

## **An Overview of Islamic Law on the Tingkeban Tradition In Javanese society (Case Study in Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency)**

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### **Abstract**

*This research aims to evaluate the Javanese tingkeban tradition from the perspective of Islamic law, with a focus on Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency. This tradition involves giving gifts to pregnant women to celebrate the upcoming birth. The research employs qualitative methods and a case study approach to delve into the understanding and analysis of the tingkeban tradition and to assess its compatibility with Islamic teachings. The research findings indicate that the tingkeban tradition is a rich cultural heritage of the Javanese community that also reflects elements of religion. From the perspective of Islamic law, this tradition can be considered a positive practice as it expresses gratitude, togetherness, and sharing. However, the study also identifies aspects that need careful evaluation, such as its alignment with religious principles, differences in interpretation, and the potential for misuse. In this context, the research provides practical recommendations for the Javanese community to conduct the tingkeban tradition in accordance with Islamic values. These recommendations include enhancing the understanding of religious values related to the tingkeban tradition, integrating Islamic legal principles in its implementation, and emphasizing transparency and fairness in the management and execution of contributions. It is hoped that this research will offer valuable guidance to the Javanese community in preserving their cultural tradition while considering the strong principles of Islam in the process.*

**Keywords:** Islamic Law, Javanese Society, Tingkeban.

### **A. Introduction**

Islam as the revelation of Allah SWT provides a holistic guide for humans to achieve happiness both spiritually and physically, as well as regulate the life order of individuals and society. In contrast, laws outside Islam tend to focus on social aspects and distinguish individual rules as norms, morals, or immorality.<sup>1</sup> Islam as the most perfect religion in which it contains a complete system of religion, the perfection of the religion of Islam as stated in the Qur'an surah Al-Maidah verse 3.

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<sup>1</sup> Mardani, *Islamic Law Introduction to Islamic Law in Indonesia*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Siswa, 2010), p.225

Islam regulates various aspects of life, including physical and spiritual aspects, politics, socio-culture, work, food, and others. Islam was introduced by the Prophet and Messenger of Allah with the aim of returning mankind from darkness to the light of truth. The arrival of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH brought changes to the rules made by humans that were contrary to the revelation of Allah, such as in matters of aqidah, Shari'ah, worship, and morals.

However, when we look at the Tingkeban custom in Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency, questions arise about how this custom is in accordance with religious teachings. Customs have various dimensions, some are legal and some are just good habits. Ceremonial ceremonies often have sacred value, but some are still influenced by non-Islamic teachings that are part of the culture that are difficult to eliminate, especially in Javanese society which is known for its many ceremonies throughout the journey of life, from pregnancy to death.

One of these traditions is tingkeban or mitoni, which is associated with the birth event. This tradition is still preserved in Islamic societies, sometimes considered essential to achieving safety and peace.<sup>2</sup> Tingkeban is a ceremony held by a woman who is pregnant for the first time when her fetus reaches the age of seven months. In the implementation of this ceremony, there are several series that must be undergone, including flushing or bathing and selamatan. In the selamatan, there are often items that have meanings and symbols contained in them. In this ritual, the means presented in salvation are usually made as many as seven pieces.

The tingkeban ceremony in the Javanese tradition is held on the 7th, 17th, and 27th of the Javanese calendar, which corresponds to the phase before the full moon. This ceremony is held on the left or right side of the house, facing the direction of the sunrise. The number of people involved in bathing is usually odd, such as 5, 7, or 9 people. After bathing, the pregnant woman is clothed or jarik up to seven times, with the seventh considered the most appropriate. This ritual is followed by the cutting of the seventh tumpeng, starting with prayer and ending with eating rujak, and so on.

The basis of all Javanese traditions is an expression of gratitude and supplication to Allah SWT for the salvation of the mother and baby, even though it is conveyed in the form of a symbol that has meaning. Violating this tradition can get a negative response from the surrounding community.

