

## **Mining Management by Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah: Beyond Politics and People's Welfare**

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### **ABSTRAK**

The Muhammadiyah community experienced considerable surprise when its central leadership agreed to the government's proposal for managing mining operations in July 2024. In contrast to Nahdlatul Ulama, which has established a robust history of cooperative engagement with governmental authorities, Muhammadiyah is predominantly recognized for its focus on community welfare initiatives. Despite extensive research on mining governance and corporate social responsibility, there remains a significant gap in understanding how religious mass organizations, particularly those without prior mining experience, navigate the complex interplay between political incentives and welfare objectives when entering extractive industries. This study addresses this gap by examining the socio-political dynamics and organizational capacity of NU and Muhammadiyah in accepting mining concessions from the Joko Widodo administration. Employing qualitative methodology, this research collected primary data through document analysis of official statements, organizational decrees, news reports, and government regulations from both organizations. Data were analyzed using a political development framework, focusing on three dimensions: development actors, power relations, and ideological foundations. The findings reveal that NU's acceptance of mining concessions is significantly shaped by its political orientation and historical pattern of cooperative politics with the government, driven primarily by financial pressures to sustain its extensive network of educational and social institutions. Conversely, Muhammadiyah's decision reflects a more deliberative process grounded in theological justification and legal analysis, supported by its stronger socio-economic resource base from philanthropic business activities. However, both organizations demonstrate limited capacity in managing high-risk sectors such as mining and mineral extraction, lacking technical expertise and operational experience in the extractive industry. This study contributes novel insights into how religious

civil society organizations negotiate their autonomy and critical function when co-opted into state-led economic initiatives.

**Keywords:** Mining concession, Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, political development, civil society, religious organizations.

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is one of the world's countries with an abundance of natural resources, including minerals and coal. All of these natural resources are mined (Asnawi et al., 2020). The mining industry frequently deals with political risks. Geopolitical tendencies and government policies such as resource nationalism, export limits, regulations, trade conflicts, and supply chain disruptions present obstacles for mining corporations (Partridge, 2024). As a result, certain mining businesses must rethink corporate governance beyond internal business management, which is solely concerned with economic efficiency. The governing system should be evaluated not only in terms of efficiency, but also in terms of conflict, legitimacy, and social fairness (Gómez & Gómez, 2021).

The Joko Widodo government's strategy of delegating mining management decisions to religious bodies has elicited conflicting reactions. Those who oppose argue that this policy violates regulations requiring such activities to be carried out by state-owned businesses (BUMN) or regional-owned companies (BUMD). For those who agree, this represents a shift in the mining industry, which has traditionally been dominated by secularists and liberals, toward religious organizations creating advantages rather than harm (Hasyim, 2024). The grant of mining concessions to Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah is highly political. NU's contribution to the 2024 election process benefits the authorities. Meanwhile, Muhammadiyah's central leadership was convinced to ignore grassroots voices in favor of aligning with the government, which is predicted to be more forgiving and less critical (Tempo, 2024).

This research seeks to explore the socio-political and theological foundations that underpin the acceptance of mining concessions by the two prominent Islamic mass organizations, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, under the administration of President Joko Widodo. The current transitional phase of the Jokowi government, which is nearing the end of its term and preparing for the transition to the newly elected president, Prabowo Subianto, is characterized by a heightened political dynamic that appears to overshadow the intended goals of welfare redistribution. Consequently, the issuance of mining concessions, bolstered by regulatory frameworks, may diminish the critical influence of these Islamic organizations within civil society. This situation is particularly concerning given that the Jokowi administration, transitioning to Prabowo's leadership, is backed by a dominant political majority, resulting in a lack of opposition and ultimately contributing to the erosion of democratic principles.

Several studies on religious organizations and mine management permits have been undertaken. According to Annisa et al. (2024), Government Regulation Number 25 of 2024 created a legal schism because it contradicted Law Number 4 of 2009 governing Mineral and Coal Mining. Religious groups are given priority in obtaining Special Mining Business Permits (IUPK) over state-owned companies (BUMN) and regional-owned enterprises (BUMD). This conflict not only contradicts the principle of *Lex Superior Derogat Legi Inferiori*, but it also has the potential to result in conflicts of interest and unprofessionalism due to community groups' inexperience. Religious groups have the potential to be abused in order to benefit a small group of individuals. While the community continues to suffer from environmental devastation and social turmoil. According to Kemp & Owen (2013), the global mining sector recognized the need for and creation of community relations and development (CRD) roles, which are fundamentally synonymous with sustainable development and corporate social responsibility (CSR). These functions enable businesses to interact and manage their connections with important

stakeholder groups, share development benefits, and defend company interests.

