regulations.

Because it does not have a church building, every weekend, the Catholic congregation in the Bekasi District crowds the school building belonging to the Trinity Foundation on Jalan Majapahit in the Lippo Cikarang area. The Church organizes the congregation who attend the service into three generations: Saturday afternoon, Sunday morning, and Sunday afternoon. There are around 4,500 people who come to the Catholic Church for worship services because 1,500 people attend each time the service is held. The total number of Catholic congregations in the Bekasi district reached 12,000 people. This number makes it possible for the Catholic community to have several churches. But,

until now, there are still problems with establishing one Church (interview with MR Parish Secretariat in Bekasi in October 2021).

The implication of not being allowed to establish a church is that Catholics experience problems in worshipping. They cannot worship in a solemn atmosphere because the place of worship is not currently in the Church but is staying in the Trinity Foundation school building. They also do not get religious education from the Church as usual. Although Church officials still provide spiritual and educational services, the quality of these services is certainly not optimal, especially in religious education. Religious education is a citizen's right. Through religious education, a citizen will receive religious knowledge to carry out religious teachings according to their belief. The lack of religious knowledge will affect the quality of behaviour and the practice of religious values.

During the Reformation, public expectations arose regarding the management of religious life that was more respectful of human rights, especially in terms of the fulfillment of the rights of citizens to freedom of religion and belief. Constitutional amendments that accept all articles of human rights are a clear indicator that the imperatives of freedom and equality are placed by the constitution as the foundation for a constitutionally democratic order of life for the nation and state. In addition to constitutional guarantees, we also have Law no. 39/1999 on Human Rights and the ratification of key international human rights instruments. Unsurprisingly, there is great hope that eliminating discrimination can be completed, and the protection of FRB will be better (Bagir, 2022: 38-39).

However, the freedom to express one's thoughts and political goals was one of the freedoms in the reformation era. The reformation era was also marked by the emergence of the euphoria of identity politics, where religious symbols were widely used to attract constituents. The presence of religion in politics is undoubtedly vital to being a moral guardian. Still, it becomes a problem when only symbols without prophetic values are put forward and become a guide for political behaviour to fight for truth and injustice.

Meanwhile, on the other hand, there is also pragmatic political behaviour, namely seeking personal gain from politics, where politics is only used as a tool to gain power. In comparison, politics is something noble with a noble goal, namely as an instrument to fight for justice and prosper society.

The political behaviour shown by former Regent Neneng Hasanah Yasin reflects at the same time the existence of identity politics and practical politics. Neneng Hasanah Yasin has used religious issues to gain political support from some Muslims who refuse permission to build a church. This assumption is based on the fact that Neneng Hasanah Yasin was the Regent from 2012 to 2018. Neneng Hasanah Yasin also understood the Church historically. There is no reason for her to ignore the building permit of the Church that has been submitted since 2015. During her leadership, until the Anti-graft Commission caught her in 2018, Neneng Hasanah Yasin never issued the building permit for the Church and did not even provide the slightest explanation at the request of the church building committee.

CLOSING

Committee of Mother Teresa Church Cikarang Bekasi District, after completing the requirements for obtaining a development permit under the 2006 PBM, then submitted it to the Bekasi District Government in 2015 to obtain a building permit for a house of worship. However, the request was never answered and responded to for reasons never been submitted.

Several factors can be categorized as supporters, one of which is the religious attitude of the tolerant and moderate Muslim community. Several requirements include the support of 60 local people, and recommendations from RHF and the Ministry of Religion of Bekasi District cannot be separated from the approval of the nearby people in particular and Cikarang Bekasi in general.

The unresponsive attitude of the local government is the main obstacle in the case of the Cikarang Catholic Church. Neneng Hasanah Yasin, as Regent of Bekasi District for two periods (2012-2018), never wanted to reply to a letter requesting a hearing submitted by the Church. The attitude of the Regent of Neneng is suspected to be politically motivated, worried that her electability will be degraded in front of the people of Bekasi District, which is predominantly Muslim, sided with the church building committee.

Concerning the inhibition of licensing for church construction by the District Government, the Regent has implications for the non-fulfillment of the rights of Catholics. They experience obstacles in terms of worship and receive proper religious education from the Church. Although Church officials still provide spiritual and educational services, the quality of these services is certainly not

optimal, especially in religious education. It is clear evidence of violations by the Bekasi District Government of the community's human rights in the right to freedom of religion and worship stipulated in the constitution, laws, and regulations.

Based on the description above, this study recommends that the Regional Government, namely the Regent Akhmad Marjuki, can continue the Acting Regent Dani Ramdan policy to grant a building permit for the construction of the Mother Teresa Church. The permit is feasible because all the requirements in the 2006 PBM have been met. In addition, other requirements such as permission to change the master plant land of Lippo Cikarang have also been fulfilled, so there is no longer any reason for the Regent not to issue the building permit for the Mother Teresa Church.

Many politicians and government officials still do not make leadership an opportunity to work to realize justice and prosperity for the people through the power and authority possessed according to the constitution and laws and regulations. Thus, in addition to supervision by the community and authorized institutions, political education needs to be improved by providing lessons on national politics, moderate religious attitudes, respect for human rights, rights to freedom of religion and belief, and not discrimination. This program aims to ensure that its behaviour aligns with existing religious norms, the constitution, and laws and regulations.

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