

## RELIGIOUS APPROACHES TO TERRORISM PREVENTION: AN ANALYSIS OF MAQASHID SYARIAH ON THE STRATEGY OF THE NORTH SUMATERA FKPT

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### ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of terrorism in Indonesia, particularly in the city of Medan, poses a serious challenge that threatens social stability, national security, and national values. In this context, the North Sumatra Terrorism Prevention Coordination Forum (FKPT) acts as an extension of the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) in implementing prevention programs based on local wisdom and a humanistic approach. This study aims to gain a deeper understanding of the FKPT North Sumatra's strategies in countering terrorism in the city of Medan through an approach that is not only functional but also theological, by examining these efforts from the perspective of maqāṣid al-syarī'ah. This research uses a qualitative method with field research (empirical). Data is obtained through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies of FKPT programs and the involvement of stakeholders such as religious leaders, academics, and local communities. The results of the research show that FKPT implements an integrated strategy, including educational, cultural, collaborative, and digital approaches. These efforts are carried out through moderate religious literacy, the involvement of women and youth, and the dissemination of peaceful narratives on social media and in arts and culture. This strategy is not only in line with state policy but also reflects the implementation of maqāṣid al-syarī'ah in protecting religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property. Thus, the FKPT North Sumatra strategy demonstrates that terrorism prevention can be achieved not only through repressive approaches but also through strengthening religious and national values that prioritize the public good.

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### INTRODUCTIONS

The phenomenon of terrorism has become a global issue that demands serious attention from all elements of the nation. Terrorism is no longer understood simply as a form of physical violence, but has evolved into a multidimensional threat encompassing ideological, psychological, social, economic, and political aspects (Hasibuan, 2024). In Indonesia, a series of terrorist acts that occurred after the reformation have demonstrated that extremist and

radical movements not only attack state structures but also undermine the social fabric of pluralistic societies. In this context, North Sumatra is one of the provinces with a significant history of terrorist activity, indicating the existence of social, ideological, and security gaps that need to be addressed with an appropriate and comprehensive approach (A. Y. Prasetyo, 2021).

Events such as the 2010 CIMB Niaga Bank robbery in Medan, which was proven to be part of a terrorist network's funding strategy, and the armed attack on the Hamparan Perak Police Station in the same year, served as a stark warning to the government and the public that radicalism is not merely discourse, but has taken a concrete form, causing loss of life, damage to public facilities, and creating collective fear (Firmansyah, 2011). The fact that the perpetrators came from an organized network, even having connections with extremist groups across regions, shows that terrorism prevention cannot be done solely through coercive or militaristic approaches, but must also be accompanied by social, educational, and value-based prevention efforts.

To address these challenges, the government, through the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT), established the Terrorism Prevention Coordination Forum (FKPT) in various regions, including North Sumatra Province, as the vanguard in engaging the community in the terrorism prevention agenda (Setiawan et al., 2023). FKPT is designed as a non-structural organization representing elements of civil society, with a management composition that includes religious leaders, traditional leaders, academics, youth, women, media, and arts and cultural activists. The FKPT's primary function is to implement counter-radicalization and deradicalization strategies peacefully, prioritizing a humanist, educational, and participatory approach to stem the influence of violent ideologies spreading within society.

The North Sumatra FKPT has implemented various strategic programs such as digital literacy training, tolerance campaigns on social media, interfaith and cultural discussions, outreach in schools and Islamic boarding schools, and the establishment of a peaceful women's and youth network (Idris, 2018). The FKPT's approach is also preventative through the implementation of an early warning system, which aims to identify potential radicalization early based on social phenomena, religious group dynamics, and extreme narratives in the public sphere. This strategy is a crucial part of building community resilience against radicalism and acts of terrorism (D. Prasetyo et al., 2017).