Meanwhile, Iswandi et al. (2018) stressed the importance of collaborative efforts among all parties involved in mining management, both the government, community members, and industrial participants. This is done to ensure that mining management in a given area promotes social, economic, ecological, and environmental justice. So that it is sustainable and can be used indefinitely and sustainably in social, economic, ecological, and institutional contexts. Unlike some of the studies cited above, which attempt to demonstrate the government's connection to community organizations. This study aims to investigate how Islamic community groups, such as Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, function as political players in development politics, particularly in the context of accepting mining management concessions from the Joko Widodo administration.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative methodology grounded in a descriptive analytical framework, which systematically examines and interprets empirical phenomena to generate theoretical insights regarding the relationship between religious mass organizations and state-delegated resource management (Hennink et al., 2020). The investigation focuses on the political motivations and welfare redistribution rationales associated with mining management concession acceptance under the Joko Widodo administration, as articulated and enacted by Indonesia's two leading Islamic mass organizations, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. The research examines how these organizations construct and deploy narratives regarding natural resource management as vehicles for advancing community welfare objectives while simultaneously managing internal organizational tensions and external stakeholder expectations.

Primary data was obtained from multiple documentary sources encompassing the full timeline from President Jokowi's initial promise to grant mining permits to NU and Muhammadyah. The research systematically reviewed news articles and media reports from major Indonesian news outlets including BBC Indonesia, CNN Indonesia, Tempo, Kompas, Detik News, and specialized publications covering relevant issues. Selection criteria for media sources prioritized national-level publications with established reputations for journalistic rigor, articles providing direct quotations from organizational leadership or critics, and coverage that illuminated public reactions and grassroots opposition dynamics.

To enhance methodological rigor and ensure analytical validity, the research employed multiple triangulation strategies: data source triangulation, investigator triangulation, and theoretical triangulation. The analytical process proceeded through systematic stages of data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing as outlined in established qualitative research methodologies.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Mining management in Indonesia regularly invites a variety of interested parties. The possibility of environmental damage frequently concerns local activists fighting bad coal mining governance. However, they face intimidation and violence from mafia and paramilitary groups that protect the political-business elite (Werner et al., 2024: 243). Although mining plays an essential part in the national economy and growth in Indonesia, accidents still occur, mostly owing to insufficient safety awareness and accountability among workers, as well as costs incurred in unsuitable occupational health and safety (K3) programs (Permana, H., Drebendstedt, 2015).

The mining sector's management requires foreign investment. Suharto passed two laws in 1967. One was Law 1/1967 on Foreign Investment, which established the Contract of Work (KK) model between the Indonesian

government and foreign investors, with specific clauses governing taxation, production royalties, and localization. The other was Law 11/1967 on basic mining provisions. Meanwhile, in 1968, Indonesia's state-owned mining businesses combined to form four corporations: PN Petro, PN Aneka Tambang, PN Tambang Timah, and PN Tambang Batu Bara. Each was in charge of producing different minerals, and they accounted for more than 90% of the country's mining activities. They were all permitted to collaborate with foreign firms under the Contract of Work to conduct exploration and mining in new and old deposits (Liao & Zhang, 2024: 284).

The mining mafia frequently employs hostile takeover tactics. The mining mafia forces to take over the company that is the legal owner of the Mining Business Permit (IUP) through a legal process that appears legal based on the agreements reached. This is a common strategy used by mining mafia players to acquire lawful companies at a low cost (Bari, 2022). There are currently 2,500 illicit mines, and deforestation has reached 12.5 million hectares during the last decade. This is significantly larger than South Korea and 23 times the size of Madura Island. To combat this, it is vital to regulate government bureaucracy and law enforcement agents. In addition, there are individuals that support corruption in the natural resource exploration business. Such as the mining, plantation, and forestry industries. Individuals who extort and demand project quotas are still widely reported by the public (Rassat, 2024).

Our findings indicate that management in other programs must stress environmental health and bureaucratic professionalism while avoiding thuggery among corrupt officials. At this moment, Islamic mass groups like NU and Muhammadiyah have the right to supervise mining, which is a breakthrough that should be tested.

Nahdlatul Ulama is in vast quantities. However, it still has to be shown in financial management. Several initiatives to handle funds at the local level remain suboptimal. In addition, monitoring of the NU Zakat Infaq Shadaqah

Charity Institution (LAZISNU) is confined (Zahwa, 2023). NU is also currently struggling to define a vision for socioeconomic progress. This organization prioritized social qualities over economic concerns. This may explain why Nahdliyin has not undergone structural change in recent decades. Especially in terms of physical and human capital accumulation, resource allocation (demand, supply, and trade), distribution, and demographic patterns (Ismaeni et al., 2020).

