THE CHARACTERISTICS AND VARIETY OF VIOLENCE IN INDONESIA: A THEORETICAL REVIEW

Dr. Argyo Demartoto, M.Si.

A variety of inter/cross-ethnic violence can occur any time particularly in an area, a region, city or country consisting of varied Ethnics, Religions, Races and Inter-Group like in Indonesia. The reality of pluralism from those differences sometimes triggers the inter/cross-ethnic violence occurrence. Pluralism and heterogeneity of ethnic, religion, race and inter-group with their various differences existing in Indonesian society sometimes become the source of conflict or violence collective.

Collective violence refers to a group of people's action both to threaten, to harm, to damage, to take over and to end an individual's or other group's life. The word collective here is used to emphasize that such the action is more than one people's decision.

Collective violence is a phenomenon signing Indonesian's state formation, particularly since the signs of President Soeharto's reign would end. The angry mass sometimes could not control themselves like what occurring in: Kupang (East Nusa Tenggara), Mataram (West Nusa Tenggara), Sambas (West Kalimantan), West Papua (Irian Jaya), Ambon and North Mollucas, Aceh, Riau and etc.

In order to understand the characteristic and variety of violence in Indonesia, this writing is expected to help describing the characteristics and dynamics of collective violence and explaining the relationship between those varied violence and many relevant variables.

A. CONCEPTUALIZATION OF VIOLENCE

In the social science literature, there are found two definitions of violence. Ted Robert Gurr, focusing his attention on political violence, defines violence as

> "all collective attacks within a political community against the political regime, its actors including competing political groups as well as

incumbents or its policies. The concept represents a set of events, a common property of which is the actual or threatened use of violence … The concept subsumes revolution, … guerilla war, coups d'etat, and riots" (Gurr, 1970: 3-4).

This definition of political violence concept from Gurr at a glance is apparently very broad, including all occurrences the main element of which is the use or the threat of violence use. The definition is, however, actually limited, namely only about the action committed by actor or group of actors that oppose the state ruler. Based on that definition, the political violence is not committed by the state ruler, but by those who oppose it. Whereas, in fact, the ruler also commits many violence against the people it dominates. A broader definition is proposed by Johan Galtung, defining the violence as:

"any avoidable impediment to self-realization"

(Galtung, 1980:67)

So, violence is any thing obstructing someone in actualizing his/her self-potency naturally. Galtung adds, however, that the obstruction is something avoidable. It means that the violence can be avoided when the obstruction is put away.

Based on Galtung's conceptualization, the violence can be divided into two: direct or personal violence and indirect or structural violence.

1. Direct violence is the one committed by an actor or a group of actors against others (violence-as-action); indirect violence is something built-in in a structure (violence-as-structure).

2. Meanwhile, indirect/structural violence is committed by a people or a group of people using violence instrument. Structural violence occurs "unintentionally", there is no certain actor committing it. For example, the children in poor and slump areas, suffering from brain weakness because of malnutrition and hence they cannot realize themselves as well as the normal children, it is not the result of someone's bad (evil) intention. Their anguish is a result of a balanced and unjust social economic structure. That is structural violence. In other words, violence not only manifests as the

condition imposing anguish or misery on someone, but also as the obstruction for someone in obtaining goodness or happiness. From Galtung's assumption of violence, a conceptualization can be developed enabling the discussion about violence not only committed by a group of society member, but also by the state officials and private capital controller. Table 1 summarizes that conceptualization.

Table 1

The Characteristics of Violence within the Society

Border	Actor	Dimension	Medium	Scope
State	State apparatus	Physical Non physical (mental terror)	Weapon and army organization and police, public policy	comprehensive
Social Structure	State apparatus, capital controller	Non physical (political, economic, social, cultural)	Public policy. Capital production/ accumulation process and media	comprehensive
Personal/ Community	Individual Group	Physical	Anomie group. Individual action	comprehensive

The table describes political violence as the process proceeding in three borders: state, social structure, and personal or community. In each border, the politic violence is committed by different actors, with different dimensions, media and scopes. In state border, the violence is committed by the state apparatus and is comprehensive in nature.