Tingkeban rituals vary between regions and groups due to different influences of outside cultures. Some regions perform this ritual based on Islamic values, although there is actually no basis in Islamic teachings for pregnancy salvation ceremonies such as 4 months or 7 months. By some, this is considered an innovation in religion, which in Islam is called bid'ah and is considered heretical. However, tingkeban is part of Indonesia's cultural wealth that is not unfamiliar in Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency. In the perspective of social and cultural sciences, ceremonies such as mitoni and

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<sup>2</sup> Rini Iswari et al., *The Study and Writing of Traditional Ceremonies in Cilacap Regency*, (Semarang: Education and Culture Office, 2006), p.69

the like serve as a way to cope with anxiety, such as the anxiety of prospective parents regarding their expectations during pregnancy, childbirth, and the future of the child to be born.

That is why since the time of our ancestors who did not know religion, they created rituals full of this meaning. Until now, some of the people of Laman Bukit Village still hold the tingkeban tradition strongly. The ritual of tingkeban is so complex that it involves energy, thought, and even material resources in its preparation and execution. The community believes that all these stages are part of the process that must be undertaken, starting from the selection of days and dates that must meet the terms and conditions that have been set.

This tradition contains magical and religious elements, although the perpetrators are Muslims who adhere to the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. This is an important aspect that researchers need to understand, because consciously or unconsciously, they have combined elements of Islamic teachings with elements from outside Islam through syncretization.

Most of the Indonesian people are followers of Islam, and they recognize that Allah is the Creator of everything that governs the universe and provides rewards and trials. However, there are also those who continue to carry out ritual ceremonies that contain rational aspects without feeling guilty. In the twentieth century, when the reform movement emerged in Indonesia, many animist beliefs and dynamism were still developing.<sup>3</sup> In some areas in Indonesia, it seems that there are still many cultures that cultivate belief in amulets, wood, stones and various things that are considered supernatural forces that can affect the movement of life, which can turn profits, losses and disasters and happiness to mankind. Likewise, what happened in Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency is interesting to research. The people of Laman Bukit have traditionally adhered to customs and culture, especially the Javanese tribe, because some of the residents there are mostly Javanese. This cannot be separated from the influence of Javanese customs and culture that has existed for a long time.

The tingkeban ritual is a tradition that is always carried out by the Javanese people in Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency in praying for the safety of the prospective baby and its mother. In this Tingkeban Ritual tradition, there are some very valuable advice in domestic life, especially and in society. Tingkeban is also carried out on a woman whose gestational age is seven months with the intention that the woman and the baby who will be born in the month of her birth will be born safely, physically and spiritually. This seven-monthly tradition or tingkeban also shows the character of the Javanese people who think positively about this tradition to ask for the safety of the future baby and its mother, the purpose is that the child conceived is born safely.

The tingkeban tradition is part of the cultural heritage of our ancestors that contains meaning and has a long history. In Javanese tradition, when a pregnant woman enters the age of seven months of pregnancy, one of the ceremonies performed is tingkeban.

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<sup>3</sup> A. Mukti Ali, *The Nature of Modern Thought in Indonesia*, (Yogyakarta: Yayasan Nida, 2010), p.14

Traditional ceremonies have a variety of meanings, and most of them involve salvation. The Javanese people know various types of salvation, such as tingkeban, babaran, sepasaran, selapanan, going down to the ground, circumcision, marriage, and death ceremonies.

In some regions in Indonesia, pregnancy is the focus of special attention, especially among the Javanese people. When a mother is pregnant, many expectations are placed on the baby she conceives, it is hoped that this baby will grow up to be a generation that is beneficial to the family, nation, country, and religion. In addition, having children is considered a gift from Allah SWT., and with the birth of a child, a married couple feels that their life has become more perfect. Therefore, pregnancy safety is important for the Javanese people as a form of asking for salvation to the Creator.<sup>4</sup>

Some communities carry out the tradition of tingkeban in a variety of different ways and locations. One common way is to hold a tingkeban at home by inviting family members, neighbors, and close acquaintances. In addition, this tingkeban tradition involves various rituals such as sungkeman, flushing, brojolan chicken eggs, brojolancengkir ivory, breaking the yellow janur wrap, splitting ivory cloves, sideways, selling dawet and rujak, and feasting.

