

# Conflict of the House of Worship Construction in Jambi Province and its Solution

Robi'atul Adawiyah<sup>1\*</sup>, Ismanto<sup>2</sup>, Mohd Yasin<sup>3</sup>

1. Doctoral Student of Law at Law Faculty of The Jambi University, Telanaipura Jambi 36122 Indonesia

2. Doctoral Student of Law at Law Faculty of The Jambi University, Telanaipura Jambi 36122 Indonesia

3. Doctoral Student of Law at Law Faculty of The Jambi University, Telanaipura Jambi 36122 Indonesia

## Abstract

The house of worship is the symbol of a religious existence. Construction of houses of worship of a religious community in the middle of other predominantly religion often lead to resistance and conflict that sometimes lead to violence and unrest. As one of the region with a multi-religious population, Jambi province was not immune from the conflict of houses of worship construction. The results of this study showed that the main cause of conflict of houses of worship construction in Jambi is due to the establishment of houses of worship of minorities religion do not get permission either from the government or from the majority of local residents. It is due to the houses of worship construction that does not comply with the terms agreed on the construction of houses of worship in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** conflict, house of worship, solution, Jambi, Indonesia

## A. Introduction

Indonesia is one of the most pluralistic country in the world (Woodward 1998). In addition to its population consists of 500 ethnic groups, which each has its own language and culture as well as almost all the major world religions are officially recognized in Indonesia; Islam, Protestant, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Kong Hu Cu. That does not include 'indigenous religions' whose numbers are also aplenty.

Religious and cultural diversity in Indonesia is like a double edged sword. If the diversity can be managed properly, it will be the basis of the success of national development. Conversely, if the heterogeneity of nationality cannot be managed properly, it will hamper national development and even lead to disintegration of the nation.

As a pluralistic nation, of course, Indonesia has a very high potential for conflict, especially inter-religious conflict. In reality, a conflict which lead to violent in the name of religion has always been common in Indonesia and in fact increased sharply after the political reform of 1998. (Hamdi 2012) Annual Report on Freedom of Religion and belief of the Wahid Institute (2013), mentions that along January-December 2013, the number of infringement or religious intolerance occurs as much 245 cases. Largely of these is houses of worship conflict from the sealing of houses of worship by government forces occur as many as 28 cases to refusal/ closing of a house of worship by citizens occur as many as 25 cases.

As one of the regions in Indonesia which are considered safe from religious violence, Jambi province also experienced some conflicts of construction of houses of worship. According to data from Jambi Police, until 2014 occurred 12 cases of construction of houses of worship conflict, 8 of which occurred in the province of Jambi. Although there were no casualties, the conflict of houses of worship raises no small loss can even be fatal because it could hamper national development.

## B. The Reality of Religious of Jambi Society

Jambi Province is one of the 33 provinces in Indonesia. Jambi province located in the middle of Sumatera Island, lie alongside east coast to west coast of Sumatera Island. It is consist of 9 regencies and 2 cities, they are Bungo regency, tebo regency, Merangin regency, Muaro Jambi regency, Batanghari regency, Sarolangun regency, Kerinci regency, Tanjung Jabung Barat regency, Tanjung Jabung Timur regency, Jambi City and Sungai Penuh City.

Jambi society is a heterogeneous society. The majority is Malay ethnic who were the original/ native people of Jambi. Malay culture has a lot to assimilate and influenced by the style of Islamic culture. Malay is synonymous with Islam. That is where there is Malay ethnic, there is Islam. Therefore, Jambi people is quite known as a religious community as Custom Seloko (Tradition aphorisme in Jambi) "Tradition is based on canon law, Canon law is based on Qur'an, canon law hike and tradition downhill, canon law speak up and tradition wear". This Seloko custom means that Jambi custom rooted in the rule of canon law (Shari'ah), which comes from the holy book the Qur'an (Somad 2002). In addition to the Malay ethnic group, there are also migrants who come from various parts of the country such as Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, in addition of Sumatra region and even from abroad such as Chinese, Arabic and Indian (Religion Ministry of RI 2003).

