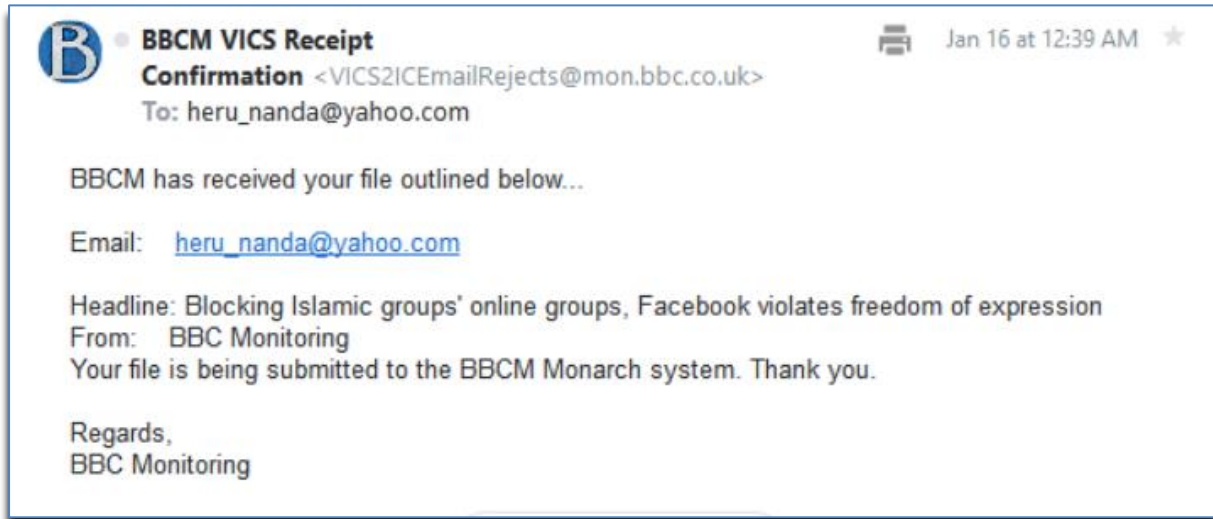


Blocking Islamic Groups' Online Groups, Facebook Violates Freedom of Expression



[AH07_130118, AntoniusHerujiyanto USD_Yk]

The so-called Alliance Refusing Tyrannical Facebook [ARTF] have staged a rally protesting against the social media giant's decision to ban their online activities.

The Alliance comprises of many different Islamic groups including the Defenders of Islam Front or FPI.

FPI's spokesperson, cleric Slamet Maarif, has disagreed with the media's accusation that FPI's online groups have created the people's restlessness.

According to him, many of the blocked FPI's online groups are meant to carry issues on humanitarian social activities such as providing the victims of natural disasters such as floods and landslides with humanitarian aids. Other FPI's online groups are also meant to carry Islamic da'wah on setting up Gerakan Sholat Subuh or the morning Islamic prayers movements.

He stated, therefore, that Facebook's decision was the one causing restlessness, not the other way around.

"We really want to communicate and have a talk with the management of Facebook Indonesia," the cleric said, adding that FPI would also like to talk about the media's community standards.

Mentioning that he had once reported about some other parties' online groups carrying religious blasphemy and hate speeches to the management of Facebook, he said that he had never had any response to his filing the report.

According to the cleric, the management of Facebook should have clarified about their decision not to block the very accounts.

In the meantime, FPI's lawyer, Eggi Sudjana, said that Facebook's decision to ban the Islamic groups' online activities did violate the Article 28 of the Indonesian 1945 Constitution on freedom of expression.

Source: Adhila,suara-islam/read/kabar/nasional/24726/Blokir-Akun-Dakwah-dan-Sosial-FB-Dinilai-Melanggar-Kebebasan-Berpendapat, "Blokir Akun Dakwah dan Sosial, FB Dinilai Melanggar Kebebasan Berpendapat (Blocking FPI's online groups, Facebook violates freedom of expression)", in Indonesian, 12 Jan 18.

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