However, the effectiveness of such prevention strategies requires a strong conceptual and normative foundation so that they are not merely technocratic but also aligned with the noble values of society. In the context of Indonesia's predominantly Muslim society, the Maqashid Syariah approach is an important foundation for analyzing and strengthening the direction of terrorism prevention policies. Maqashid Syariah, as a framework for the main objectives of Islamic law, emphasizes the importance of protecting five fundamental aspects: religion (al-din), life (al-nafs), reason (al-'aql), descendants (al-nasl), and property (al-mal) (Nurhidayatullah & Sw, 2024). In practice, any terrorism prevention strategy must be able to address the need to protect these aspects from the threat of violence, ideological chaos, and religious manipulation that undermines human values.

The application of Maqasid Syariah in terrorism prevention is not only relevant as a religious justification, but also as an approach compatible with the principles of human rights, peace, social justice, and diversity (Kausar et al., 2025). This perspective allows the North Sumatra FKPT strategy to be viewed not only as state intervention to silence violence, but also as an effort to care for and safeguard community life with dignity and justice.

Furthermore, this approach aligns with the ethnically and religiously heterogeneous society of North Sumatra. With its diverse cultural background, a terrorism prevention approach based on local wisdom and the values of Maqasid Sharia (Islamic principles) will be more easily accepted and internalized (Kausar et al., 2025). Values such as tolerance, mutual cooperation, and deliberation have become part of the social identity of the North Sumatran people. The FKPT can articulate these values within the framework of Maqasid Sharia to strengthen social cohesion and the community's ideological resilience against divisive radical ideologies.

However, in its implementation, the FKPT still faces several challenges, including a lack of active involvement from local religious and cultural leaders, limited access to communities vulnerable to radicalization, and obstacles to cross-sector coordination. These challenges need to be addressed immediately to ensure effective,

measurable, and sustainable prevention strategies. Therefore, an academic study is needed that not only describes the role and strategies of the FKPT but also analyzes them from an Islamic scientific perspective, particularly within the framework of Maqashid Syariah.

Based on this description, this article examines the terrorism prevention strategy implemented by the North Sumatra Terrorism Prevention Coordination Forum using the Maqashid Syariah approach. This approach aims to assess the extent to which the policies and program implementation align with the basic principles of protecting life in Islamic law. This study is expected to provide a scientific contribution to the development of values-based terrorism prevention strategies, while simultaneously strengthening the role of civil society in maintaining peace and social harmony in Indonesia.

## METHOD

This research is a qualitative-research with field research (empirical) that aims to understand the strategy of the North Sumatra FKPT in preventing terrorism in Medan City, viewed from the perspective of Maqashid Syariah (Suyanto, 2023). This approach was chosen to describe the social reality and local values that underlie the FKPT strategy. Data analysis uses three approaches: a statute approach to examine Law Number 5 of 2018, a case approach to analyze terrorism cases in Medan, and a conceptual approach to examine the principles of Maqashid Syariah. Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews with FKPT administrators, while secondary data came from literature, regulations, and related documents. The research location is the North Sumatra FKPT Office, with informants selected purposively and expanded through the snowball technique. Data collection was carried out through open interviews and documentation studies. Data analysis was carried out qualitatively with an interpretive approach, without statistics, to maintain the depth and relevance of the findings.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### North Sumatra FKPT's strategy in curbing terrorism in Medan City

The North Sumatra Terrorism Prevention Coordination Forum (FKPT)'s strategy to stem terrorism in Medan City is part of the state's systematic efforts to counteract violent ideologies that develop latently or openly within society. This effort focuses on preventing radicalism through a non-violent approach that is cultural, educational, and collaborative. FKPT, as a strategic partner of the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) at the regional level, was established to carry out the mandate of community-based terrorism prevention by taking into account the local context of each region (Mukhlis & Mustofa, 2020). In the context of North Sumatra, particularly Medan City, FKPT plays a very significant role considering that this region is a multicultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious metropolitan city, making it vulnerable to the infiltration of extreme ideologies that often exploit religious issues, social inequality, and identity conflicts (Ali & Setiawan, 2021).

The research results show that the terrorism prevention strategy implemented by the North Sumatra FKPT has had a real impact, particularly in building collective public awareness and strengthening ideological resilience among Medan's younger generation. Mhd. Nurhusein Daulay also stated that "youth participation in peace programs is increasing. In several schools and universities, peaceful digital literacy communities and diversity discussion forums have been established that regularly provide peer education." (Mahfuzah, 2025a).

