Virtual Democracy MCA (Muslim Cyber Army) Influences on Political Issues in Indonesia

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Abstract: A wave of democracy has existed since the end of the Cold War. Democracy is an ideal system for developed countries, that should be practiced in developing or third world countries. The wave of democracy that has struck third world countries, including Indonesia, has caused impacts through the entryera of globalisation. A democracy based on freedom and human rights has a tremendous impact on the dynamics of society. The freedom that comes from using social media both positively and negatively poses as a lighter in the context of the development of religious populism. One of the items of evidence of the development of religious populism is the existence of a social media account named MCA. MCA utilises social media in channelling aspirations related to political issues. This focus of this research is on how social media utilisation by MCA can change society's mindset related to political issues. The methods used in this research were social media analysis and literature studies. The MCA movement is indicated to have a political goal because it always disseminates information that is on a tangent to political issues. As a result, it can be said that virtual democracy has an impact on the growth of the religious populist movement in society as well as MCA.

1 BACKGROUND

Globalisation is a phenomenon that is inevitable for every nation, including Indonesia. Moreover, globalisation is initially interpreted as a form of economic liberalisation which has a significant impact on the political sphere of the state. The power of globalisation has an impact and is related to the encouragement by society of participation and democracy. The relationship between participation and democracy is close and mutually connected. Public participation can help to take control of the state, which means that the state cannot act arbitrarily. The urgency of the public's participation is important because it is the spirit of the democratic implementation occurring in the country. Democracy itself is also born from the demands of the outside world, or in other words, democracy is a mandatory requirement for a country in the globalisation era. In the 21st century, globalisation is encouraged by the latest technological advances, namely the internet. The internet becomes more interesting when democracy makes it simpler to know the needs of democracy itself. Therefore, societies face a new era of democracy called the "democracy digital era".

The democracy digital era provides a space for public participation in the country. Digital technology is supported by the internet which can be used to provide a new public space that can be used by the whole of society. "Digital technology not only increases participation, but also offers certain advantages. As a virtual tool, the internet makes participation activities easier". Furthermore, it can also attract society to participate. Based on political theory,

Sastroadmodjo (1995) suggested that the factors that affect the participation rate of society are modernisation and mass communication. Modernisation is considered to be the ability to facilitate access to participation through the availability of devices which are more efficient and effective. This availability of devices is presented by the use of the digital era. In addition, participation in politics in particular is increasing because of mass communications through a variety of information communication networks. Images of participation and democracy in the digital era can be seen through the track record and data analysis focused on the users of social media. Social media becomes a representation of the presence of a digital age which is used as a public space for society to express various aspirations. Based on the data from Hootsuite, there are 132.7 million internet users in Indonesia, with 130 million being social media users. The numbers show that societies who are made up of internet users have increased in the digital era. Digital democracy is an effort to implement the concept of democracy without being confined by the limitations of time, space, and other physical conditions (Hacker and Dijk, 2000).

The advantages offered by social media are the main attraction for the political world. People who use social media use a new term to describe internet users, which is netizen. The improvement of political communication through the internet is used by political actors to reach new goals. Political actors aim to win the hearts of netizens in order to become the king of social media. The requisite politics will make the virtual world as successful as the real world that they want to build and control. Netizens have the freedom to make groups with different backgrounds and interests in order to show their political existence and ideology through social media. In some cases in Indonesia, the accounts contained in social media can even have a specific background as a part of their religious identity. Why does this happen?

The phenomenon of religious populism is participated in through social media, including Indonesia. The high sentimentality of religion freely supports participation in the era of digital democracy, which has encouraged the emergence of movements of identity in social media. In fact, accounts focused on religious identity are not uncommon, who also often upload and proclaim about political issues. Recent political phenomenons grow along with the development of social media. Social media is one of the communication tools that must be owned by everyone

2 EMPIRICAL BACKGROUND

In Indonesia, the dependence on social media provides both positive and negative impacts. One positive impact is providing transparent information that is easily accessible. On the other hand, the negative impact of social media is that hoax news, which is not trusted, can be spread through social media. The news is widely open on social media networks but it is not necessarily verified. It is used by individuals with a particular identity to influence their readers through preaching.