It means that it may include every aspects of human life. Violence may also occur at social structure level, like when the golf court businessman, for the sake of pursuing capital accumulation, makes many farmers loss their field quickly and become marginal in their own kampong. The violence receiving much attention is the one at

personal/communal level. Whereas, compared with other two types, its scope is very limited and not supported by sophisticated organization.

Galtung's modified conceptualization may give a more detailed description on violence phenomenon particularly the one occurring within the society who is actively stabilizing the presence of national bureaucracy throughout homeland (state-building) and increasing the capital accumulation. In that dynamic condition, the violence may occur as the result of action they, businessmen or community, commit; generally, the violence committed by and in community border is the reaction to violence committed by and in state and capital borders. That is as the reaction to a variety of things obstructing the probability for the people to actualize their potency; such as arbitrary action by bureaucracy and structural violence in the form of imbalance, injustice, exploitation, marginalization, poverty, and other various structural diseases emerging as a result of capital controller's action with the state support.

B. FACTORS CAUSING VIOLENCE OCCURRENCE SUCH AS RIOT IN INDONESIA

One of interesting explanations imposed by the proponents of psychological approach, assuming that all political phenomena including politic violence, departs from human thought.

1. Based on such assumption, their attempt of finding the basic cause of riot is concentrated on the physical factors, namely someone's feeling and awareness of disappointment. Briefly, the argument is that political violence in community border occurs due to the presence of in-dept and widely frustration among the society. It is particularly in the manifestation of relative deprivation, namely discrepancy between the society's value expectation (the expectation for the goods or life condition they believe as right) and their value capability (the goods or condition they likely obtain or the system's capability to enable people obtaining goods and condition they want). Such the deprivation condition results in frustration (Gurr,

1970:3-5). If that disappointment intensity is getting higher and touches a various layers, including elite group, the emerging violence will be getting wider and in more sophisticated form (Gurr, 1970: Chapters 6-9). In other words, people disappointment to deprivation and unjust treatment is the primary motive of political violence such as riot.

2. However, is the riot like what occurring in West Kalimantan, East Timor or Irian Jaya only the reflection of material disappointment? Isn't there immaterial issue? The demand to answer this question can be found in the theorization about ethno-naturalism; the proponents of which are supported in two streams. The primordialist ethno-nationalist theoretician proposes argument that many ethnic-based political movements emphasizes on the ethnic nationalism. This kind of political movement is the manifestation of cultural tradition that still holds out based on primordial ethnical identity, so, the primary motivation of their political action is to maintain that cultural identity; something immaterial.

3. On the contrary, the instrumentalist ethno-nationalism theoretician interprets ethnicity issue as solely "an exercise in boundary maintenance", and assumes that the communal movement is the respond to the partial treatment, so they engage in politics using ethnical symbols in the objective of responding to unjust treatment from other parties; perhaps immaterial in nature. The use of ethnical symbols is based on practical reason, namely the effective medium to induce emotional support.

4. Other criticism against Gurr's relative deprivation theory, resembling the instrumentalist ethno-nationalism argument, comes from Charles Tilly (1978: Chapter 1). Political scholars studying a variety of revolutions in European history show that the violence is the result of leaders' calculation mobilizing group resource to respond to the changing political opportunity. The political violence occurs not because of the society's emotional expression, but is a rational action or instrumental action to achieve certain political interest. Briefly, the political violence is the political calculation product.

When we observe, the four arguments about the cause of violence elaborated above, the argument can be divided into two parts:

1. Firstly, the theoretical group argues that the violence is an emotional reaction to external interference.

2. Secondly, the proponent of instrumentalist argument arguing that violence is the result of strategic calculation and tactical decision. What can be learnt from these two groups of approach? Basically, the truth lies between those two arguments; for that reason, we can utilize both of them.