Based on the data of Ministry of Religion of Jambi Province in 2013, As for the number of religion follower and the number of houses of worship in Jambi province as below.

Table 1. The number of religion follower in Jambi Province

NO	Regency/ city	Islam	Protestant	Catholic	Hinduisme	Budhisme	Konghucu	total
1	Kota Jambi	481,438	38,521	20,702	942	30,173	4,979	576,755
2	Muaro Jambi	311,963	8,534	2,301	329	267	32	323,426
3	Batang Hari	264,812	2,998	2,161	11	220	40	270, 242
4	Tanjab Barat	237,437	6,958	2,802	202	1,531	79	249,007
5	Tanjab Timur	213,403	2,105	2,151	34	305	-	217,998
6	Sarolangun	235,689	5,655	3,287	42	153	-	244,826
7	Tebo	309,125	3,093	3,789	48	268	-	316,323
8	Bungo	354,716	7,105	5,711	326	659	71	368,588
9	Merangin	338,009	3,602	1,730	33	73	14	343,461
10	Kerinci	336,431	1,907	1,471	32	269	-	340,110
	Total	3,083,023	80,476	46,105	1,999	33,918	5,215	3,250,736
	Percentage	94,84%	2,48%	1,42%	0,06%	1,04%	0,16%	100%

Table 2. The number of houses of worship in Jambi Province

NO	Regency/ City	Islam		Protestant	Catholic	Hinduisme	Budhisme	Konghucu
		Mosque	Musholla	Church	Church	Temple	Vihara	Klenteng
1	Kota Jambi	366	385	59	4	1	36	25
2	Muaro Jambi	357	504	48	4	1	-	1
3	Batang Hari	292	374	27	3	-	-	-
4	Tanjab Barat	260	368	41	3	-	3	3
5	Tanjab Timur	361	343	17	4	-	-	-
6	Sarolangun	370	388	32	7	1	1	-
7	Tebo	384	498	18	8	-	-	-
8	Bungo	306	538	31	6	-	2	-
9	Merangin	357	851	21	8	-	-	-
10	Kerinci	301	407	7	2	-	1	-
	Total	3,354	4,656	301	49	3	43	29
	Percentage	39,76%	55,20%	3,57%	0,58%	0,04%	0,51%	0,34%

Two tables above shows that the majority of the population of Jambi people is moslem as much 94.84% from the total of the population. Because of that, it is not surprising that the number of mosques and musola more than a house of worship of other religions. But other religions still be given the same rights to build houses of worship as long as comply with the requirements of the Government on the construction of houses of worship.

### C.The conflict of Houses of Worship Construction in Jambi Province

Etymologically, the term conflict is derived from the Latin verb 'configere' which means hit each other (Wikipedia). It was adopted from Latin word into English 'conflict' and later adopted into Indonesian 'konflik'. In Indonesian Big Dictionary (2002), conflict is defined as the difference, conflict and discord.

Sociologically, conflict is defined as a social process between two or more people (can also group) where one party trying to get rid of the other party by destroying it or making it powerless. According Hadari Nawawi and M. Martini, conflict is the inner atmosphere containing anxiety because of a contradiction between two or more motifs. The opposition encourage people to do two or more conflicting activities at the same time. Correspondingly, T. Hani Handoko defines conflict as all sorts of opposition or antagonistic interactions between two or more parties (Religion Ministry 2004). Thus it can be understood that the conflict is the controversy in human relations between the parties with the other parties, between groups with other groups, and between the organization and other organizations which arise as a result of differences in interests, emotional, psychological and value in achieving the goal.

Conflict is one of the essences of life and human development that have various characteristics. Humans have different gender, social and economic strata, the legal system, nation, tribe, religion, beliefs, and cultures and also different life goals. The difference is what lies behind the conflict. As long as there are such differences, conflicts are inevitable and will always occured in order to satisfy the aspirations of both parties.