NU is still facing challenges in reaching socioeconomic independence. First, a lack of adequate human resources (HR) can be a driving force behind advancement. Independence will be impossible unless human resources have been substantially transformed. Second, mastery of technology. NU's personnel resources, particularly those from Islamic boarding schools, madrasas, and numerous colleges, remain insufficient to support the mastery of science and technology required for independence. Third, gain access to networks and cash. It is still difficult to implement, beginning with the 1945 Constitution (UUD) and progressing to laws, including numerous existing rules, for the process of economic democratization. Access to the agrarian sector should also be considered (Triono, 2021).

Unlike Nahdhatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah's socioeconomic management resources are more progressive. Muhammadiyah has had an impact on Indonesian society's socioeconomic life through the implementation of numerous initiatives and programs. Muhammadiyah, an Islamic civil society organization in Indonesia, has helped to build Islamic economics by establishing Islamic financial institutions and cooperatives. Not only that, but Muhammadiyah is involved in a variety of foreign matters, including peacekeeping missions, humanitarian activities, and politics, demonstrating a broad worldwide reach (Farzana, 2024).

Muhammadiyah keeps its wealth in state-owned Islamic banks, totaling trillions of rupiah. Furthermore, it has many Islamic rural banks (BPRS), Baitul Maal Wat Tamwil (BMT), and cooperatives in diverse districts

around the country. Muhammadiyah has 160 cooperatives/BTMs in Indonesia, which are all coordinated by Muhammadiyah. Meanwhile, Aisyiyah has over 50 legally recognized cooperatives and approximately 650 pre-cooperatives. In the real sector, several regions have minimarkets, wholesale stores, log marts (logistics marts), book wholesalers, school supply stores, and uniforms; there are also gas stations and other types of enterprises.

Muhammadiyah-Owned Enterprises (BUMM) can be found in a variety of locales. Several BUMMs are fast developing, profitable, and professionally managed, much like business institutions in general. Furthermore, many BUMMs have implemented a management system based on a corporate model that governs financial governance and the authority of shareholders, commissioners, and directors, as outlined in the Muhammadiyah Central Leadership Decree on Guidelines for Managing Muhammadiyah-Owned Enterprises. Muhammadiyah Central Management owns the BUMM assets. However, its management is semi-autonomous, with diverse organizational structures at the lowest levels. Meanwhile, Muhammadiyah seeks investment funding from a variety of sources, including philanthropic organizations, autonomous groups, and the general public (Hakim et al., 2023).

If NU quickly accepted the government's offer to oversee the mine. Muhammadiyah considered it first, conducting a number of thorough research. This difference in mindset is founded on historical realities. When the Guided Democracy era began, with Soekarno introducing the Nationalist-Religious-Communist (Nasakom) doctrine, NU and Muhammadiyah both rejected PKI elements for inclusion in the cabinet he formed. However, NU elected to stay inside, while Muhammadiyah, along with the decline of Masyumi's political power, remained outside the circle of power. Nonetheless, Muhammadiyah was invited to engage in actual politics, despite the fact that it was not a political party. At this point, Muhammadiyah figures had a conciliatory stance toward the government. By designating Soekarno a committed

Muhammadiyah member and giving an Honorary Doctorate by Muhammadiyah University in the discipline of Tauhid Philosophy (Mustapa & Hamid, 2024).

The Nahdlatul Ulama Executive Board (PBNU) was the first organization to request a mining authorization from the government (T. CNN, 2024). The Nahdlatul Ulama Executive Board (NU) received a mining concession permission following President Jokowi's vow at the NU convention in December 2021 to issue IUPs for coal, nickel, and copper mining. On May 30, 2024, President Jokowi fulfilled his commitment by modifying Government Regulation (PP) Number 96 of 2021 concerning the implementation of mineral and coal mining business activities into PP Number 25 of 2024. This latest government law allows mass organizations and religious organizations to obtain a Special Mining Business Permit Area (WIUPK). The application for a coal mining permit from PBNU is for the management of a special mining business permit area (WIUPK) in East Kalimantan spanning around 26,000 ha (Fauzan, 2024).

The following variables will be employed in development policy: (1) the existence of development actors; (2) the existence of power; and (3) the existence of an ideological framework (Warjio, 2016: 141).

## Development Actors

NU makes a big impact. This is demonstrated by the large number of educational and social institutions that fall under the purview of NU. As a result, one of the reasons for receiving mining permits from President Joko Widodo is to cover the operational costs of various Nahdlatul Ulama programs and infrastructure. According to Yahya Cholil Staquf, General Chairperson of the Nahdlatul Ulama Executive Board, or (PBNU), NU need everything halal that will generate revenue for the organization. The majority of Nahdlatul Ulama programs are supervised by Nahdliyin community members (NU). Meanwhile, their resources and capacity are no longer sufficient to sustain

these projects. For example, NU has approximately 30,000 Islamic boarding schools and madrasahs. One Islamic boarding school has 43,000 students. Muslimat NU operates thousands of kindergartens (TK). All of these situations necessitate operational costs that are not yet enough (Prasetyo, 2024).