Like Gurr's statement, the studies on various ethnic and communal groups active in politics show that their mobilization and strategy is based on interaction between those factor categories. "The disappointment due to partial treatment and group identity feeling is the basic foundation for mobilization and determines the type of demand the leaders of movement can propose" (Gurr, 1993: 124). When the people disappointment is not sufficiently severe and group identity is not sufficiently strong, the leaders do not have material or medium to respond to the threat or opportunity coming from outside group. On the contrary, when that disappointment is in-depth and expands, is counterbalanced by the groups' strong identity and interest, the adequate "dry weed" is available; just waiting for the opportunity to make it burnt.

Thus, disappointment only leads to political violence in community border, when the mobilization is carried out on the conflict occurring. The mobilization is manifested in the process of encouraging the group member or other society in order to be willing to exert their effort and resource in carrying out collective action for the sake of mutual interest. What is mobilized? In this stage, the discussion about conflict mobilization leads us to the conversation about the triggering phenomenon. The argument is that the psychological condition indirectly results in collective violent behavior. That relationship is qualified by the presence of event functioning as the trigger. In other words, the dry weed needs spark. Then, because the trigger cannot be assumed as the just-in-time occurrence, but perhaps occurs as a sequence of

events, in order to excite the mass's attention, the triggering event should be mobilized.

Up to this point, an explanation can be proposed that the collective political violence is related to the psychological condition, in the manifestation of people's widely disappointment, exploded by the triggering event. However, the next question is: How can the disappointment or frustration widen and be in-depth? How the potency emerges to carry out the political articulation of that disadvantaged group's interest.

C. FACTORS DETERMINING THE DISAPPOINTMENT INTENSITY AND THE POTENCY TO COMMIT VIOLENCE

Discussing about the minority group's problem, Gurr proposes four factors he considers as determining the disappointment intensity and the potency to commit the political violence as the solution.

1. Firstly, how severe is the collective retardation or anguish of communal group compared with other groups. The larger the difference of inter-group condition, the stronger is the reason to be disappointed and the more solid is the perception that they have mutual interest to carry out collective action. It means that, the higher is the potential to carry out mobilization among the members of group.

2. Secondly, firmness of group identity. The group disappointment and potential to articulate such the disappointment politically depend on the salience of that group identity. Group identity is usually very salient in the communal society that feels threatened. The group identity may dim or fade due to stratification and segmentation occurring within the group.

   What does strengthen the group identity? According to Gurr, there are three external conditions:

   a. Firstly, the anguish level of concerned group compared with other groups;

   b. Secondly, the cultural difference level of concerned group compared with other groups; and

c. Thirdly, the conflict intensity between concerned group and other groups or state. The first two factors, according to Gurr, are difficult to change; but the third one, changes easily.

3. Thirdly, the group's cohesion and mobilization degrees. The group cohesion is secure when there is a solid communication and interaction network. Such the cohesion declines when the group is divided into several movements and political organizations. The effective organization of social, politic, and economic interest in an institution warrants the solidity of group cohesion. As aforementioned, in the mobilized group, the members are ready to contribute their effort and resource in the collective action for the sake of mutual interest. But, social-economic modernization (meaning the opening of larger opportunity for the alternative view to enter) can undermine the solidity of cohesion, particularly when that modernization makes the youth not believe in the effectiveness of traditional institutions.

4. Fourthly, the repressive control by the dominant groups. The compulsive power applied unjustly encourages the emergence of anger and suspicion. The communal group compelled to keep staying in the lower status usually hides in-depth disappointment to the dominant group but it is not willing to carry out the opposing action. The apathy occurs because of belief that open opposition can result in very adverse risk. In disadvantageous condition, the group results through the violence and is maintained with violence as well, therefore the disappointment of the group is getting in-depth and the group identity is getting stronger, but the potential mobilization declines. The latter is the general characteristic of country that is carrying out big project, namely state-building and economic development pursuing growth. The obstacles the communal group's members encounter are clearly structural in nature (structural blockage). For that reason, the only one way of stepping on the mobilization ladder is frequently to compromise the group identity and to integrate with power structure controlled by the dominant groups.