One of the groups that use a religious identity is the MCA (Muslim Cyber Army). The MCA is a group that uses the Islamic faith as the basis for the group's formation. The MCA spreads their post through social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The MCA group has been in existence since 2016, which was marked with Habib Rizieq's statement that Jokowi blocked him online, calling for the help from the Muslim Cyber Army. Because of the statement from Habib Rizieq, the MCA strengthened the news put through social media. One event that is a marker of the MCA is the 212 events organised through social media; the 212 events accused the former Jakarta Governor, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, of being a blasphemer in order to deepen the case against the other political actors.

One of the MCA's missions through preaching is to reject hoax news and to rebuild the good image of the religious leader, Habib Rizieq. In contrast, the news that they make have cornered one of the parties. In fact, they often spread news content that contains SARA (Tribe, Religion, Race, Inter-Group) and politics. The MCA account provides information related to one political actor or another political party. Thus, with such news, many readers believe the news even though the news is not necessarily true. The distribution of the news through social media allows it to spread quickly. Moreover, the impact of the news that includes political issues will affect political stability.

The formation of the MCA and the phenomenon of religious populism greatly affects the public stigma. In addition, the use of social media is one of the strategies used changing the social stigma and stockpiling the MCA. The phenomena showed that religious populism that is accompanied by the development of technology, such as social media, is the result of democracy. Democracy in cyberspace also has a significant impact in relation to shaping the mindset of society, especially concerning political issues. Therefore, in this paper, the authors will discuss how the Muslim Cyber Army movement in Indonesia can change the mindset of society towards political issues through social media

3 METHOD

This paper consisted of several stages that began with data collection. This was continued by the

analysis of the data. When observing the movement patterns of the MCA in social media, the authors used the qualitative research method. Through the qualitative method, this paper produced descriptive data in written and spoken forms, thus allowing people's behaviour to be observed in relation to the MCA movement in social media.

The data collection technique used in this paper came from the secondary data in the form of documentation. The documentation was in the form of national and international journal literature. The observations related to the movement of the MCA were observed directly through the social media accounts of the movement on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram account.

Overall, the data analysis process involves some attempt to interpret the data in the form of text or images. Researchers need to prepare the data that s to be analysed in order to understand and interpret the real meaning of the data. After interpreting the data, it will be analysed using a predefined theory.

4 LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1 Identity Politics

An identity will always refer to several things, including the social, political and cultural. In the current global condition, a person can have more than one identity. An identity will continue to grow and is not final. Identity is a special characteristic that becomes the entry point for other people or other societies to introduce themselves.

Castelle found that "Identity is the foundation of the construction process and psyche-cultural culture of an individual that gives meaning and purpose to a particular individual. This is because the formation of identity is a process of internal dialogue and social interaction."

Another definition came from Stuart Hall (in The Question of Cultural Identity, 1994), who said that identity is something that is actually formed by unconscious processes that transcend time. In identity, there is something that is "imaginary" about integrity. Identity remains incomplete, and is always "in progress" and "being formed".

The politics of identity itself is an individual's participation in their social life which is determined by their cultural and psychological background. Empirically, the politics of identity is constructed from the actualisation of political participation in the cultural roots of the local community. Moreover, it has a process of internalisation that is continuous in the cultural fabric of society in a social interaction.

The rise of culture and the local community in the form of identity politics should be a corridor to declaring a commitment to democracy and sticking to Pancasila as the crystallisation of the cultural values of the nation. It can maintain and preserve life in order to live in the harmony and glory of the Republic of Indonesia.

4.2 Digital/Virtual Democracy

The concept of digital democracy was born alongside the development of technology. The high level of public interest in using technology is used as a new way to meet their aspirations. Digital democracy itself is the result of the synergy between digital technology and democracy. Democracy offers the world a future, which is the dream of the digital technology era. It upholds the values of freedom of information and communication, and digital technology comes with a guarantee of effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, openness and accountability. Nikos Frangkis (2007) found that "...digital democracy could be defined as any electronic exchange in the democratic process, both from the citizens' perspective, and that of politicians and the political system. It reflects, in this particular ambit, the tendency toward physically substituting politically significant participation in events by using electronic communication means".

Digital democracy itself combines the concept of representative democracy and participatory democracy with an emphasis on the use of digital technology devices. Democracy in a digital era is a revolution that offers what democracy offered in an earlier era. Democracy in the digital era is accepted by society because it offers a way to deliver the aspirations easily. The purpose and direction of the digital democracy uses communication networks at the global level and it is able to penetrate the boundaries of space and time.