Meanwhile, Sofiyati explained that the family approach is very effective in preventing radicalism from entering the household. "We witnessed how, after the training, many housewives became more alert to dangerous content on social media and more actively engaged in dialogue with their children about tolerance and inclusive religious practices." (Mahfuzah, 2025b). One of the main achievements was the increase in anti-radicalism literacy among school and university students. For example, in a public lecture at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra (UINSU), the Head of the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) equipped thousands of new students with an understanding of religious moderation and digital literacy as a form of protection from exposure to violent ideologies

on social media. This activity was also followed by the declaration of moderation volunteers, which aims to make students pioneers of peaceful narratives in public and digital spaces.

Furthermore, the North Sumatra FKPT has successfully established and expanded a network of peace agents, namely young people trained to spread messages of tolerance, diversity, and anti-radicalism. Programs such as the Young Indonesian Expression provide them with training in peace communication and digital literacy. These activities also encourage cross-sector collaboration, involving teachers, youth leaders, and religious communities (Jamberita.com, 2022).

Another equally important achievement is the increased community participation in deradicalization activities based on local wisdom. FKPT utilizes cultural media such as peace poetry competitions, art performances, and peace narrative workshops to ground anti-violence messages in a format that is easily accessible to the wider community. This is particularly relevant in Medan, with its high cultural and religious diversity.

Although the North Sumatra Terrorism Prevention Coordination Forum (FKPT) has demonstrated various positive achievements in preventing radicalism and terrorism, the reality on the ground shows that strategic obstacles remain that hinder the maximum effectiveness of the programs designed. These obstacles are structural, technical, and social, requiring serious attention and long-term, planned management.

#### 1. Budget and Operational Resource Limitations

One of the main challenges facing the North Sumatra FKPT is budget constraints. This limited budget prevents several terrorism prevention programs from being implemented optimally, particularly those that are digital, creative, and reach remote areas. Activities such as digital literacy training, producing counter-radicalism content, strengthening the capacity of peace agents, and developing peace media platforms require significant financial and technical resources (Mahfuzah, 2025a).

This situation is exacerbated by limited logistical and technological support. Some of the activities planned by the FKPT cannot reach areas outside the city, even though these areas have latent potential for radicalization due to limited access to quality education, credible information, and community empowerment programs.

#### 2. Organizational structure only at provincial level

The North Sumatra FKPT (FKPT) continues to face challenges in that its institutional structure, which exists only at the provincial level, has not yet been established at the district/city level. This results in the implementation of terrorism prevention programs being inconsistent and inconsistent across North Sumatra. In some areas, work units or FKPT representatives have not yet been established to carry out educational and facilitative functions directly within the community. This lack of structural presence has resulted in weak oversight of social dynamics that could potentially give rise to radical ideology. These regions, however, are highly vulnerable to social conflict, poverty, and socio-economic inequality, which extremist groups often exploit as entry points for the spread of violent doctrine (Mahfuzah, 2025b).

#### 3. Low Reach to Marginalized Communities

Marginalized communities, such as the poor in suburban areas, minority communities, and young people who have dropped out of school, remain underserved by FKPT programs. Yet, these groups have significant potential to become targets for recruitment by radical groups due to their lack of ideological literacy, social alienation, and dissatisfaction with the economic and political situation. Radical groups often offer a new identity, a false sense of solidarity, and an appealing "meaning of life" to individuals who feel marginalized. The absence of inclusive national ideology education and empowerment programs for these marginalized communities creates a gap that is highly vulnerable to exploitation (Mahfuzah, 2025b).

