

# Mahfud MD and Prohibition Imitating the Prophet's Government System

written by Harakatuna



The government system became an interesting topic-at the same time controversial-in a Panel Discussion entitled “The New Hope of the Islamic World: Strengthening Indonesian-Malaysian Relations” which was held at The Great Council of Nahdhatul Ulama ([PBNU](#)) Kramat Raya, Jakarta, Saturday (1/25) yesterday.

The event initiated by PBNU and Wahid Foundation was attended by four figures: [Said Aqil Siroj](#) as PBNU Chairperson, [Yenny Wahid](#) as Director of the Wahid Institute, Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs (Menko Polhukam) RI [Mahfud MD](#), and Malaysian Defense Minister [Mohammad bin Sabu](#), or familiarly known as Mat Sabu.

Initially, netizens responded to the Panel Discussion as a sign of Mahfud MD's reconciliation with Aqil Siroj, who had 'not gotten along' during the 2019 Presidential Election. However, when the event was held, what became a lively conversation was actually [Mahfud MD's](#) statement. He was blasphemed because he said that imitating the Prophet Muhammad's governmental system was 'unlawful'.

“There is no particular system of khilafah which must be followed according to the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet. There is no system. Therefore, Indonesia, in the form of a republic with a presidential. Malaysia is in the form of

a kingdom with parliamentary. Does it violate the Qur'an? No, because there are no teachings in the form of the state in the Qur'an and sunnah. That humans are citizens, yes. What shape it is up to, "said Mahfud MD.

"Because we are forbidden, by our religion, to establish a country as established by the Prophet. Shocked? Yes it is forbidden. Because the state established by the Prophet was a theocracy, where the Prophet had three powers at the same time. Legislative, if there are new legal issues. The legislative body of the Prophet, the executive body of the Prophet as well. The judiciary? Prophet. Now there can't be a country like that (age, ed.) That Prophet. Haram, if we are, "added Mahfud.

"Well. Therefore, the choice of state and system of government, the khilafah system, Brothers, which are now being chosen by Indonesia and Malaysia are equally correct. Equally not in conflict with sharia ... We don't need an Islamic state, but we need an Islamic state. Like New Zealand, an Islamic country, Japan, an Islamic country. "

## **The "Prohibition" of the Prophet's Government System**

One very important note here is, that statement we can through the news in the media. Generally, every reporter, editor, and media itself has a certain policy on all published news. There is something that must not be forgotten, namely: the language of journalists. Besides, so far, about Mahfud MD's statement, his coverage has not been found in national media.

When NU Online first reported, the media clearly had the purpose of using the 'illegitimate' editorial. Minimal to attract visitors, because the prohibition is attributed to the Prophet Muhammad. The problem is different when media such as Suara.com and Duta.co report similar content. This is where the background of the media is an important element for understanding a news.

Then, is it true that Mahfud MD intends to forbid the Prophet's governmental system? That's what needs to be straightened out. Some media have already twisted Mahfud's statement, and asked for comments from an agency that does not understand the case. In this level, the aim is one: to mock Mahfud as Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security. If not, what else?

From the statement quoted earlier, “the imitation of the Prophet’s government system” which meant Mahfud was the forbidden to apply theocracy system. Theocracy must not be applied, because it will rob prophetic authority. Whereas today, prophetic authority is gone. That is, theocracy was irrelevant, after the death of the Prophet Muhammad.

Example. When the Prophet holds three positions at once; legislative, executive, and judiciary, what are the benchmarks of authority that we use to pin these three positions to one person today? Obviously not. Today, the legislature has its own institutions, as well as the executive and judiciary. If all three are forced to apply today, what happens is precisely the tyrannical government system. Obviously that is contradictory to the way of the Prophet’s leadership.

Mahfud MD just explained, it should not be misunderstood. That the government systems of Malaysia and Indonesia are incidentally different, do not conflict with the Qur’an and Sunnah. The Malaysian Parliamentary Case and the Indonesian Presidential Republic are not the same as the Prophet’s theocracy system, certainly not a problem.