Based on the data released by "We Are Social" by January 2018, there are 132.7 million internet users in Indonesia with a penetration rate of 50%. Apparently, people who are actively using the internet are also active when it comes to using social media; as many as 130 million with a penetration rate of 49%.

Here we can see that the level of active users of social media in Indonesia is quite high, so it facilitates the democratic process online. This does not mean that democracy in a face to face manner is unnecessary. Cyber democracy or virtual world democracy remains a stepping stone to be followed up with concrete actions, so there is a good synergy between democracy in the virtual world and the real world.

There are four benefits gained from social media from the practice of democracy (Fayakhun, 2017). The first is access to information. Social media (Socmed) is used as a source of information access that accommodates the aspirations of society because it promotes the public's interest. The second is as a tool of interaction. The high number of social media users in Indonesia causes limited interactions in cyberspace. However, the interaction becomes a way to strengthen democracy. The third is a space of participation. For social media, democracy becomes a new place to encourage people to participate in all aspects of life. The fourth is as a place to decentralise information. Social media is helpful in bringing the government closer to its citizens so then societies can be involved in the practice of democracy.

4.3 Populism

The definition of populism by KBBI is an understanding that embraces, recognises and upholds the rights, wisdom, and interests of small communities. The definition of religion has an understanding that is more inclined to religious practices and emotions. The understanding of religion in this discussion is that it is this close understanding that makes people's life more segmented.

Populism has four characteristics. First, the movement represents the interests of marginalised groups. Second, it is used against the systems and sub-systems that are the cause of the marginalisation. Populism rejects the setting up of the government and the political elite. Third, the populism movement spreads the discourse of economic crises, politics and morality that erodes the existence of the nation and of the state. Fourth, the populist movement also displays religious figures but it is also able to provide solutions to the problems of the country. The figure becomes a role model for societies who follow this movement. (CSWS, 2017).

The traces of contemporary populism are triggered in various countries such as the United States, which is marked by "Trumpism". Trumpism began to exist when Donald Trump became an elected candidate in the US presidential elections. In the Europe, it is characterised by the UK government through "Brexit". The events that have hit Indonesia are through the occurrence of massive protests from Muslims responding to the blasphemy committed by the former Jakarta Governor, Tjahaja Basuki Purnama (Ahok). Through these events, the wave of populism is increasingly prevalent and it is growing into a big movement.

Figure 1. Characteristics of Populism.



Data Source: CSWS Fisip Unair FGD "Religious Populism" at November 23, 2017.

The movement of populism in Indonesia is growing in the lower classes and also can be found in the majority of the middle classes. Both of these circles are people who are always dissatisfied with the policies and leadership style of the main political actors. In addition, there is the dominance of one particular party that does not have any ideological similarities. "Islamic populism" is defined as a trend that has anatomy that is similar to populism (specifically, right populism). This term makes Islam an identity group. The populist Islamic term can also be used to differentiate between radical Islam and Islamic political movements in electoral politics (Hadiz, 2017).

The religious populism movement that has developed in Indonesia is caused by Western power in the political, cultural, social and economic fields. The emergence of the phenomenon of civil war in the Middle East, the discrimination against Muslims in Western countries, the expulsion of the Rohingya ethnic group and the economic crisis has hit the lower classes of Indonesian society, where the majority are Muslims. The phenomenon that happened recently is not a profitable position for Muslims. Marginalised Moslems, hit by the crisis, will foster a sense of solidarity among fellow adherents of Islam and join them in spreading the issue of discrimination and marginalisation. These conditions give birth to the radical movements that oppose the teachings of the West as well as the symbols of non-Muslims.