#### 4. The Dominance of Radical Groups in the Digital Space

The most complex challenge is the dominance of radical groups in the digital space. Social media platforms like YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and Telegram have become strategic platforms for the spread of radical propaganda. The content presented by these groups is highly visually appealing, uses popular language, and is often packaged in formats that appeal to young people, such as short videos, Islamic preaching podcasts, or motivational narratives based



on transnational ideologies. The North Sumatra FKPT recognizes the importance of a digital counter-narrative strategy, but the biggest obstacles faced are limited human resource capacity, digital content production tools, and a lack of strategic networks with local creators. Without strong counter-content, the public, especially the younger generation, will continue to be exposed to narratives of violence, intolerance, and takfiri propaganda that easily go viral. The FKPT has begun building partnerships with local content creators and digital communities, but these efforts remain limited in scale. Greater collaboration with ministries, influencers, mainstream media, and educational institutions is needed to disseminate peaceful narratives massively and consistently (Mahfuzah, 2025b).

The above obstacles demonstrate that terrorism prevention is not only about developing programs, but also about building a strong social and digital ecosystem. The North Sumatra FKPT needs to strengthen coordination with the central and regional governments to increase budget allocation, institutionalize institutional structures at the district/city level, and strengthen digital counter-narrative strategies based on research and local culture. Without these, prevention efforts will remain sectoral and short-term.

To address these challenges, FKPT adopted a creative approach: partnering with local influencers, young content creators, and digital communities to produce educational content that is relevant, engaging, and rooted in local culture. Programs like SuDaRa in North Kalimantan and digital training in East Kalimantan have inspired similar strategies to be implemented in North Sumatra. Short video-based content, podcasts, infographics, and peaceful campaigns on TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube are expected to become key tools to more systematically and sustainably stem the dominance of radical narratives.

Overall, the North Sumatra FKPT's strategy can be said to be quite effective in curbing terrorism, particularly through a soft prevention approach involving education, culture, community, and digital media. By simultaneously integrating cultural, educational, and digital approaches, the North Sumatra FKPT can become a model for a robust community-based terrorism prevention strategy that is relevant to the dynamics of urban communities like Medan.

### **Opportunities and Challenges for the North Sumatra FKPT in Implementing Strategies to Curb Terrorism in Medan City**

The North Sumatra Terrorism Prevention Coordination Forum (FKPT) faces several opportunities and challenges in implementing its strategy to stem terrorism, particularly in Medan. This analysis was conducted by considering the Maqashid Syariah approach, the socio-political conditions of Medan's society, and the FKPT's actual practices.

#### **1. Opportunity**

The North Sumatra Terrorism Prevention Coordination Forum (FKPT) has several strategic opportunities to carry out its terrorism prevention duties in Medan. Institutionally, Presidential Regulation No. 46 of 2010 concerning the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) and the Decree of the Head of BNPT No. 9 of 2012 concerning the establishment of FKPTs in each province provide a strong legal basis for the North Sumatra FKPT to act as an extension of the BNPT in implementing deradicalization and counter-radicalization programs. This legal legitimacy provides a gateway to establishing strategic partnerships with various parties, ranging from local governments, religious leaders, community organizations, the media, and educational institutions.

Medan, as a large and multicultural city, is a fertile ground for soft approaches. Medan's ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity can be leveraged as a social force in building a national narrative and promoting religious moderation. Local wisdom values such as mutual cooperation, deliberation, and customs can be capitalized on to strengthen social resistance against violent ideologies (Luthfiah, 2024). The North Sumatra FKPT has capitalized on this potential by developing community-based programs, engaging traditional leaders, and strengthening interfaith dialogue.

Furthermore, active partnerships with universities such as the University of North Sumatra (USU) and the State Islamic University of North Sumatra (UINSU) provide reflective and academic space for

disseminating moderate religious narratives through the Maqashid Syariah approach (K. Nasution & Rohani, 2023). FKPT also collaborates intensively with Islamic community organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, and Al-Washliyah to promote the values of Islam as a blessing for all the worlds.

Equally important, the widespread digital transformation among Medan's youth presents a significant opportunity to develop alternative narratives. The FKPT (Facebook, Community Empowerment, and Community Empowerment) can leverage digital platforms like YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and podcasts to convey messages of peace more creatively and contextually. Youth participation in digital content production is key to fostering ideological resilience through the media they know and consume daily. Support from national programs like "Peace in Cyberspace" also expands the FKPT's scope to counter the digital propaganda of radical groups. New regulations, such as Presidential Decree No. 7 of 2021 concerning the National Action Plan for the Prevention and Countering of Extremism (RAN PE), also strengthen the FKPT's regional framework. With this support, the FKPT can integrate terrorism prevention strategies into regional development programs through cross-sectoral synergy and active community participation (Panjaitan & Rahayu, 2023).