## **Homeland As Manifestation of the Prophet’s System**

So the core of Mahfud’s statement is [the affirmation of the spirit of equality](#) between our government system today, whatever its form, with the government of the Prophet. Although the form of the system itself is different. We cannot even match the authority of the Prophet. But elements of the government system applied by the Prophet today remain, only divided in their duties. The legislature, executive and judiciary have their respective institutions.

What government system is implemented today in Indonesia? Is it true, as said Mahfud, there is no contradiction with the Qur’an and sunnah?

The modern understanding of the state involves two things; form of state and form of government. There are two forms of state, namely unity (union) and union (federation). While there are three forms of government; republics, monarchies and commonwealth. In the form of government, there are systems implemented, including presidential, parliamentary, semipresidential, constitutional monarchy,

absolute monarchy, communism, and liberal democracy.

So where is the position of the Republic of Indonesia, and where is the government system of the Prophet Muhammad? Why can not be imitated?

As the name implies, the Unitary Republic of Indonesia is a form of a unitary state, both centralized and autonomous. This nation feels both, under the leadership of the New Order and [post-reformation](#). The government system is presidential, so that executive power is elected through elections and separated from the legislative power. While the judicial power is in the hands of The Supreme Court (MA) and The Constitutional Court (MK).

At the time of the Prophet Muhammad there was no form of state. But government systems can be classified, for example aristocracy and theocracy. The aristocracy was applied in the Roman empire, and the great empires of the time. But the Prophet himself used theocracy. The application of the system was intertwined with the authority of the Prophet himself as an Apostle; holding legislative matters, acting alone as an executive, and holding jurisprudential ([judicial](#)) authority.

Imitating the Prophet's governmental system is clearly not possible, for reasons explained above. But the Republic of Indonesia itself is also substantially a manifestation of the Prophet's system, because it contains the three authorities, although institutionalized separately. If the legislative-executive-judiciary is the essence of the state of the Prophet, which in Indonesia all three have been fulfilled, why are we making a fuss over Mahfud's statement?

## Complement the Unity

Our most important agenda is to honestly strengthen unity, to sow unity for the sake of the existence of the Republic of Indonesia itself. There is nothing problematic about Mahfud MD's statement. He did not want to worsen the Prophet Muhammad's governmental system, or forbid Muslims from following the sunnah. What the Prophet applied has a context, which is different from our context today.

The most important primordial elements in the state of one spirit, and we do not reduce the slightest of the way the Prophet's state. Namely upholding unity,

justice and equality before the law. The urgency of this unity is not without foundation. What was experienced by Mahfud; accused of deviating from the sunnah of the Prophet, there is one concrete form of [stigmatization](#).

Stigmatization here is closely related to the delegitimation of the government, to the existing government system in the Republic of Indonesia. The hidden interests behind the spinning of Mahfud MD's statement are easy for us to guess who is the culprit. If not those who want the NKRI government system to be replaced by the *khilafah 'ala manhaj an-nubuwwah*, who else?

The key, once again, is to strengthen the unions themselves. The narrative about the incompatibility of the [NKRI](#) government system with the Prophet Muhammad's government system must be counteracted as strongly as possible. What was applied by the Prophet was manifested in the frame of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia. Of course with contextualization in several aspects. There is nothing to dispute.

It is precisely what is contradictory to the Prophet's governmental system is the *khilafah* that is called for today. Because, aside from being tyrannical, led by one amir, the *khilafah* they fought for did not include substantial elements of the state. As is known, the tyrannical-monarchy system is the worst system of government.

So, is it true that "haram" imitates the system of government of the Prophet Muhammad? If what is meant by imitating there is to take theocratic prophetic role, it is clearly not allowed. Haram is not because of imitating the Prophet, but because of positioning as an equal authority with the Prophet.

After all, the state is a political matter. Including periveral (*dunyawi*), not at the level of the sacred (*ukhrawi*). The Prophet did not demand that we imitate him. The Prophet said: "*Antum a'lamu bi umur dunyakum* (You know more about your worldly affairs)."

*Allah Knows The Best (ash-Shawab)...*