D. PETER BLAU'S THEORY OF SOCIAL CLEAVAGE STRUCTURE WITHIN THE SOCIETY

Meanwhile, the same problem receives attention from the sociological scholars. In order to describe the phenomena above, particularly identity reinforcement and group cohesion, we can use Peter Blau's conceptualization (1964) about social cleavage within the society. In this sociological conceptualization, the social structure condition of society is described in the social cleavage based on the religion parameter, ethnic, race, and social class. The society is assumed as having ability to develop the consolidated or intersected configuration of social cleavage.

The configuration is called as consolidated when the social cleavage occurring make the member of society or ethnic group A embraces X religion, and obtains livelihood from trading; the members of ethnic group B generally worship according to Y religion and work as the farmers; while ethnic group C embraces Z religion and many of them occupy the administrative-governmental posts. Such the configuration is intersected in nature when the social cleavage enables the members of society from a variety of ethnic groups to embrace different religions and to look for actively livelihood from any sectors. In the first configuration, the exclusive cleavage makes inter-ethnic relation changes easily into inter-religion and inter-class one. In the second configuration, the social cleavage enables the members of society mixing in a variety of life dimensions: ethnics, religions, and social classes.

Thus, it is understandable that the groups within the society experiencing social cleavage in consolidated manner tends to develop a strong identity of group and more easily creates the solid group cohesion. In such the groups, "the conflict awareness" tends to be high; as a result, when there a conflict with other group, the intensity tends to be high. On the contrary, in the intersected society, the conflict awareness is developed more difficultly, so that the conflict intensity tends to be low.

In turn, the structural condition is related to the society's psychological condition. Individuals within the society with consolidated social cleavage

configuration tend to do "conflict subjectivity" more easily than the members of society with intersected configuration. The members of society with high conflict intensity tend to interpret more easily the conflict pertaining to the objective condition (objective conflict) into the personal conflict (subjective conflict). For example, the conflict pertaining to economic problems develops into the one pertaining to religion.

E. INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND THE VIOLENCE WITHIN THE SOCIETY

The elaboration above shows that the explanation about mentality condition reinforcement with the perpetrators of violence in community border proposed by both sociological and psychological theoreticians is complementary. But, there is untouched problem, namely: Why that mental condition changes into potential conflict? Also, recalling the probability that social cleavage condition can change from intersected configuration into more consolidated one. What does cause that change?

In order to describe it, the developmental theoretician help is needed, particularly those applies the political economic perspective. In this view, that local actor problem should be put into the economic-political context of both national and global development. From this perspective, it can be seen that in practice, the development process provides two consequences: positive and negative. In addition to providing economic productivity improvement and expansion of goods and services provision capability, the economic development also involves the compulsory process and leads to the difference of opportunity to participate in productive process and in enjoying the result. It means that development is a process involving the application of both direct and structural violence. How can?

The national development like the Indonesian Government carries out basically contains two principal dimensions:

1. The first dimension of development is manifested in the attempt of building the state domination institution (state-building). In this definition,

the development is identical with the activity of expanding the presence of national bureaucracy in entire areas of its jurisdiction. For the countries independent post-Second World War, this bureaucracy expansion is very important because they assume the function of making massive social change for the sake of their people's life improvement. For the sake of its policy application effectiveness, the state should consolidate and expand its domination to reach all people and areas belonging to its jurisdiction.

This process is based on the principle of national identity and interest development. Practically, what called national identity and interest is more defined based on the leaders of majority groups' interest. For example, the larger pressure is put onto the attempt of power centralization, and very little pressure is put on to the attempt of autonomy administration to the local actors. When the economic development requires a thorough plan, the necessity to improve the efficiency of bureaucracy work increasingly reinforces the rationalization for the centralization of policy making. As a result, the particular interest and relative autonomy of communal group/local ethnic is ignored. For that reason, it is not surprising that in the Third World countries, the state-building accompanying the economic development generally generates a variety of policies tending to assimilate the members of ethnic/communal groups so that they merge into the identity of majority group, restricting their historical autonomy and extracting their richness, natural resource to be used by the state. Briefly, this process eventually results in annoyance and disappointment among those ethnic and communal groups; particularly because they cannot maintain the autonomy and cannot participate effectively in the ruler coalition.