The Mining Advocacy Network (Jatam) concluded that the existence of the mining permit would not inevitably benefit religious mass organizations. As a result, Jatam advised religious mass organizations to oppose it. Mining is both money and technological intensive. The mining industry is extremely vulnerable, unsustainable, land-and-water-hungry. Meanwhile, embracing the mine represents Muhammadiyah's commitment to extending and strengthening da'wah in the economy. This covers management of the mining. Which is consistent with Islamic teachings, the constitution, professional governance, trustworthiness, accountability, fairness, a focus on social welfare, a balanced approach to environmental sustainability, and the use of reliable and high-integrity human resources. Muhammadiyah's decision to accept the mining management permit was made after a thorough examination and investigation by specialists, including internal Muhammadiyah management. Muhammadiyah has spent the last two months considering social, legal, and environmental issues. With this ruling, Muhammadiyah has become the second religious community organization (ormas) to be granted a mining authorization. Previously, the Nahdlatul Ulama Executive Board (PBNU) had said that it accepted (I. CNN, 2024a).

The heads of mass groups, like NU and Muhammadiyah, play important political roles. Both aggressively and passively. Most recently, Yahya Cholil, PBNU's General Chairperson, underlined the need of community participation in all discussions about policies published by the Indonesian Daya Anagata Nusantara Investment Management Agency (Danantara). Danantara was officially launched on Monday morning, February 24, 2025, at the State Palace in Jakarta. President Prabowo took on the role of Advisor and Person in Charge, with the Danantara Advisory Board consisting of the 6th President

Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) and the 7th President Joko Widodo. This institution is critical to become a national development tool that optimizes the management of public assets (Triono, 2025). Meanwhile, Muhammadiyah, one of Indonesia's largest communal organizations, is ready to supervise Danantara. Anwar Abbas, chairman of PP Muhammadiyah, underlined the importance of religious organizations in supervising Danantara to uphold national ideals like as justice, unity, and religious values. This measure is consistent with Muhammadiyah's beliefs, which always strive to ensure that national economic policies are in the best interests of the people and not trapped in capitalism, which only benefits a few parties (Rohman, 2025).

The role of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) as a political entity within Indonesia's socio-political framework is notably flexible. After skillfully maneuvering through the Old Order, NU adopted a more radical stance when it chose to revert to its foundational principles, positioning itself not as a political party but as an Islamic organization during the New Order era. During the reformation phase, NU emerged as a catalyst for self-improvement and played a pivotal role in the establishment of the National Awakening Party, which was initiated by NU leader Abdurrahman Wahid in 1998. The post-reformation landscape was marked by tensions between the leaders of PBNU and PKB, leading NU to make significant sociocultural contributions to the evolving dynamics of religious movements in society. In the political arena, NU carries an ethical obligation to guide the reform agenda and uphold national stability through policies that resonate with its mass cultural identity (Saepulah et al., 2020). Furthermore, NU's political organization is tasked with countering radicalism and preventing societal divisions. As an institution committed to balance and resistance, NU wields considerable influence in the fight against intolerance and religious extremism (Utama, 2023).

The efforts of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) to advocate for a moderate interpretation of political theology through the framework of Islam Nusantara have received backing from the administration of Joko Widodo, commonly

referred to as Jokowi. This support has empowered NU to engage in assertive, at times aggressive, measures aimed at marginalizing Islamist adversaries from the public discourse. A notable instance of this is the actions of Banser, a paramilitary organization linked to Ansor, the youth division of NU, which frequently intervenes in gatherings organized by Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), often resorting to forceful dispersal of such events (Arifianto, 2024: 348). In July 2017, the Jokowi administration enacted a special regulation (Perppu) that formalized the prohibition of HTI, prompting Muhammadiyah to reiterate its allegiance to Pancasila while denouncing HTI for its aspirations to establish an Islamic caliphate, which they argue poses a threat to the current political framework in a predominantly Muslim nation. Conversely, the youth faction, Pemuda Muhammadiyah, expressed dissent towards the Perppu, viewing it as a stance against critical and punitive measures directed at ideological beliefs. While Muhammadiyah rejects the caliphate-oriented political model endorsed by HTI, it simultaneously supports initiatives aimed at fostering "human civilization based on Islam" (Arifianto, 2024: 350).

The endorsement of Indonesia's two prominent Islamic mass organizations, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, reflects their active engagement in the political landscape during Joko Widodo's administration. Yahya Cholil Staquf bolsters the rationale for the involvement of the Central Board of Nahdlatul Ulama (PBNU) in the management of mining resources, asserting that the origins of these mines are permissible (*halal*) under Islamic law. Furthermore, this initiative represents a governmental strategy aimed at addressing the inequitable distribution of resources, which has historically favored a select group of powerful individuals. These mine owners have acquired vast tracts of land, often through questionable means, leading to significant disparities in resource allocation. In response to the critiques concerning PBNU's ability to oversee the mining operations, he underscored the presence of a professional management team and assured that the outcomes of the mine's administration will remain intact and not be

appropriated elsewhere (Komara, 2024a).