As a multi-religious area, the province of Jambi is potential for conflict among religions. To avoid a clash between religious minorities and the majority Muslim population of Jambi, in the era of the 90s, the Government had issued Jambi Governor Regulation which sets Kotabaru District of Jambi Province as a special location of establishment church. Until now, for Pal Lima village Kotabaru Sub-district alone there are 12 churches stood there more than other places in Jambi province. However, due to the spread of the population, many Christians

took the initiative to build a church in the vicinity of their residence. Therefore the majority of their neighborhoods are Muslims, then the construction of the church often acquire resistance from local residents.

Table 3. The names of the churches in Pal Lima village Kotabaru district:

NO	Church Name	Address
1	GPDI (Gereja Pantekosta Di Indonesia)	Rt. 07 Kel. Paal Lima Kec. Kota Baru
2	GKPI (Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia)	Rt. 07 Kel. Paal Lima Kec. Kota Baru
3	GHKI (Gereja Huria Kristen Indonesia)	Rt. 10 Kel. Paal Lima Kec. Kota Baru
4	GSJA (Gereja sidang Jemaat Allah)	Rt. 10 Kel. Paal Lima Kec. Kota Baru
5	GBIS (Gereja Bethel Injil Sepenuh)	Rt. 10 Kel. Paal Lima Kec. Kota Baru
6	GBKP (Gereja Batak Kristen Indonesia)	Rt. 10 Kel. Paal Lima Kec. Kota Baru
7	Gereja Pentakosta	Rt. 10 Kel. Paal Lima Kec. Kota Baru
8	GKPS (Gereja Kristen Protestan)	Rt. 10 Kel. Paal Lima Kec. Kota Baru
9	HKBP (Huria Kristen Batak Protestan)	Rt. 11 Kel. Paal Lima Kec. Kota Baru
10	Gereja Penyebaran Injil	Rt. 11 Kel. Paal Lima Kec. Kota Baru
11	Gereja Methodist Indonesia Moria Jambi	Rt. 10 Kel. Paal Lima Kec. Kota Baru
12	Gereja Bethel Indonesia	Rt. 10 Kel. Paal Lima Kec. Kota Baru

The table above shows the names of 12 churches built in pal Lima village districts Kotabaru Jambi. All of these are Christian (Protestant) churches but each of which has a different group/ideology. In addition, the Ministry of Religion registered more than 300 (three hundreds) group or denominations of Christianity. Each group does not want to join a church of another group. So that could be in the Neighborhood (RT) stands some Christian churches with each other that although the religion is Christian but different group.

The construction of the Catholic church rarely cause problems in Jambi. Even on 18 April 2013 was held a groundbreaking establishment of the Catholic Church St. Gregory the Great on the South Rim Village Kenali Asam Bawah District of Kotabaru Jambi by Jambi Mayor dr.HR. Bambang Priyanto. This is because in central of Jambi city is only available one Catholic church that is increasingly no longer enough to load thousands of congregations. In addition to the Catholic, Development temple or wihara in Jambi also not cause a fuss and conflicts with the majority population.

According to the Head of Security Maintenance (Kabaharkam) National Police of Indonesia, General Commissioner Imam Sujarwo, compared to other parts of Indonesia, Jambi including one that is conducive and safe area of racial conflict. In addition, the results of the mapping study of religious harmony in Jambi Province implemented by the Ministry of Religion Research of Indonesia (2013) showed that inter-religious relations, internal religious people, and religious with the government in Jambi province are relative harmonious, although the potential for conflict is always being there. Potential conflicts relating to the construction of house of worship and place of religious service for the minority people, especially the people of Christian.

According to data from Jambi Province Police (Intelkam 2014), in 2013 occurred 11 cases of conflict of houses of worship, among others:

1. Establishment of the Protestant Church in Indonesia (GPDI) Koni branch located at RT. 48 Ex. Kenali Besar district. Kotabaru built without government permission and without the consent of local people.
2. The cottage meetings Jl. Purnama Lrg. Ex RT.13 substation. Sukakarya district. Kotabaru Jambi with the managers, among others, Sugeng, Corporal Manalu and Sihombing. The plan is the meeting place will be built a Protestan church. But at first permits to residents to be built school. Construction is not received official permission from local residents and rejected because it does not comply with the regulations SKB two Ministers on the construction of houses of worship.
3. Establishment of the Protestant church Simalungun (GKPS) Kotabaru GKPS church branch located in RT.19 kel. Bagan Pete district. Kotabaru without government permission and without the consent of local people.