2. The second dimension of development is manifested in the capital accumulation process. In this definition, the development is the attempt of improving the national economic productivity, the implementation of which is realized in the economic development corresponding to the path the western countries passed through previously, namely the quickly

economic growth through the capitalist way focusing on industrialization. Practically, the process encourages the exploitation of all natural resource and human resource available, so that as if no resource should be missed. It is in this context that we can understand why the ethnic/communal groups such as Dayak in Kalimantan and Amungme in Irian Jaya, are confused in encountering the capital penetration into their traditional area. Meanwhile, in the view of the investors coming there, what occurs is the attempt of utilizing the important resources that were neglected so far and left underutilized by the traditional ethnic groups.

In the capital penetration process that is global in nature, it is the communal groups that receive the most negative consequences. Their natural resource and manpower are absorbed into the national, international and global economic activity. As a result, they are alienated from the land, forest and a variety of other resources surrounding them; namely on which they rely for their life, both materially and culturally. For them, the forest is not only the livelihood source but also has religious meaning.

Considering this perspective, the national development process according to the capitalistic way is one of principal sources of violence occurrence in the both state and social structure borders; direct and structural violence. The same process also encourages the change of social cleavage configuration within a society, from intersected to consolidated ones. The group identity and cohesion that originally may be faded by involving the members of communal group in the pluralist organizations, find the strong reason to reconfirm and to strengthening anymore. As mentioned above, it is this condition that mature the conflict situation; that prepare that "dry weed".

F. INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGION AND COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE

Recalling that many riots occur in Indonesia colored by or involving the religious symbols, how can the role of religion be understood as one of independent variables of the collective violence? Many theories elaborated above tend to put religion as the mobilized media among the adherents; not as the principal source of conflict. Is that right?

There at least two reasons why the religious dimension needs to be emphasized on in the discussion about riot.

1. The first reason is that the presence of indication that social-economic modernization in various societies with Moslem majority population, encourage the improvement of religiosity, not secularism, like the past modernization theoretician's prediction. Despite religiosity among other religions' adherents, what occurs in the Moslem is very salient. The problem is that the process in fact contains the potential disruption to the harmony in the relationship between religious adherents. In that society, for example, the militancy tends to increase, fundamentalism develops, and tolerance among the adherents of religions declines. How can?

   One assumption is that the successful social-economic modernization had encouraged the higher self-confidence. For the religion adherent group that originally is in bottom layer largely, the vertical mobility apparently results in the confirmation of group identity. As a result, the characteristic of "we-they" relationship becomes transparent. A variety of symbol and attributes showing group identity is getting shown off, so that the difference awareness is getting higher. When this awareness is followed by the difference of objective condition, like social class, the conflict awareness will develop easily.

2. The second reason is the presence of assumption that the same process provides the loosing of relationship between some religion adherents and the religious institutions catering them. The declined authority of religion institution is increasingly felt among the religion adherents. The leader

religion institution's authority over the members of religious community experiencing modernization-urbanization, particularly the young age layer, feels loosing. In some places in Java, demonstration-effect due to the modernization process make the relationship between the *kyais* (teacher of Islam) and their *santris* (student at traditional Muslim school) is not as close as that previously. The prominent thing occurs in the relationship between *santri* and the *ulama* (scholar of Islam) that in their adherents' opinion has been co-opted by the state. The same thing is also reported occurring in other various religions. Among the Christians, the relationship between community and their religion institution's leaders changes into the looser one. The declined cohesion among these religious communities may make the management of conflict among the religious communities more difficult to do.