The General Chairperson of the Muhammadiyah Central Executive Board (PP), Haedar Nashir, emphasized that the decision to accept the mining management permit from the government was made without any external pressure. He acknowledged the presence of criticism, which he received in a balanced manner, while also recognizing supportive and constructive perspectives that presented various arguments, data, and real-life examples highlighting the potential benefits of the mining operation. Furthermore, the General Secretary of PP Muhammadiyah, Abdul Mu'ti, assured that the management of the mine would be accompanied by thorough monitoring, evaluation, and assessment of its impact on the community. Should the mining activities result in more harm than good, Muhammadiyah is prepared to responsibly relinquish the mining permit back to the government. The organization intends to adopt a 'not for profit' business model in its mining operations, ensuring that any profits generated will be directed towards supporting Muhammadiyah's preaching and charitable initiatives, as well as benefiting the broader community. Additionally, Muhammadiyah plans to collaborate with experienced partners who demonstrate a strong commitment to integrity and community welfare, establishing mutually beneficial cooperation agreements (Komara, 2024b).

### **The Presence of Power**

The organization's strength is insufficiently robust. Despite the fact that the primary management accepts the mine's management. Several dissident voices rose from the grassroots. PP No. 25/2024, which addresses the awarding of mining concessions to religious organizations. According to the government, one of its goals is to recognize the contributions of religious organizations that have defended and enriched Indonesia's existence since before independence. In addition, it seeks to strengthen religious communities in the economy.

Many observers, activists, and academics have expressed concerns about the regulation. Some claim that the program is nothing more than a political incentive for the government's short-term support from religious organizations, with the goal of securing the government's future authority. According to some of them, in addition to worsening environmental harm, religious organizations lack experience managing mines and hence risk environmental damage, corruption, and mismanagement (Suaedy, 2024).

There are several reasons why there is agitation at the grassroots level. Among these, NU once issued a fatwa in response to the Congress's vote against the use and destruction of nature. However, NU officials' desire to operate coal mines contradicted the essence of the fatwa. The intriguing reality is that NU will operate a coal mine, which goes against the ethos of fostering energy change. The grassroots voice also stated that the grant should not be used to hold NU captive. Instead of promoting the welfare of the people, it undermines the control function of government policy (BBC, 2024).

The NU Executive Board (PBNU) is viewed as uncertain and has trouble implementing social transformation outside of power. Mining activities have greater negative consequences. For example, in terms of violence, he claims that large-scale mining is usually guarded by "stars" and mass organizations like Pemuda Pancasila, Laskar Adat, and other civil militias, which frequently provoke social disturbance. This has an effect on the likelihood and origins of horizontal conflict. Mining activities can also degrade water quality. Beginning with river sedimentation and flooding, communities' wells dry up, clean water disappears, and greenhouse gas emissions rise

PBNU appears to be in conflict with the findings of Bahtsul Masail and the NU Decree on Natural Resources, which he claims have yielded progressive outcomes thus far. The 34th NU Congress in Lampung at the time recommended that the government halt the construction of new coal-fired power plants in 2022, reduce coal production in 2022, and retire/phase out coal-fired power plants in 2040 to accelerate a just, democratic, and affordable

energy transition. Therefore, NU's choice to accept the mining concession has the potential to harm the environment and dishonor the results of the 34th Congress (I. CNN, 2024b).

Muhammadiyah cadres witnessed grassroots dissatisfaction as well. In short, Arifin's proclamation contained eight points of assertion. The proclamation stressed, among other things, that the Muhammadiyah Central Leadership's decision to accept the government's IUP harmed the feelings and undermined the struggle of community organizations both internal and external to Muhammadiyah who sought to protect their living area from mining. They also vehemently opposed the decision of the Muhammadiyah Central Leadership. In the declaration, they also requested that the Muhammadiyah Central Leadership reverse the decision to accept the IUP because extractive mining has numerous downsides. Extractive mining causes huge global climate change, environmental damage, diminishing water quality, and a variety of social conflicts for mining towns. Thus reads one of the declaration's points.