Based on the index showing the income gap between the rich and the poor in the world, Indonesia is ranked in fourth position in the world, behind Russia, reaching 74.5% above India (58.4%), Thailand (58%), and Indonesia (49.3%); 10% of Indonesia's people control 75.7% of Indonesia's wealth. Other data has shown that two thirds of wealthy people in Indonesia are a crony; people close to power. Referring to the crony-Capitalism Index, and related to the position of people who became rich due to their proximity to power, Indonesia was ranked the world's sixth, under Russia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, the Ukraine, and Mexico. (Herdy, 2017)

Based on the above data, Indonesia has a gap of 49.3%. The nominal data shows that Indonesia still has a high gap level between the rich and poor. This gap helps the movement of religious populism. The culmination of the religious movement was at the same time as the demonstrations against the blasphemy cases focused on former Jakarta Governor, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok). After the 212 demonstrations, the populism movement increasingly began to exist in social media. Social media is used as a communication tool that is effective at promoting the mission of their demonstrations. After the 212 demonstrations, there became one movement called the Muslim Cyber Army (MCA).

4.4 Muslim Cyber Army (MCA) in Indonesia

The MCA (Muslim Cyber Army) is a movement without form and structure that operates in social media. The development of the MCA movement is through social media and news that is related to Islam or political issues. It is recorded in history that the MCA emerged in Indonesia in 2016. It is marked by a tweet from Adam Harvey, a Journalist at ABC for Southeast Asia, who stated: "Radical Indonesian cleric Habib Habib Rizieq says that Jokowi is blocking him online. Calls for help from Season Cyber Army."

One of the religious leaders that is a role model of the MCA, Habib Rizieq, said that his social media account was blocked by the government. Habib Rizieq, commonly called HRS, voiced that there should be a cyber-war and asked the MCA to join him. In 2017, the MCA was developed by the events of 411 and 212. The demonstration on behalf of Islam when dealing with the religious defamation by the former Governor of Jakarta has strengthened the radicalism of the religion. Additionally, it was also used by political actors to get their own victories. These events resulted in widespread religious radicalism. Political issues about religion do not seem to happen in Indonesia. After the events of 411 and 212, the issue of religion has always been associated with political issues. As a result, the former Jakarta governor, who is of Chinese ethnicity, is not allowed to take on a governmental position.

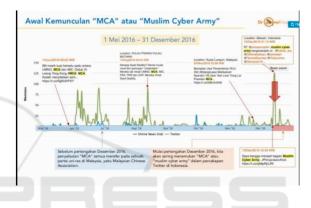


Figure 2: The beginning of the "MCA" or "Muslim Cyber Army" movement emerged

Source: Ismail Fahmi, PhD (The War On MCA)

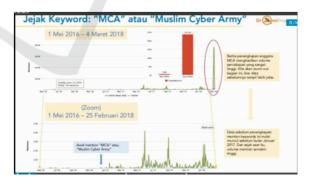


Figure 3: Keyword Trail: "MCA" or "Muslim Cyber Army"

Source : Ismail Fahmi, PhD (The War On MCA)

In 2018, the police arrested 14 members of the MCA in various regions in Indonesia. The pros and cons concerning the actions of the government have spawned a social media war. One pro-government Twitter is @digembok, which always de-legitimised the MCA.

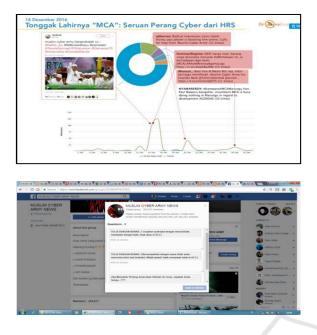


Figure 4: Trigger Developed "MCA": Statement of Cyber Warfrom HRS Source: Ismail Fahmi, PhD (The War On MCA)

The war of the MCA and the government's proaccount has become a cluster. A cluster is a combination of social media accounts. In this case, the cluster is divided into two smaller clusters, which are the cluster of the pro-government and the cluster that is counter-government. The arrest of 14 members of the MCA made the pro-government cluster wider and the MCA cluster narrower. This will not last long if the pro-government is negligent in maintaining the cluster, as the MCA will find gaps to attack back. The patterns of the social media wars that occur between the clusters ran counter to one another until now. One counter-government movement is the MCA, which is still heavily in the news, especially on the issue of governance and politics. The MCA presents a religious leader who is considered to be capable in solving the problems of the country.

4.5 MCA Characteristics

The MCA, which is without form and structure, is a movement united only because of the solidarity of having a similar ideology. Networking members or sympathisers are not bound. To join the discussion room of the MCA via Facebook, they only require mentioning the Syahada sentence twice, acknowledging that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah and recognising Jesus as a prophet. The last requirement is that if the member conducts phishing, then they will be blocked from the group.