G. Framework

The development policy in the form of support to create a quickly economic growth corresponding to the capitalist path ("capital accumulation) with the support of public administration mechanism and state domination expansion (state-building) has leaded to various effects, some of which are negative. One of them is the change of social cleavage configuration. The operation of development mechanism has created an opportunity for many citizens to utilize the resources coming along with the development for the improvement of their material life. But, it can be presumed that not all citizens can utilize that opportunity. Some citizens successfully use that opportunity then experience vertically social mobility; their social-economic status is then higher than others'. In some areas colored by the ethnic plurality, the social mobility, in fact, tends to be distributed unevenly; one ethnic group experience an increase in its social-economic status far surpassing others'. Such the change dynamics in fact makes that difference getting real over times. As the result, the configuration of social cleavage is increasingly consolidated in

nature; the identity of individual ethnic groups is increasingly firm and their daily life is separated from each other.

The relationship between the capital accumulation process and the configuration of social cleavage is complicated by the demographic change also occurring as a result of that capital accumulation, among others. The point here is that the change of ethnic composition or the change of member number of each ethnic in an area can occur because of many things. One of which is the demographic change due to Family Planning program. The effect of this program on the number of populations in individual ethnic groups may be different, so that one group is getting larger proportionally, while others is getting smaller. The interesting point, however, is the demographic change due to population migration. Migration occurring along with the development process had changed the demographic composition of many areas with strong economic attractions. Such the areas receive an increased number of coming people with different ethnic and cultural background, so that a pluralist society is created. The ethnic plurality is in fact also colored by the difference of respond from individual ethnic group's members to the opportunity offered by the capital accumulation process. Generally, the outsider more intensively utilizes the opportunity emerging from the capital accumulation process so that it enjoys higher economic profit than the native people. In turn, imbalance can exacerbate the configuration of social cleavage into the reinforcement of individual groups' ethnic identity consolidation.

The national development process also affects the religiosity condition of society members. The effect may come directly, through the government policy indeed designed to promote the religious life (e.g. through education), and indirectly (e.g. the improvement of prosperity encourages the emerging of better worship facilities). Both directly and indirectly, the development process has created the condition supporting the improvement of people religiosity. The same process, however, in fact has grown excessive militancy. The religion education process both in and out of school, emphasizing more on the attempt of confirming the peculiarity of group identity, is presumed

encouraging the increased militancy. The social process proceeding along with the dynamics of economic change tends to provide the same phenomena, as well. The economic success of one religious community generates the higher belief in their group's truth and hence tends to underestimate other groups. In some places, the increase of militancy also affects the change of social cleavage configuration from intersected to the consolidated one.

Meanwhile, how is the reaction of those who left behind to the effect of national development process? The respond of the left-behind groups depends on their capability of creating organization with effectiveness leadership to defend their interest. The more cohesive the organization, the firmer is the group's identity salience, and the stronger is the effect on the change of social cleavage toward the consolidated configuration. Whereas, as aforementioned, those who live in plural society with the consolidated social cleavage configuration tend to develop high conflict-awareness. Moreover, when the configuration of social cleavage incorporates a variety of parameters including religion, ethnic, race and class.

Thus, the negative effect of development process has encouraged the change of social cleavage configuration that in turn will encourage the improvement of conflict awareness and frustration expansion among the society. It is the society whose members experience such the psychological condition that provides the "dry weed". However, that condition alone will not generate burning conflict when there is no exploding fire. And the explosion will not generate the increasingly larger conflict when it is not fueled by the attempt of mobilizing the conflict awareness. The relationship between the society's frustration variable and the conflict awareness, trigger, and conflict mobilization variables is interrelationship; and it is the dynamic in this level that determines whether or not those antecedent variables really generate the conflict behavior in the form of that full-of-violence riot.

Meanwhile, as the social process generally, the dependent variable gives feedback to and affect the dynamics in the development process, particularly in the form of political policy in coping with such the riot. The

way and mechanism the government uses in coping with the riot in turn can encourage the new dynamics progress in such those variables and so forth. It means that, the government's respond is presumed may affect the frustration and awareness level that may mitigate or even increase the probability of recurrent riot. The conceptualization of "feedback" enables us to describe the probability of recurrent conflict in the same place or in other places.

Considering the elaboration above, here is the chart of framework of collective violence behavior in Indonesia.