## 2. Challenge

Despite its numerous opportunities, the North Sumatra FKPT still faces a number of significant challenges that require a serious and sustained response. The biggest challenge is the rise in online radicalization, with extremist groups utilizing social media, video-sharing sites, and messaging apps as primary means of spreading violent ideology. Radicalization now occurs more online, particularly among young people seeking identity (Nurpratiwi et al., 2024). Social media algorithms that create echo chambers contribute to accelerating the spread of radical ideology without adequate oversight from local authorities (Baihaki, 2025). As a coordinating regional institution, the FKPT often faces limitations in technology, digital expertise, and funding to produce counter-content on a large scale. Furthermore, low levels of digital literacy and low levels of religious literacy make the public susceptible to manipulative, exclusive, and provocative religious narratives.

Another challenge is the limited public understanding of terrorism prevention, both conceptually and practically. Many still view terrorism as solely a security force issue, not a shared responsibility. A lack of education about religious moderation, tolerance, and national values has led some communities to become passive in addressing the symptoms of radicalism in their communities. Furthermore, the stigmatization of former terrorist convicts (napiter) poses a serious obstacle to social reintegration. Communities that have not accepted the presence of former convicts in their communities tend to reject and ostracize them, which can lead to former convicts falling back into terrorist networks due to the lack of a decent and inclusive living space (Idris, 2018).

Another structural challenge is limited budget and human resources. Dependence on central government funding limits the FKPT's ability to design and implement programs independently. This limitation is exacerbated by North Sumatra's vast geography and diverse social characteristics. A lack of trained human resources in the Maqasid Syariah- based deradicalization approach and mastery of information technology also hinders effective community outreach.

## **The North Sumatra FKPT's Strategy in Curbing Terrorism in Medan City from the Perspective of Maqashid Syariah**

### 1. Legal Protection

The North Sumatra FKPT's strategy to stem terrorism in Medan City is based on a legal protection framework that is not only repressive, but also holistic and transformative. This approach refers to Law Number 5 of 2018 concerning the Eradication of Criminal Acts of Terrorism, which has expanded the scope of criminal law to terrorism, including prevention through the involvement of various elements of society. FKPT, as an integral

part of the BNPT at the regional level, carries out its function of strengthening the role of the law by using a non-penal approach as its primary strategy (Sularto & Purwoto, 2016). This approach emphasizes prevention efforts through education, strengthening legal culture, and developing community capacity to recognize and counter radical ideology. One concrete manifestation of this is a community-based legal education program delivered inclusively through interfaith forums, educational institutions, and digital communities (Sularto & Purwoto, 2016).

Furthermore, the FKPT integrates the principles of restorative justice in its treatment of former terrorist convicts (Ping & Kusnadi, 2025). This approach aims to restore the social standing of former perpetrators so they are not alienated from society and do not relapse into radical networks. This process involves not only law enforcement officials but also community leaders, religious leaders, and families, as a form of comprehensive social reintegration. The FKPT's collaboration with the police, the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI), educational institutions, and civil society organizations strengthens the law's position as an instrument of community protection. Legal outreach is conducted systematically to prevent the abuse of freedom of religion and expression as a means of spreading extremist ideologies. Thus, the legal protection developed by the FKPT is adaptive to the dynamics of Medan's heterogeneous and pluralistic society and prioritizes human rights within the framework of a democratic state based on the rule of law.

## 2. Maqasid al-Shari'ah

The FKPT North Sumatra's terrorism prevention strategy also reflects the integration of national legal values with the principles of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* (the principles of Islamic law). This approach demonstrates that counter-radicalization efforts can be carried out not only through state instruments but also through the internalization of substantive and universal Islamic values (Abbas, 2023).