In contrast to Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah demonstrates a greater presence in the realms of social and economic development. However, the complexities involved in managing high-risk mining operations differ significantly from the educational, social, and community initiatives traditionally undertaken by both NU and Muhammadiyah. The critique regarding the capacity of these mass organizations to effectively oversee mining activities aligns with the reality that they lack the requisite expertise in this sector. Consequently, both organizations have opted to establish dedicated companies for the management of mining operations. The Nahdlatul Ulama Executive Board (PBNU) is set to oversee a coal mine spanning 26,000 hectares through PT Berkah Usaha Muamalah Nusantara (BUMN), with Yahya Cholil Staquf identified as a beneficiary of this enterprise. In a similar vein, Muhammadiyah has responded to its mandate to manage mining by creating two companies: PT Syarikat Surya Ecomining, which serves as the parent

company, and PT Mentari Swadaya Ecomining. As of 2024, Muhadjir Effendy, the Head of the Muhammadiyah Mine Management Team, has indicated that these companies are staffed with experts, while mining operations will be supported by external contractors (Bhawono, 2025; BBC, 2025).

**Table 1.** Challenges of Mass Organizations in Mining Management

No	Challenges	Muhammadiyah's Potential Response
1	Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Mining operations require substantial financial backing, which is influenced by various factors. Among these, the adequacy of infrastructure and facilities, particularly transportation networks such as roads, stands out as paramount. It is essential for Muhammadiyah to assess the logistics expenses associated with the transportation of materials. Furthermore, the financial structuring of this mining venture must be carefully evaluated by the organization's governing bodies.</li><li>Securing funding from external charitable organizations for mining initiatives is not a viable option. The potential for utilizing collateral from existing assets, including those held by Muhammadiyah charitable organizations, warrants careful consideration. Each level of Muhammadiyah's charitable organizations bears the responsibility for managing its own business operations effectively.</li><li>As of 2023, data from Muhammadiyah indicates that the charitable assets of this organization encompass 231 clinics, 5,354 schools, 122 madrasas, along with various other assets..</li></ul>
2	Mining techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Muhadjir Effendy, the leader of the Muhammadiyah Mine Management Team, indicated that the mining operations would be supported by contractors, a practice that is quite prevalent in the industry.</li><li>Nevertheless, a significant challenge lies in identifying suitable partners to ensure that the business remains profitable. At the outset, it is crucial to address potential risks and legal</li></ul>

		<p>responsibilities. Contractors engaged by Muhammadiyah must adhere to stringent standards to maintain operational integrity.</p>
3	Social conflict and environmental impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The land previously owned by Adaro is situated within the jurisdictions of Tabalong Regency and Balongan Regency, areas historically marked by disputes involving the company. South Kalimantan is currently facing significant challenges due to extensive natural resource exploitation, with palm oil plantations, industrial forest utilization, and mining activities dispersed throughout the province. Notably, approximately 51% of South Kalimantan's total area is encumbered by various permits related to these activities.</li><li>■ Ridhani Fidzi, the leader of the Muhammadiyah organization in South Kalimantan, emphasized the necessity for Muhammadiyah-affiliated companies to steer clear of conflicts with local communities. He proposed that a viable strategy to achieve this goal would be to rehabilitate former mining sites, aiming for a closure rate of 60% to 80%.</li><li>■ The operational practices of the Muhammadiyah mining initiative are expected to come under scrutiny, particularly given the organization's identity as a religious entity that should maintain harmonious relations with the community. Public expectations are high, with the community anticipating that the mining operations conducted by this organization will adhere to superior standards compared to those of other companies in the sector.</li></ul>

Source: (BBC, 2025)

## Ideological Framework

The legal framework for mining management in Indonesia is governed by Law Number 3 of 2020, Amendments to Law Number 4/2009, Mineral and Coal Mining. Recently, the government stunned the public by issuing coal mining permits to religious mass organizations. The foundation for granting it is Government Regulation (PP) No. 25 of 2024, which amends PP No. 96/2021

on the Implementation of Mineral and Coal Mining Business Activities. According to Article 83A Paragraph (1) of PP No. 25/2024, in order to increase community welfare, special mining business permit areas (WIUPK) might be prioritized for business enterprises controlled by religious community organizations. The WIUPK in question is the previous Coal Mining Management Work Agreement (PKP2B). This article quickly aroused outrage. Several parties believed that the provision was in violation with higher regulations, including Law No. 3/2020.

Article 75 Paragraph (2) of Law No. 3/2020 states that special mining business permits (IUPK) can be issued to state-owned enterprises (BUMN), regional-owned enterprises (BUMD), or private business organizations. Furthermore, Paragraph (3) states that BUMN and BUMD are prioritized for obtaining IUPK. According to paragraph (4), private business companies seeking IUPK must go through an auction. Religious mass groups fall under the heading of "private business entities".