4. Establishment of the Church of Christ Rahmani Indonesia (GKRI) Jakarta branch located at RT. 19 Ex. Bagan pete district. Kotabaru built without government permission and without the consent of local people. In addition, at the beginning of construction, the builder explained that the building is only used as a meeting place alone.
5. Establishment Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) Terminal Terpadu located at Jalan Penerangan RT.48 Ex. Kenali Besar built without government permission and without the consent of local people.
6. Polemic that led to the cessation of the construction of five houses of worship Protestant in the RT. 34/06 Village Pasir Putih, District of Central Rimbo Bungo regency because did not have building permit (IMB) and yet permit the establishment of the church.
7. Rejection by RT. 12 Ex. Penyengat Rendah district, Telanaipura Jambi on Development of five churches in RT. 12, They are:
  - a. Pentecostal Church (Person in charge: Rev. W. Iwan Adam, S.Th)
  - b. Pentecostal Church of Indonesia (GPI) Person in charge: Rev. Paul Elvin Sinaga
  - c. Pentecostal Church in Indonesia (GPDI) Person in charge: Rev. BA Sitanggang.
  - d. National Injeti Protestant Church (GFIN) undertaking: Pastor FrediTampubolon
  - e. Syaloom church of Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP), Person in charge: Rev. T. Sitorus, S.Th.

Of the five houses of worship at RT. 12 Penyengat Rendah village, four were houses that functioned as a house of worship and the HKBP Syaloom church was in the process of establishment. It turned out that in the process of licensing, in addition there are forged the signatures of citizens, the church building committee has also asked residents to sign the letter, which was originally the letter as a form of support for candidates (candidates) a particular party in the elections of 2009. The letter, signed by the residents, then, manipulated as local support to approve the construction of the church (Jambi Kesbangpol 2014). This polemic ended with the closure of the Church Syaloom by Jambi Province Government for not meeting regulatory requirements for establishing the law on places of worship. Whereas in 2014, there were two cases of establishment of houses of worship conflict in Jambi, namely:

1. Establishment of Huria Kristen Indonesia (HKI) Immanuel church at RT. 32 Pompa Air Village, Bajubang District. Batanghari regency because there is no permission from the Government and there is no agreement of local people.
2. Establishment of the Pentecostal Church in Indonesia (GPDI) in the village of Kampung Baru district. Asam Tanjab Barat regency because there is no government permission and approval of local people.

Of these cases, it can be concluded several factors causing conflict construction of houses of worship in Jambi province. Yes It Is:

#### 1. Licensing

The main factor triggering the establishment of houses of worship conflict is making procedure permits the construction of houses of worship are not taken properly and loaded fraud. conflict houses of worship are often motivated by the argument that the building or development plans do not have a building permit (IMB) or not in accordance with the designation of or infringe the spatial concept (Eden 2010)

Since long ago, to prevent conflicts in the construction of houses of worship, the Government has made a regulation in the form of Joint Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs and the Minister of Home Affairs No. 9 and 8 of 2006 on Religious Harmony and Construction of Houses of Worship, in which stipulated that the establishment of worship must meet the administrative and technical requirements of the building as well as some special requirements.

In Article 14 of the regulations mentioned that the establishment of houses of worship must include a list of names and identity card (KTP) house of worship user at least 90 people, the support of the local community at least 60 people who passed / chiefs of the village, as well as get a written recommendation from the office religion department districts / cities and Forum for Religious Harmony (FKUB) district / province. If the requirements of the 90 candidates that users can not be met at the village level, the calculations can be done at the district level, district / province, or town, so in essence there are no restrictions on the construction of a synagogue.