However, the development of the times has influenced changes in people's mindsets. Individuals who are educated and have an understanding of religion tend to change some aspect of the traditions or rituals that exist in society. The development of religious knowledge has brought about changes in this cultural tradition.

Thus, without realizing it, culture in Indonesia is slowly acculturating, resulting in a new culture. In the new culture resulting from the acculturation of the culture, it does not only eliminate the old culture but also gives a different shade of the original culture.<sup>5</sup> As well as the tingkeban tradition carried out by the people of Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency. They really appreciate the tradition, in fact they always do the tradition even though they know it is not mandatory for them to do it.

However, they strongly believe in the words of their parents and even the old parents. who gave advice that doing the tradition of monthly nujuh is very important for women who have just had children or have just conceived their first child, because this is done so that the fetus conceived by the mother gets safety until the day of delivery arrives. However, if they do not do this tradition, some people who are fahan (originally of Javanese descent) must tell them that if it is underestimated or taken lightly, it will cause unwanted things such as something will happen to the fetus or mother. So when the mother whose gestational age has reached seven months, she must do selamatan. Therefore, the researcher considers that there is a gap between the view of customary law and Islamic law in this tingkeban tradition, so based on the information above, the researcher is encouraged to study "A Review of Islamic Law on the Tingkeban Tradition in Javanese Society (Case Study of Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency).

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<sup>4</sup> R. Gunasasmita, *Kitab Primbon Jawa Serbaguna*, (Yogyakarta: Narasi Publisher, 2009), p.76

<sup>5</sup> Muhammad Fauzan Nasir, "The Reading of the Seven Selected Letters of the Qur'an in the Mitoni Tradition", (Thesis of IAIN Surakarta, Central Java: 2016), p.4

## B. Research Methods

This research was carried out in Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency, West Kalimantan Province, precisely located on Jalan Sintang-Pinoh, precisely in Selamat Datang Melawi. The researcher chose the location because Laman Bukit Village in Belimbing District, Melawi Regency, West Kalimantan Province is a densely populated area with Javanese people, both permanent residents and immigrants, so it has implications for social phenomena and events that occur in the local community. The research approach used is an empirical approach. To obtain and collect the necessary data as primary data during the research, the researcher uses the Field Research method. The field research methods used by the researcher include observation, interviews, and documentation.

## C. Results and Discussion

### 1. Implementation of Tingkeban (Seven Months of Pregnancy) in Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency

Indonesia, with its diversity of ethnicities and languages, has the largest population in all of its territories occupied by Javanese tribes. In addition to being known as a friendly tribe, the Javanese people are also famous for having a variety of traditions and cultures. Their customs include a number of traditions such as kenduren ceremonies, sekat ceremonies, ruwatan ceremonies, tingkepan ceremonies, wedding ceremonies, and so on. One of the important traditions in the series of traditional events is tingkeban, which is a tradition related to the seven months of pregnancy.

The tingkeban tradition in Javanese culture is considered a very sacred tradition, which is expected to run without interference from supernatural entities or other factors that can interfere with its smooth functioning. In Laman Bukit village, the community still holds fast to this tradition as their ancestral heritage. In its implementation, the tingkeban tradition in Indonesia, especially among the Javanese people, expresses gratitude for the pregnancy of the mother-to-be through a special ritual called Tingkeban.

According to KH. Muhammad Sahal Mahfudh, the Javanese people are famous for their diversity of traditions. Today's traditions have developed organically and in line with the thinking of modern society. Most of these traditions were also influenced by the beliefs and beliefs of their ancestors that were diverse at the time, so not all traditions are in line with the teachings of Islam. Therefore, as a custodian of tradition, it is important not to take it carelessly, but always to reflect and make judgments in accordance with the teachings of Islam.<sup>6</sup> The origins of the Tingkeban tradition are not known for sure, but it can be concluded that this tradition is closely related to the development of the fetus in the womb. Humans are created from the ground, become sperm in males, fuse with female eggs, and evolve into humans.