The MCA is considered to have an effective strategy in attracting society. According to the data from online news republika, it is proven that from 2016 to 2018, there were 102,064 MCA accounts and 20 admin accounts. The workings of the MCA are to accommodate hoax news, videos and provoking images for the purpose of dissemination. The target of their message is as an actor of the government and political parties. Some of the accounts that make up the cluster cons of government are the Cyber Moeslim Defeat Hoax, amounting to 145 people, The Family Team Cyber which has nine members, the Sniper Army Team that has 177 members and six administrators and accounts that are similar to the MCA but that do not show the MCA identity such as the @indonesiabertauhid Instagram account that already has 466k followers and@teropong.rakyat who has 63.7k followers. Accounts that are not on behalf of the MCA can be regarded as a right hand or relation of the MCA based on the patterns and types of data transmitted. This is because they deliver from the same structure.



Picture 5: Joining Requirements Member of MCA Muslim Cyber Army Indonesia Group Source: Facebook Muslim Cyber Army Indonesia

From the above data, the followers of each account are not small. Over 2 years, the MCA drew the attention of the Muslim community in Indonesia. The number of followers listed above does not included the number of members or followers on the Facebook group. The group of the MCA on Facebook has as many as 3,417 followers. The use of social media in reporting strategies for public attention is considered to have a high level of

effectiveness. As a result, there are many accounts related to MCA that are developing fast.

Basically, the accounts of the MCA all have the same pattern. There are some characteristics that can be seen in the MCA movement. The first official account is named the MCA (Muslim Cyber Army). To identify whether the account is an account of the MCA or not can be seen in the group or account name. Some groups use the MCA name openly. But some, especially Instagram accounts, do not show the identity of the MCA. In other words, they use the identity of the religion of Islam or Islamic symbols. Second, the social media accounts of the MCA or that use Islamic symbols have the same pattern of reporting positive news that rivals the government. The MCA recognises that members of the MCA clarify the policies of the government subsidies and spread the news that the policy is a hoax.

The MCA recognises that they can go against each policy from the government, as well as counter every crevice of government reporting. Third, the news is disseminated in the form of a provocative proclamation. The purpose is only to provoke, so then the news presented is provoked and related to the community issues raised. Fourth, one wave populism can be seen from religious leaders who feel able to solve the problems of the state and of the nation. The MCA movement upholds Habib Rizieq as a role model in both religion and society. According to the MCA, Habib Rizieq should be able to overcome the country's problems. This is proven because the early occurrences of the MCA are characterised by a post about Habib Rizieq stating that "Radical Indonesian cleric says Habib Rizieg Jokowi is blocking him online, calls for help from Season Cyber Army". From these statements, the MCA movement started to develop in Indonesia.



Figure 7: Example of Provocative News Source: Facebook Muslim Cyber Army News

4.6 Impact of MCA movement

The MCA movement has changed people's mindsets on the public degradation issues related to politics and the government. The changing of the legitimacy of the Muslim community is triggered by the level of publicity. As mentioned above, the wave of populism has four characteristics, and one of them is that the wave of populism occurs because there are people who are against being marginalised. It makes them provide news against the authorities because the government is considered to be the cause of the marginalised party. The MCA is a movement that goes against the government or the ruling political party because the MCA feels that the political elite has led to marginalisation, especially that of Muslims. The MCA attracts so many Muslim members who jointly undertake counter-government reporting.

In addition, the societal legitimacy of the government has declined because of the social media war. The government, which is the stake holder in the country, should be able to solve the problems related to social media with a pattern of mediation. This will help the social media war case not grow fast in the eyes of the general public. The consequence of the presence of the clusters being segmented makes the society become firmer.

5 ANALYSIS OF THE THEORY OF IDENTITY POLITICS

Emerging identities refers to several conditions such as social, political and cultural. As described above, identity is a special characteristic of any one person or community that becomes the entry point for other people to introduce themselves. Castelle found that "Identity is the foundation of the construction process and culture of an individual who gives meaning and purpose to a particular individual, because the formation of identity is a process of internal dialogue and social interaction."

Identity as described by Castelle refers to the basic construction of psycho-cultural culture. Psycho-cultural qualities and identity can be manifested into religious and ethnic identities. Identity formation is built by a complex process through experience, confidence, or interactions with the environment. This is the reason why identity construction is not a short time process. The process of identity formation does not apply finally because the identity can be changed with the development of knowledge and through interactions with the environment.