In reality, the procedure of production permits of houses of worship construction are sometimes not taken correctly loaded even forgery. The builder of the house of worship is often 'cut corners' in a way to bribe certain parties who have authority. So as if local residents approved the construction of the manipulation of signatures, but when asked they did not know anything about the establishment of religious buildings.

#### 2. Between the majority and minority

The establishment of houses of worship conflict almost all of them motivated by the refusal of certain religious groups on the existence of a house of worship. Because It is expected that they are disturbing the public. The presence of a house of worship whose location was built in the middle of the community who most impressed embrace another religion would intimidate and threaten the existence of other religions, because houses of worship not only serves as a place to conduct worship or religious activity alone, but also as a symbol of the

presence of a religious group.

Difficulty to build the house of worship not only experienced one religion. Almost all religions in Indonesia has experienced difficulty in building a house of worship. Not only a minority of Christians who have difficulty establishing a church in the middle of the vast majority of Muslims in Sumatra and Java. It turns out that Muslims also have difficulty establishing prayer room or mosque in the mid of Christians are a majority as in Nusa Tenggara Timur (Catholic), North Sulawesi (Christian), West Papua (Christian) and Bali (Hindu). Even Christians which are a minority as Indonesian Bethel Church in Sikka also have difficulty establishing a synagogue in the center of the Catholic majority (Asry 2011).

From what the author described above, it can be concluded that the majority of conflict cases of House of worship construction occur in the capital city of jambi, Jambi city. In the other hand, the fundamental problem of conflict of houses of worship in Jambi is a permission issue additional places of worship of religious minorities, especially Christian churches (Protestant) in the majority of believers without regard to the provisions in force concerning the establishment of houses of worship. Troubled church tend to ignore the problem of social relationships that the key word is "where the earth Rome, do as the Romans". This is often fueled conflict establishment of houses of worship in Jambi.

#### **D.Conflict Management of Houses of Worship**

As social beings, humans cannot be separated from the process of interaction between each other. Of the interaction process, people can work together to build peace, progress and harmony, but also of the interactions, conflicts arise which if not be managed properly can become a tragedy.

Pattern of resolution and comprehensive solutions to minimize and prevent conflicts should always be sought to prevent the expansion and continuation of the conflict. Among others:

First is sociological approach. It is a way of handling conflict completely, the solution is not instantaneous. In this approach the pattern of structural functionalism in institutional forms such as the Forum for Religious Harmony (FKUB) becomes important. This condition requires a very proactive stance and optimal from institutions like FKUB.

Forum religious harmony that is born from society to society facilitated local government, it is competent to accept, accommodate, dialoging and distribute existing religious aspirations. FKUB has a strategic role for religious harmony when viewed from the pattern formation almost entirely the aspirations of the community. FKUB members are religious leaders and communities that have been recommended and submitted by religious councils are official. Moreover, on this forum there are elements that local government does have direct access to the people in the region being surrounded. Through dialogue forums can build understanding and togetherness in order to realize harmony.

The whole conflict of houses of worship construction in Jambi can be resolved through Communication Forum for Religious Harmony (FKUB) Jambi. According to Marwazi (2012), FKUB Jambi province has made steps to resolve the cases that caused friction between religious communities. The steps are:

1. Approach amicably through consultation
2. intensive dialogues involving religious leaders together relevant officials who facilitated by the provincial government of Jambi
3. Legal process through the Court while still trying to soothe and directing people fighting each other along religious leaders concerned
4. Submitted on local government policy (Marwazi,2012)

Second is theological approach. Religious leaders must be able to provide teaching and example and practice of religion is good and right. Very important and urgent to do is reinterpretation of religious teachings that were socialized in the community is just teaching frees man from the chains of hatred and violence against others; teaching accommodating to human values.

