

Muslim Women, Corruption, and the Butterfly Effect

The Indonesia government is clamping down on the lavish lifestyles of some tax officials amid concerns that a recent scandal centering on the suspicious wealth of a Jakarta tax official, as this could spiral into a widespread anti-tax movement also ruin the reputation of the ministry of finance as a state institution. The increased scrutiny on tax officials comes after Mario Dandy Satrio, son of tax official Rafael Alun Trisambodo, was arrested last week after allegedly assaulting a minor. Photos and videos of Mario's extravagant lifestyle in his social media account, and his father's Rp 56 billion (US\$3.6 million) in reported wealth, came to light in the following days, raising questions about where the money had come from. Mario's mother is also a socialite named Ernie Meike Torondek. Since the Mario Dandy case went viral, portraits of the luxury of her mother, have circulated as well, showing off bags of fantastic price to a pet dog named Pablo who is dressed in branded items. However, Ernie quickly deleted all of her photos. (TVOne News)

The incident of abuse committed by Mario caused the unexpected Butterfly Effect, namely the reputation of the Indonesian Ministry of Finance's institution at stake. A minor criminal incident unexpectedly causes a chain of events to lead to large-scale chaos. From love affairs and teenage fights to the scandal with the Director General of Taxes at the Ministry of Finance: an irregularity of IDR 300 trillion, involving 460 employees, indicating mafia within state institutions.

Butterfly effect is a theory of chaos which explains that very small changes in the Earth's atmosphere can change the path of hurricanes (tornadoes) or delay, speed up and even prevent tornadoes from occurring elsewhere. As a result, this scandal shows that damage and corruption in modern secular society has infested all lines. From the smallest line i.e. the family unit, to state institutions, culturally and structurally. Moreover, the structure of the economy of this country 80% of state revenue comes from taxes. So no wonder, the exposure of the ostentatious lavish lifestyle of tax and customs officials and their families has certainly sparked public jealousy. Obviously, behind a corrupt official there is always a wife who likes to live in luxury and spoiled children who have less moral compasses. That's the portrait of a secular modern family in big capitalistic cities.

Then the question arises where to start efforts to eradicate this endemic corruption. Let's start from the definition. Corruption in Islam is any act which violates Islamic law, not only at the level of public officials. A simple but fundamental definition. But Islam has stricter standards for the level of public officials, such as the strict prohibition of bribes, gratuities and even the prohibition of giving gifts to state leaders/officials. Therefore, in the broader context of Islamic teachings, the practice of corruption is an act that is contrary to the principles of *maqashidussy shari'ah* namely justice, accountability, and responsibility. That's why the practice of bribery and gratuity is a major sin (*kaba'ir*) in Islam. It was narrated from Jabir bin Abdullah (ra) that the Prophet (saw) said, «هَدَايَا الْعَمَلِ غُلُولٌ» **“Gifts given to leaders are treacherous treasures.”** (Tabrani in Al-Awsat no 5126).

Corrupt behavior is a mental attitude that is closely related to wealth and the worldly-minded. Islam gives this directive from a fundamental level, it is proven that Rasulullah (saw) has warned us of the dangers of slandering wealth and love of the world, which will destroy this ummah. He (saw) said: «فَوَاللَّهِ مَا الْفَقْرُ أَخْشَى عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَكِنِّي أَخْشَى أَنْ تُبْسِطَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَيْكُمْ كَمَا بَسِطَتْ عَلَى مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ، فَتَنَافَسُوهَا كَمَا تَنَافَسُوهَا، فَتُهْلِكُكُمْ كَمَا أَهْلَكْتَهُمْ» **“By Allah, it is not poverty I fear for you, rather I fear you will be given the wealth of the world, just as it was given to those before you. You will compete for it just as they competed for it and it will ruin you just as it ruined them.”** (Bukhari and Muslim).

So to borrow the analogy of the butterfly effect, the role of Muslim woman is actually vital in eradicating corruption, because she is the last bastion of the Muslim family, her role is able to exist from the smallest line even to the middle and large levels. Because of this, Muslim

women must have the courage to take a big role at various levels, so that there will be massive changes in the community and uproot the seeds of corrupt behaviour from their roots. The following are the steps that Muslim women need to take at the different levels:

1. Individual level. Build strong faith, surround yourself with useful knowledge, especially religious knowledge (Islamic Thaqafah) so that our identity as Muslim women is maintained and always fully submissive to Sharia laws.

2. Family level. The flow of capitalistic life makes today's women and mothers weaker in carrying out their main role as the bastion of the Muslim family. Therefore, strengthen the role within the family, improve the quality of interaction with the family according to Islamic teachings, educate children according to Islam, encouraging families and the environment to get involved in da'wah, including complying Sharia in meeting economic needs, not being tempted by usury and a hedonic lifestyle.

3. Society/community level. Actively conducting *amar makruf nahi munkar*, on public issues that depict corruption in society. This includes correcting the materialistic and consumerist lifestyles of women, such as the lifestyles of socialites, wives of officials and others who prioritize superficial appearance, consumption of luxury goods, and connections to power which actually strengthen the oligarchic political streak.

4. Global/socio-political level. Build Islamic political awareness, engage in congregational dawah and play a collective role in correcting those in power, exposing the greed of oligarchic elites, corrupt state institutions, the tyranny of capitalistic policies, and the deviance of secularism/other ideologies. Including promoting the return of Islamic life through the establishment of the institution of the Islamic Khilafah (Caliphate) upon the method of the Prophethood which will implement Islamic laws and maintain *maqasid shari'ah*.

The crucial and fundamental role of Muslim women in building a family is like the small flutter of a butterfly in the tropical forests of Brazil which influences the occurrence of tornadoes in Texas. So that when Muslim women are aware of their role, their work in building society will produce real and big changes, even changing the world. All to gain the pleasure of Allah. *Wallahu a'lam bishowwab*

﴿وَإِذَا أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نُهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً أَمَرْنَا مُتْرَفِيهَا فَفَسَقُوا فِيهَا فَحَقَّ عَلَيْهَا الْقَوْلُ فَدَمَرْنَاهَا تَدْمِيرًا﴾

“And when We intend to destroy a city, We command its affluent but they defiantly disobey therein; so the word comes into effect upon it, and We destroy it with [complete] destruction.” [QS. Al Isra: 16]

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Dr. Fika Komara

Member of the Central Media Office Hizb ut Tahrir