Talking about the MCA, the topic of conversation will lead to the religious identity of Islam because members of the MCA consist of Muslims who uphold the teachings of Islam. They deny the existence of non-Islamic symbols or Western concepts. Members of the MCA are united on the basis of religious affiliations in common solidarity. MCA cadre members are very flexible. One of the conditions that they must have is Islam. In addition to the religion of Islam, members of the MCA also feel that Muslims are marginalised by government officials. Identities are formed in such a way that they can be obtained through the experience of Muslims who feel marginalised by government policy.

The MCA is formed with the goal of the existence of the Muslims. The MCA movement is intended to indicate the identity of the Islamic religion and the power of the Muslims if they are united. One fact that cannot be avoided is that the state of Indonesia has a Muslim majority population, but Muslims feel that the government is not pro-Muslim. It causes the existence of the MCA movement to demonstrate against the government. They believe that if Muslims are united, then it can shake the political stability of the government.

Cressida Heyes revealed that "Identity politics is a flagging political activity in a broader sense, insulated by injustice experiences along with members of certain social groups." Cressida Hayes' opinion of the understanding of the politics of identity is associated with the formation of the MCA. Before the MCA formed, a wave of populism through many countries. Indonesia swept experienced the populism movement due to the condition of having marginalised communities. The MCA were formed to strengthen the existence of the identity of the Muslim religion. Identity politics are based on the experience of Muslims who are against the governmental policies. This makes them come together as a marginalised group.

6 CHANGE THE PUBLIC MINDSET WOULD BE A POLITICAL ISSUE

The MCA, as a Muslim group that attacks the government, always gives news that they call the "clarification" of the government policy. The negative news about the government will decrease

its public legitimacy. If the legitimacy of government fades, then their political legitimacy will also fade.

The MCA has gathered a lot of members over the span of 2 years because the MCA upholds an Islamic religious identity. In fact, Indonesia is a unitary state that upholds multiculturalism. However, the concept of multiculturalism is not enough to maintain stability in the society. Multiculturalism has various cultures and religions that are a particular challenge for the government when it comes to being fair to all people. Indonesia has finally found out the impact of multiculturalism for itself. One group of people feel marginalised by the government in particular. As a result, the MCA movement formed as an impact of multiculturalism and religious populism.

The MCA, in changing the understanding of its members related to politics and government issues, will not escape from the negative publicity. The MCA does not state that the news is negative coverage because the MCA uses the term "clarification" concerning the policies established by the government. The negative news related to the government and politics makes and shapes people's mindset. This can also decrease the public legitimacy of the government.



Figure 8. Mindset's change of society by MCA

7 CONCLUSION

Democracy in the digital age is the direct impact of globalisation, particularly the advancement of information and communication technology. Powered by the high number of social media users, there is more secure community participation and aspirations. Social media then grows and develops into a new container that serves as a source of information and participation, and that involves the decentralisation of information and interaction. Through social media networks, all information will be open widely. On the other hand, the negative impact of social media is a change in the dependency stigma attached to an object affected by

the news through social media. Information may be wide open in social media networks, but it is not necessarily information that has been verified.

The development of the digital era in Indonesia has been followed by a phenomenon that has been described as religious populism. The high sentimental religion freely supports participation in the era of digital democracy, having encouraged the emergence of movements of identity in social media. The religious populism movement developed in Indonesia because of some of the Western power shifts in the political, cultural, and economic social spheres; this includes the emergence of the phenomenon of civil war in the Middle East, the discrimination of Muslims from Western countries, the expulsion of the Rohingya ethnic group, and the economic crisis that hit the lower classes of society Indonesia.

The common thread that can then be inferred from the above phenomena is the presence of social media as a forum for a wide variety of background accounts of the Islamic populism movement that is capable of changing the mindset of society when dealing with political issues. In fact, one of the

The Muslim movements, the Cyber Army (MCA) have been utilising social media to raise and discuss hot topics that will be able to lead the reader's opinion. The MCA movement, to some extent, has changed the mindset of the people and the legitimacy of the public degradation issues related to politics and the government. The shift in the mindset and legitimacy of the Muslim community has been triggered by the level of publicity in the neutralised structure.

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