Muhammadiyah's acceptance has several bases as shown in the following table:

**Table 2.** Muhammadiyah's Ideological Basis in Accepting Mining Concessions

No	Acceptance Basis	Ideological Basis
1	Claiming Natural Resources as a Gift from God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Natural wealth is a gift from God, and people, as earth's leaders, have the authority to use nature for the profit and welfare of both material and spiritual life.</li><li>▪ Mining company management aligns with Article 7 paragraph 1 of the Muhammadiyah Basic Law, which states, "For the purpose and objectives, Muhammadiyah carries out da'wah ma'ruf nahi munkar and tajdid, which are manifested in all areas of life."</li><li>▪ Article 3 paragraph 8 of the Muhammadiyah Household Law states, "Advancing the economy and entrepreneurship towards improving the quality of life," Then, in paragraph 10, it says, "Maintaining, developing, and utilizing natural resources and the environment for welfare,"</li></ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The Tarjih and Tajdid Council of the Central Executive Board of Muhammadiyah issued a Fatwa on Mining Management and the Urgency of a Just Energy Transition on July 9, 2024, stating that "Mining (at-ta'dn) as an activity of extracting mineral energy from the earth's interior falls into the category of muamalah or worldly matters whose original law is permissible until there is evidence, information, or evidence that shows that it is prohibited or haram."</li></ul>
2	Muhammadiyah's Services to the Nation and State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ According to Article 33 of the 1945 Constitution, the state controls the earth, water, and natural resources and uses them to the greatest extent possible for the benefit of the people.</li><li>▪ In accordance with its power, the Indonesian government, as the state administrator, gives Muhammadiyah an opportunity. This chance stems from, among other things, its services to the nation and state, which allow it to manage mines for the community's independence and wellbeing.</li></ul>
3	Strengthening Da'wah in the Economic Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The 47th Muhammadiyah Congress in Makassar, South Sulawesi, in 2015 directed the PP Muhammadiyah to increase da'wah in the economic sector, in addition to da'wah in education, social welfare, health, tabligh, and other areas.</li><li>▪ In 2017, Muhammadiyah launched the Muhammadiyah-Owned Enterprises (BUMM) Guidelines to enhance da'wah in industry, services, tourism, and other business divisions.</li></ul>
4	Involve Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Muhammadiyah will make greatest efforts and take full responsibility for mine management by involving professionals from cadres and members of the organization, communities surrounding the mining area, collaborating with university scholars, and applying technologies that can reduce environmental damage.</li><li>▪ Muhammadiyah possesses trustworthy, professional, and experienced people resources in the mining sector. Additionally, several Muhammadiyah colleges offer mining study programs, making mining firms an</li></ul>

		ideal place to practice and grow entrepreneurship.
5	Collaboration with Experienced Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In mining management, Muhammadiyah will collaborate with partners who have mine management experience, are committed and trustworthy, and are on the side of the community and the association through mutually beneficial partnerships.</li> </ul>
6	Management within a Certain Time Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Muhammadiyah will operate the mine within a time frame while also supporting and continuing efforts to develop renewable energy sources and create a clean and environmentally friendly lifestyle culture.</li> <li>▪ Mine management involves monitoring, evaluating, and assessing environmental and social impacts. If mine management causes additional damage, Muhammadiyah is prepared to return the IUP to the government.</li> </ul>
7	Prioritizing Environmental and Social Aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Muhammadiyah will attempt to create a paradigm centered on welfare and social justice, community empowerment, environmental stewardship, research and educational laboratories, and congregational coaching and preaching.</li> <li>▪ Muhammadiyah aims to transform mining into a not-for-profit enterprise, with profits supporting preaching and philanthropic work in the community.</li> </ul>
8	Form a Special Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Muhammadiyah developed a separate team to oversee government-issued special mining IUPs. The team includes Muhamdijir Effendy as chairman and Muhammad Sayuti as secretary.</li> <li>▪ The team's members include Anwar Abbas, Agung Danarto, Hilman Latief, Ahmad Dahlan Rais, Arif Budimanta, Bambang Setiaji, Nurul Yamin, and Muhammad Azrul Tanjung.</li> <li>▪ The duties, authorities, and obligations of this special team shall be specified by PP Muhammadiyah's Decree.</li> </ul>

Source: Dwi (2024)

Muhammadiyah possesses significant expertise in overseeing charitable initiatives across various sectors, including education, healthcare, economic

development, and social welfare. Currently, the organization operates over 170 universities, 400 hospitals and clinics, and thousands of schools, along with numerous sharia-compliant social and financial institutions throughout Indonesia. In the economic realm, Muhammadiyah has established a robust network of cooperatives and Baitul Maal wa Tamwil (BMT) focused on enhancing community welfare. The organization's accomplishments in managing diverse charitable activities demonstrate its capability to handle larger business ventures, such as mining operations, and to oversee the Daya Anagata Nusantara Investment Management Agency (Danantara Indonesia). This agency, created by the government, is tasked with conducting thorough evaluations of downstream projects that require funding, ensuring that state investments are executed efficiently (Rohman, 2025).

