

Anti-Extradition Bill in Hong Kong: "Democracy" Turmoil from Within - against Beijing

News:

BBC reported hundreds of thousands of people are protesting in Hong Kong against a controversial extradition bill, despite the bill having been suspended. The densely-packed crowds are demanding that the bill - which would allow extradition from Hong Kong to mainland China - be completely scrapped. It is feared that the bill would cause the city to open up to mainland Chinese law and that people from Hong Kong could become subject to a different legal system. The region's leader, Carrie Lam, on Sunday apologised for causing "disputes in society" over the bill. A day earlier she delayed the bill plans after mass protests this week. Many protesters, who fear increased Chinese influence over Hong Kong, are calling on Ms Lam to resign over the unrest.

The Extradition Bill will facilitate the transfer of fugitives between Hong Kong, the People's Republic of China (PRC), Taiwan, and Macau. If approved, those who become suspects in Hong Kong can be extradited to China - a country popularly called Mainland China by Hong Kong people. The Hong Kong government said the law was designed to make Hong Kong no longer a "paradise" for criminals. (Tirto.id)

Comment:

Pro-democracy and freedom in Hong Kong movement clearly has anti-China spirit showing the remnants of the Western colonial influence in the region, although Hong Kong has released by England in 1997. This big demonstration is the second mass pro-democracy moment after the 2014 Umbrella Revolution which has the same tone against Beijing's 'anti-democracy' regime. It seems that the British managed to invest the value in a Western way of thinking in the people of Hong Kong. The scent of contestation between China and the West was very strong, it was evident from the strong anti-Chinese spirit seen from Hong Kong movement figures such as Benny Tai Yiu Ting as intellectual figures and Joshua Wong as a young militant activist at that time.

Tense relations between Hong Kong and Beijing is nothing but the result of the application of the One Country Two System (Hanzi: 一國兩制, hanyu pinyin: yiguo liangzhi) which was launched by Deng Xiaoping to achieve the unity and reunification of China under the auspices of the People's Republic of China (PRC). One country in question is the People's Republic of China with its central government in Beijing. While the two systems in question are systems of socialism with centralized power in the People's Republic of China and capitalism and democracy at different levels in Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan.

Under the auspices of "One Country, Two Systems", Beijing promised three territories of wide autonomy to take care of the executive, legislative, and judiciary.

The central Chinese government in Beijing was banned from intervening and also the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was not officially present to administer territorial affairs. Freedom of opinion, press, religion, and protest are protected by law. While Beijing is responsible for defense and foreign affairs.

This implementation of dual political policy often used by the West to sue the central authority in Beijing which is seen as anti-democracy. Beijing repressive govern-style reflected in the Extradition Bill (one example) is often targeted by pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong where they are backed by the West. Pro-Chinese media also loudly voiced that this demonstration was ridden by the west.

But apart from the contestation between China and the West influences, fundamental critique about the democracy and freedom idea - which is revered by Hong Kong protesters – is very important to do, especially for Muslim like us. And certainly, we should see it only from the perspective of Islamic thought. Muslims with their status as *shuhada'ala naas* - witnesses to humankind, should be able to behave on their own principles and ideology. Not to be deceived by the magnificent ideas of freedom and democracy from the West, as well as not being trapped by China's economic dominance, both West and East are both human values and systems.

Democracy is obviously not the solution nor the future for the world today which has multiple crises. Democracy is also not the answer for Hong Kong, Indonesia or even the Western countries. The failure of democracy should make us aware of human limitations in the delivery of rules and laws. Human reason is weak and limited; and cannot determine the needs of other human beings. In contrast, Islam has the source of law to regulate every facet of human life issues derived from the One who created the human mind itself. He is Allah, the All-Knowing what needed by humans.

When Muslims have the duty to carry out Islamic da'wah to all humanity, they must make contact with the world, fully aware of their conditions, understand their problems, know the political motives of various countries and nations, and follow political activities that happening in the world. Allah (swt) has given us Muslims - a great honor and great status. But the extraordinary position and the abundant blessings of this Rabb (swt), at the same time come with great responsibility, as Allah (swt) mentioned in the verse above - to be "a witness of mankind". The great role of Muslims is also mentioned in Surah Al-Baqarah, where Allah (swt) says:

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا﴾

“Thus We have made you the ‘ummatan wasata’ (Just Ummah), that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger (Muhammad) be a witness over you.” [2:143]

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