The concept of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* as the foundation of FKPT's strategy is highly relevant in strengthening religious legitimacy in rejecting violence and extremism. Through safeguarding religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), FKPT promotes a religious understanding that is *rahmatan lil-'ālamīn* through collaboration with mainstream Islamic organizations (Zakaria et al., 2024). Mainstreaming moderate Islamic narratives is instilled through *da'i* training, media workshops, and a contextual religious curriculum. This is a concrete form of resistance against the *takfiri* ideology that denounces others as infidels and justifies violent acts.

In this context, the thoughts of Muhammad Mhd. Arbi Bayu Suhairi and Dhiauddin Tanjung become relevant, that *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* is a framework of thought capable of bridging Islamic legal norms with complex social realities. Not only in the issue of radicalism, this framework has also proven adaptive to other contemporary issues, such as child marriage out of wedlock, where the principle of *maṣlaḥah mursalah* is used as the basis for tolerance for symbolic actions to maintain family honor, as long as they do not conflict with the basic principles of sharia. Thus, the use of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* by FKPT not only confirms the commitment to preventing terrorism, but also demonstrates the flexibility of Islamic law in responding to social dynamics, thus further strengthening the relevance and acceptability of this strategy in society (Suhairi & Tanjung, 2024). Efforts to prevent terrorism based on *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* are not only repressive, but also provide solutions by encouraging the strengthening of religious moderation, socio-economic empowerment, and contextual religious literacy (J. Nasution et al., 2025).

Protecting the soul (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*) is implemented through family- and community-based anti-violence campaigns, targeting schoolchildren, university students, and online communities (J. Nasution et al., 2025). FKPT positions women and housewives as agents of peace who can be the first line of defense against the infiltration of radicalism within the family environment (Hidayah, 2024). Meanwhile, digital literacy activities and critical thinking training are forms of implementing *ḥifẓ al-'aql*, aimed at fortifying the minds of the younger generation against radical propaganda spread through social media and digital spaces (Zakaria et al., 2024).

In the social dimension, FKPT also runs an economic empowerment program for the families of former terrorist convicts and marginalized communities as an effort to safeguard their descendants (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*) and wealth (*ḥifẓ*

al-māl) (Zakaria et al., 2024). This approach targets the economic roots of vulnerability to radicalization, such as poverty, unemployment, and social marginalization. In the long term, this strategy not only breaks the chain of extremism regeneration but also creates social conditions that support sustainable peace.

This view aligns with Ansari Yamamah's thinking in Transitive Islam, which emphasizes that Islam exists not only as a transcendent teaching but also as a value system that is constantly in motion and in contact with ever-changing realities. Therefore, Islamic law is required to be transformed contextually, transformatively, and integratively, prioritizing the spirit of justice and humanity. With this framework, the FKPT's steps in empowering the families of former terrorist convicts and marginalized communities can be seen as a manifestation of Islamic practice that is relevant to the needs of the times and consistent with the maqasid al-syari'ah (the purpose of Islamic law) (Yamamah, 2019).

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research and discussions conducted, it can be concluded that the North Sumatra FKPT's strategy for countering terrorism in Medan City is implemented through an integrated approach, encompassing educational, cultural, collaborative, and digital aspects. This effort is realized through various programs such as strengthening moderate religious literacy, actively involving women and youth, and collaborating with religious leaders, campuses, and local communities.

In its implementation, FKPT has significant potential thanks to regulatory support from the central government, the diversity of Medan's relatively open community toward moderation, and collaboration with Islamic organizations and universities. However, challenges remain, particularly in addressing the massive digital radicalization, low public awareness of the importance of early prevention, stigma against former terrorist convicts, and limited human resources and budgets that impact the program's effectiveness in vulnerable areas.

From the perspective of maqāṣid al-syarī'ah (the principles of Islamic law), the FKPT's strategy aligns with the main principles of Islamic law, such as safeguarding religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property. This strategy focuses not only on security but also on building a peaceful social ecosystem through education, empowerment, and strengthening religious values. Thus, the FKPT's approach not only has state legitimacy but also theological values aligned with the principle of public welfare in Islam.

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