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<sup>6</sup> Sahal Mahfudh Muhammad Ahmad, *Dialogue with Kiai Sahal Mahfudh, Solution to the Problems of the Ummah*, (Cet. 1: Surabaya: Ampel Suci, 2016), p.258

In Islam, the Tingkeban event can be held as an expression of prayer and gratitude by holding joint prayers and charity. The condition is that the person who implements it must be economically capable and not excessive. If one does not have financial ability, there is no obligation to impose oneself. This is due to the fact that the event of Tingkeban or walimatul al-haml, which is a form of alms and prayer in Islam, is not obligatory.

In essence, Tingkeban or walimatul al-haml is an event of almsgiving, expressions of gratitude, and prayer that is carried out together with the aim of asking for salvation for the fetus, pregnant women, family, and protection from Allah from all unwanted bad things. In practice, the community often holds feasts, selamatan, tahlilan, maulid readings, and manakib, or also performs "simaan" (reading 30 juz of the Quran which is followed by the community). Some traditions also involve the recitation of the letters of Joseph and Mary as a form of seeking blessings and tabarruk for the Prophet and the figures mentioned in the two letters. Through the reading of the Quran and these books, the main goal is that the child born will always take the Quran as a guide for life and follow the footsteps of the Prophet PBUH and the guardians of Allah as told in the maulid book.<sup>7</sup> Although when viewed in terms of its history, the Javanese tradition of Tingkeban has roots that are connected to practices before the entry of Islam, and there is not even a record that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) ever taught it, what is interesting about this tradition is its spirit as a symbolic prayer for a very vital process for the fetus that is conceived. In fact, the mantra material has been replaced with prayer readings, but the spirit of togetherness and harmony in the community is still maintained.

A long-standing tradition in various Muslim communities in Indonesia, including a very good thing. In it, there is giving each other sodaqah in the form of ready-to-eat foods such as rice, porridge, cakes, and so on. In general, this tradition also follows the recommendation of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH to increase the amount of gravy when cooking food, so that it can be shared with neighbors.

From the description above, the author reveals that the Tingkeban tradition which focuses on prayers, the reading of thoyibah sentences, and the sharing of sodaqah, as carried out by the community in the celebration of Tingkeban, is a practice that is highly recommended and should be maintained and preserved. This is because this tradition brings great benefits, including strengthening social relationships in society. In addition, Tingkeban can also be a means of da'wah in the community, especially in Javanese society which is rich in local culture that is passed down from previous generations, as was done by the Wali Songo in spreading Islam in the past.

The implementation of tingkeban in Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency is an integral part of the culture and traditions of the Javanese people in welcoming the birth of a baby. The following is a description that researchers can describe about the implementation of tingkeban in the village;

a. Preparation

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<sup>7</sup> Muhammad Sholikin, *Javanese Islamic Rituals and Traditions*, (Yogyakarta: Narasi, 2016), p.80

Before the implementation of tingkeban, families who have newborn babies will make preparations that include several things. They will clean and decorate the house and provide a special room for the event. This room is usually decorated with flowers, fabrics, and Javanese ornaments.

In addition, food preparation is also carried out by choosing typical tingkeban dishes such as yellow rice, side dishes, vegetables, fruits, traditional cakes, and traditional drinks such as ginger wedang or jamu.

b. Invitations and Guests

The tingkeban event in Laman Bukit Village is usually attended by relatives, neighbors, and close friends of families who have newborn babies. Invitations can be given directly, either orally or through written invitations delivered to the people closest to them.

c. Processions and Rituals

The implementation of tingkeban in Laman Bukit Village involves several processions and rituals which include:

1) Prayer together

The event began with a joint prayer led by a religious leader or kyai. This prayer is intended to ask for blessings and safety for the newborn baby as well as to ask for guidance and kindness in his life journey.