As the majority religion, Muslims should follow the example of the Prophet Muhammad as to establish good relations with the Christians of Najran and Umar bin Khattab with the Palestinian population. Protection of the Prophet and his companions are not just limited to the protection of life and property, but is included in it religious beliefs and houses of worship. Therefore Taqiyuddin al-Maqrizi in his book, *al-Mawâ'idz I'tibâr bi wa al-Dhikr al-Khithath wa al-Atsar*, after revealing the names of the church in Cairo he declared that the churches in the area built in Islamic period. This is proof enough that the Prophet, companions, and the tabi'in allow other faiths to build places of worship respectively (al-Maqrizy 1418).

Third is humanitarian approach which focuses on the fact that the diversity of life is a reality of life. Diversity is a necessity that must and should be accepted by all Indonesian people in his life. The fact that heterogeneity has been united by Indonesian nation in the fundamental consciousness 'Unity in Diversity'. Although different but still one nevertheless. besides, man, whatever his religion, have the vision and the same nature to want to live his life as a safe, peaceful, prosperous and love each other.

To realize the unity of the nation as well as instilling a sense of tolerance and respect for fellow human beings



Indonesia needed multicultural education for all citizens. Multicultural education can be defined as the same recognition or equality of various religious, ethnic or cultural. In multiculturalism, all differences are recognized as an entity in the community that should be accepted, respected, protected and guaranteed its existence. So as to create a moral Indonesian society, tolerance, mutual love and respect among fellow, full of love, without any negative feelings inside.

Fourth, the legal approach as socialization of Joint Regulation of the Minister (JRM) of Religious Affairs and the Minister of Home Affairs No. 9 and 8 in 2006. JRM 2006 was an agreement of religious councils central level consisting of the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI), the Union of Churches in Indonesia (PGI), the Indonesian Bishops Conference (KWI), Parisadha Hindu Dharma Indonesia (PHDI) and Representative Indonesian Buddhists (WALUBI) together with representatives from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Interior. The agreement approved by the Minister of Religious Affairs and the Minister of the Interior on March 21, 2006.

The presence of JRM is expected to avoid disputes about the establishment of houses of worship. Among others, Development synagogue without a building permit (IMB), the use of the building or a house as a place of worship together regularly without permission and without a recommendation from FKUB, Development synagogue without permission while, difficulty establishment synagogue for religious minorities, arrogance construction of a synagogue that forced minorities without appropriate procedures JRM, administrative manipulation and user signature synagogue and community support. Another problem is the construction of a synagogue in question by the local community and revocation of permit by the local authorities and consideration as disturbing, causing disruption of security and order.

Although JRM still have many shortcomings such as the existence of the articles that are considered multiple interpretations, so it needs to be revised or even currently As we know, JRM was drawn up and agreed by the various institutions recognized religions in Indonesia, including Protestant Christianity represented by PGI as the parent . Because HKBP is one member of the PGI, the rejection HKBP against JRM actually exhibiting internal divisions within Christianity, between HKBP with PGI.

The presence of JRM is not a form of State or Government intervention against religion, but rather administration only. Because of the freedom of religious worship is not the same as the freedom to establish a synagogue. Freedom to build the house of worship must be in contact with the rights of others because of the building of the synagogue must be in the ground and the social environment where people are not necessarily co-religionists. Therefore, it needs clear regulations to avoid conflicts between religious communities.

## E. Conclusion

From what has been described above, it can be concluded that *first*, The main causes of conflict construction of houses of worship in Jambi province is due to non-compliance with the regulations that have been agreed upon by religious leaders in Indonesia regarding the procedure for the construction of houses of worship in Indonesia. *Second*, the establishment of houses of worship Conflicts in Jambi can be resolved through the Forum for Religious Harmony (FKUB) Jambi. So that cases were not ended to a violent let alone to take casualties. To prevent the recurrence of conflict of establishment of houses of worship, it will require a comprehensive approach including various theological and humanity, so that people can live Jambi province remains peaceful in harmony in diversity.

Only by maximizing the role of each religion as supreme values and carrier safety\_ not only for its followers but also for people of other religions\_ and obey the rules that have been agreed upon, then the religious harmony in Jambi will materialize and houses of worship conflict can be avoided. The difference is a reality. Then let make that distinction and differences more beautiful color in the mosaic of life.

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