Chart 1

The Collective Violence Behavior in Indonesia
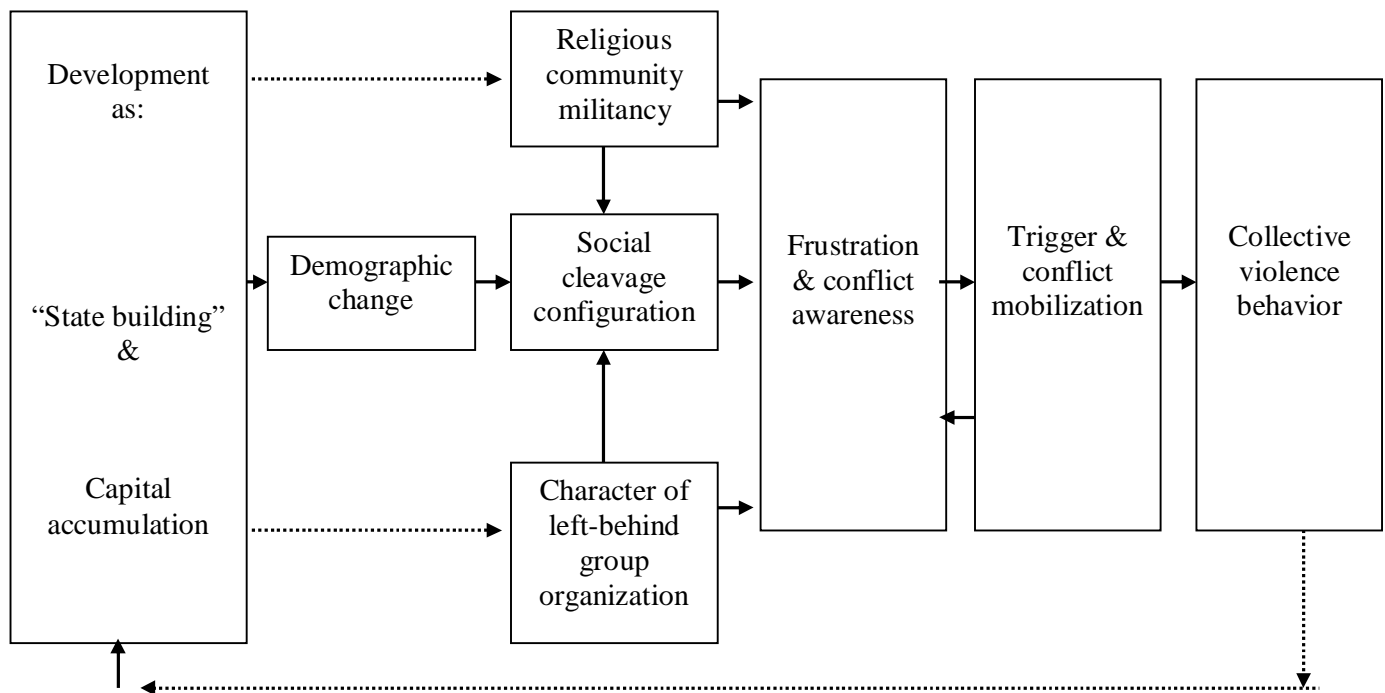
H. CONCLUSION

There are two basic components in the argument about the collective violence in Indonesia:

1. Firstly, the character of social cleavage configuration within the plural society (that can be sorted by the religion, ethnic, race, or social class

parameter) determines the conflict awareness level among the society, thereby determining the level of collective violence occurrence probability. When the cleavage configuration is intersected in nature, the conflict awareness among the member of society will tend to lower; and as a result, the collective behavior does not occur easily. Such the conflict behavior will only occur when there is an extraordinary trigger and the mobilization of conflict awareness is done widely. On the contrary, if in the developing society, the structural condition provides consolidated cleavage configuration, the conflict awareness among the member of society tend to be higher. In this condition, the trivial event may trigger the occurrence of collective violence, moreover if it is followed by the conflict mobilization among the member of society.

2. Secondly, the social cleavage configuration is highly affected by three variables: capital accumulation process and the establishment of state domination accompanying it; the characteristics of left-behind group organization; and militancy level of religious community.[]