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## Protecting City from Radical Ideologies and Activities

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# Protecting City from Radical Ideologies and Activities

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*Abstract: This study aims to identify the strategies and challenges faced in protecting Palopo from radical ideologies and acts. The purpose of this descriptive, qualitative research was to strengthen the existing theories in preventing radicalism. The subjects were people associated with the police, military, universities, Islamic schools, schools, interreligion communication forum (so-called Forum Komunikasi Umat Beragama (FKUB), preachers, and society. Seven strategies were found in protecting Palopo from radical ideologies and acts: 1) Bina Waspada Operation, 2) Balatkom Operation and Radical Ideologies, 3) Scientific Integration, 4) Religious Dialogue, 5) Obligatory Report Program, 6) Guiding the Young Generation, and 7) Maintaining Tolerance and Interreligious Harmony. It was also found that a number of challenges were faced in protecting Palopo from radical ideologies and acts: 1) Palopo is a strategic area; 2) It is a multicultural and multireligious area; 3) Young generations are the most-wanted targets; and 4) the society has a lack of sense of caring of others.*

*Keywords: Strategies, Challenges, Protecting Palopo, Radical Ideologies and Activities*

## Introduction

Radicalism has been the biggest threats for Indonesia. A number of bombings have occurred in Indonesia since 2002. It has been a trending topic among society members. Since Indonesia is a multicultural country, it will be very a strategic area for radical groups to build their movements. Indonesia should protect all its areas from growing radical ideologies and activities.

One of the areas in Indonesia that should be protected from the growing radicalism is Palopo City, South Sulawesi. Based on data obtained from the police of Tana Luwu, four districts in Tana Luwu have become the target of terrorist networks in developing their movement and followers. The police have also revealed some radical actions that have occurred in Tana Luwu. First, in 2001, the community and the police forcibly dispersed a religious activity suspected of being a radical ideology in Towuti District. Second, in 2002, the same activities appeared again in a different region, this time located in Binturu, Suli District. At first, this was considered a common activity, but the society suspected the community as the organizers and the active members who regularly conducted military exercises. The suspected community successfully recruited more than thirty-two followers. This activity was suspected as it aimed at helping radical acts in Poso (Jones and Solahudin 2014). Third, in January 2004, a bombing happened in Bukit Sampoddo Indah Cafe, Wara subdistrict, when the cafe was packed with visitors. There were four fatalities. This radical action was purely motivated as an act of Jihad (Sirozi 2005; Harb and Fischer 2013; Hwang 2012). This was supported by a statement from the main actors of the bombing who stated that the cafe was a place of prostitution.

Considering the cases stated previously, Palopo and the surrounding area is in a mountainous region and near the coast. Because of the location, it is a very strategic area for the radicals to strengthen their defense basis. They conduct many preparations and trainings in the mountains, far away from the limelight of local people. In addition, it is one of the closest lands from Poso to Makassar, so it is very strategic and has the potential to be served as a transit area for the radicals to develop their movements and recruit members.

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