2) Reading of the Holy Qur'an

During the event, the holy verses of the Quran were also recited. This is done as a form of respect for the teachings of Islam and as a hope that babies will grow up with blessings and kindness.

3) Food delivery

The typical tingkeban food that has been prepared will be served and handed over to the guests present. This food delivery procession depicts gratitude and sharing happiness with those closest to you.

4) Gifting

During the event, guests who attend usually give gifts to newborns. These gifts can be in the form of money, clothes, toys, or other baby supplies. The giving of this gift is also a form of support and prayer for the baby.

5) Symbolism and Meaning

The implementation of tingkeban in Laman Bukit Village also has a deep symbolism and meaning, such as:

(a) Symbolic of fortune and blessings

The food served in abundance symbolically represents the fortune and blessings expected for the newborn. This illustrates the expectation that the baby will grow up healthy, intelligent, and successful in life.

(b) Simbolik kebersamaan dan solidaritas

The event is a moment that gathers family, relatives, and neighbors in togetherness and familiarity. It also strengthens solidarity and social relations among members of the village community.

(c) Symbolic of hope and prayer

During the event, special prayers are offered for the newborn. It symbolizes hope and prayer for the baby to grow up to be a good person, be successful in life, and receive God's blessings.

The implementation of tingkeban in Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency is a manifestation of the rich culture and traditions of the Javanese people in welcoming the birth of a baby. This event is not only a moment of happiness for families who have a new baby, but also a place to strengthen social ties and strengthen the cultural identity of the local community.

## 2. Islamic Law's Review of the Tingkeban Tradition (Seven Months of Pregnancy)

The definition of custom in Islam, as explained by Al-Jurjânî quoted by Abdul Mudjib, is an action or speech that is repeatedly done by humans because it is in accordance with reason and is often repeated by society. Meanwhile, according to Abdul Wahâb Khalâf, 'Urf or custom is something that has been known by many people and has become their habit, either in the form of words, actions, or customs that are generally followed. In this context, the tingkeban tradition is considered a custom because:

- a. Practiced and preserved for generations, it is carried out repeatedly and continuously as an important condition to be considered a tradition.
- b. It is known by all residents of Laman Bukit Village, especially, and also known by all Javanese people in general.

In the context of the various 'Urf (traditions), the tingkeban tradition can be placed in the category of 'Urf that is Saheeh because it is in line with the teachings of the Shari'a, does not violate religious laws, does not obstruct what is obligatory, and has the following characteristics of 'Urf that is Saheeh:

- a. 'The urf brings benefits and is in accordance with common sense. 'A sahih urf is one that does not contradict Islamic beliefs, shari'a law, and ethics. The tingkeban tradition in the Javanese community in Laman Bukit Village currently has expected benefits for a better future. As long as it does not violate sharia, this tradition can be maintained and preserved.
- b. 'The urf is generally applicable. This means that the custom has been accepted by most people within the scope of a particular custom or community. The tingkeban tradition that applies in Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency is not only carried out by individuals, but is recognized and practiced by many residents, including immigrants and natives who have lived there for a long time.
- c. 'The urf used as the basis for determining the law was already there then, not something that only appeared later. The implementation of the tingkeban tradition in the Javanese community in Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency

already existed at that time and has become a practice carried out by the villagers. This is not something new and could be the legal basis for future traditions.

- d. 'Urf does not contradict the existing shari'a law or does not violate the principles of shari'a. The implementation of the tradition in Tingkeban in the Javanese community which applies in Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency does not contradict Islamic law or the principles of sharia'. Therefore, the study of the course of the procession is very important, which produces a number of data that can identify elements that can be categorized as Urf Shâhîh, because in the tingkeban tradition there are a series of actions that make up this tradition, including:
  - a. Initially, the use of incense burned after the welcome or opening speech, has now been replaced by the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah addressed to the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, the baby he conceived, and all the deceased Muslim spirits.
  - b. In selamatan, the practice of giving offerings is like that done in Javanese culture, but this meaning has shifted to giving shadaqâh.
  - c. In the past, prayers were recited by traditional leaders, while now the position has been replaced by Islamic religious figures called kyai.

Essentially, the seven-month tingkeban tradition that prevails in the Javanese community of Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency, as I gathered from various sources during field interviews, implies that this practice is permissible as an effort to seek goodness and prevent potential problems in the future childbirth process. This tradition does not involve elements that are strange or contrary to the teachings of Islam, but rather activities such as reciting prayers, accompanying with Surat Yusuf (as a hope that children will have similar morals and wisdom to the Prophet Yusuf), Surat Maryam (as a hope that children will have similar behavior and beauty to Maryam), as well as welcoming guests who have participated in the ritual and as alms from the host.

Furthermore, in the morning, the mother-to-be was bathed with seven-colored flowers while splitting ivory coconuts, then wearing a needle cloth seven times. Even though all of these steps are carried out as a form of effort with reasonable beliefs, we as humans are still reminded not to lean too much on the practice. This is because in the end everything is the destiny of Allah SWT, and He is the one who determines the final result of our every effort.

The Islamic Law review of the tradition of tingkeban at seven months of pregnancy involves consideration based on religious teachings and Islamic legal sources. Although this tradition is not explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an or Hadith, there are some legal bases and principles of fiqh that can be the basis for evaluating this practice.

#### a. Legal Basis in the Qur'an

In the Qur'an, there are verses that encourage Muslims to pray, ask for protection, and give special attention to pregnant women. For example, Surah Luqman verse 14 highlights the importance of filial devotion to parents, which includes special attention and care for expectant mothers. Similarly, Surah Al-Ahqaf verse 15 also

affirms the importance of respecting parents, which can be applied in the care and protection of pregnant mothers.

b. Legal Basis in Hadith

Although the practice of tingkeban at seven months of pregnancy is not explicitly documented in the hadith, there are several hadiths that provide guidance regarding the care of pregnant women and prayers for the safety of the baby they are carrying. These hadiths emphasize the significance of maintaining the health and welfare of pregnant women and providing prayers and protection for the unborn baby.

c. Relevant Fiqh Rules

In the field of fiqh, there are several rules that can be used as a reference to assess the practice of the tingkeban tradition when entering the seventh month of pregnancy. One of these rules is:

درأ المفاسد مقدم على جلب المصالح

Read "*dar'al-mafasid muqaddam 'ala jalb al-masalih*" which means avoiding harm takes precedence over benefiting. This means that if the tingkeban tradition does not involve practices that are contrary to Islamic principles and actually provides benefits to pregnant women, then the tradition is acceptable.

Principles such as maintaining health, giving special attention to pregnant women, and praying for the success of the baby conceived, can be the basis for assessing the tradition of breastfeeding in the seven months of pregnancy. Although there is no direct reference in the Qur'an or Hadith to this tradition, the assessment in Islamic Law involves an understanding of religious values and the corresponding rules of fiqh. Therefore, the tradition of tingkeban at seven months of pregnancy can be in accordance with Islam as long as it does not involve practices that are contrary to religion and provides special benefits and attention to the pregnant woman and her fetus.

#### D. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the discussion above, the researcher can conclude that the implementation of the tingkeban tradition in Laman Bukit Village, Belimbing District, Melawi Regency is an integral part of the culture of the Javanese people in welcoming the birth of a baby. This tradition involves preparations, invitations, processions, and symbols that depict hopes and prayers for newborns, as well as strengthening social ties and local cultural identity. In the review of Islamic law, the tingkeban tradition can be categorized as "Authentic Urf" because it is in line with religious teachings and does not neglect obligations. Therefore, this tradition should be maintained as long as it remains in line with sharia principles.

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