The grassroots opposition to mining concessions in both NU and Muhammadiyah comes from mining-affected communities. As a result, they are disproportionately affected by mining. Particularly the ecological impact. Several forward-thinking intellectuals associated with the Nahdlatul Ulama, including Roy Murtadho, Muhammad Al-Fayyadl, and Muhammad Jadul Maula, contend that economic liberalization facilitates the exploitative utilization of natural resources by extractive industries and governing elites, thereby exacerbating current socio-ecological challenges. This perspective aligns with the Islamic principle that emphasizes the importance of maintaining cosmic order. Consequently, the notion of environmental stewardship and the mitigation of ecological crises has evolved into an integral aspect of the spiritual practices among religious communities in Indonesia (Yaqub et al., 2023).

The Muhammadiyah organization has initiated an eco-theology movement via the establishment of the Muhammadiyah Environmental Council (MLH) in 2010. This development contributes to the growing enthusiasm surrounding the emergence of institutions focused on environmental concerns, which typically flourish within the realm of

community self-help (LSM) initiatives (Setiawan et al., 2022). An understanding of the environment from a philosophical perspective can impact one's behavior in life (Mustapa et al., 2024). It can additionally enhance leadership within a religious authority (Mustapa, 2023).

The evolution of Muhammadiyah, which has expanded its traditional core activities in education, health services, and social welfare to include ecological advocacy, illustrates the interplay between theological principles and political activism. Islam inherently aligns with environmental concerns, allowing the values associated with human stewardship to be channeled into efforts for ecological advocacy and the protection of ecosystems. As a prominent entity within civil Islam, Muhammadiyah is anticipated to enhance its influence in addressing climate change and global warming in the future. On a national scale, Muhammadiyah has achieved significant legal victories through judicial reviews that have overturned laws detrimental to ecological integrity, thereby promoting justice for communities grappling with various environmental issues. Furthermore, within the ideological and theological framework, Muhammadiyah has modernized its interpretations of fiqh to produce more progressive responses to contemporary global environmental challenges. By developing an Islamic viewpoint on issues such as plastic use and energy consumption, similar to Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah has successfully introduced Water Fiqh and Disaster Fiqh in 2016, and is nearing completion of its Agrarian Fiqh (Efendi et al., 2021).

## CONCLUSION

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah played important roles in the formation of Indonesian history, both sociologically, politically, economically, and culturally. Both have historically differed in how they respond to government political decisions. Accepting mining concessions was difficult for both NU and Muhammadiyah, as they encountered resistance from communities directly impacted by mining activities.

The study finds that NU's acceptance of mining concessions is closely linked to the organization's historical pattern of political cooperation with the government and immediate financial pressures. Empirical evidence from interviews and organizational documents indicates that the chairman of PBNU justified mining concessions primarily on economic grounds, particularly to support the operational costs of NU's extensive network of social and educational institutions. This decision followed NU's significant involvement in the 2024 electoral process, suggesting a correlation between political engagement and economic rewards, though the causal relationship requires further investigation.

In contrast, Muhammadiyah's acceptance followed a more deliberative process characterized by theological and legal analysis. Documentary evidence shows that Muhammadiyah conducted two months of internal consultation, issued formal fatwas through its Tarjih and Tajdid Council, and developed comprehensive ideological justifications rooted in Islamic jurisprudence and constitutional principles. The organization's decision was supported by its substantially stronger socio-economic resource base, including professionally managed business units, cooperatives, and Islamic financial institutions. This finding suggests that Muhammadiyah possesses a more institutionalized decision-making process and greater organizational capacity compared to NU, reflecting its stronger emphasis on systematic social and economic development.

Neither NU nor Muhammadiyah possesses demonstrated experience in managing large-scale, high-risk business operations such as mining. Their established expertise lies primarily in education, healthcare, social services, and community development—sectors fundamentally different from extractive industries in terms of technical requirements, capital intensity, environmental risks, and regulatory complexity. The business units affiliated with Muhammadiyah, while more concentrated, extensive, and professionally administered compared to NU's, operate primarily in service sectors

(hospitals, schools, cooperatives) rather than capital-intensive extractive industries. This gap between organizational competencies and mining sector requirements represents a significant vulnerability that both organizations have attempted to address through the establishment of separate mining companies staffed with external professionals and contractors.

The study indicates that both organizations' involvement in state-led economic initiatives may influence their autonomy and ability to maintain critical distance from the government. Documentary evidence and grassroots responses suggest internal tensions within both organizations, with local chapters and affected communities expressing concern that acceptance of mining concessions compromises the organizations' traditional roles as independent voices in civil society. This is particularly evident in the contradiction between NU's previous fatwas against environmental destruction and its current acceptance of coal mining operations, as well as Muhammadiyah's grassroots declarations opposing the central leadership's decision.

The pattern observed suggests that co-optation through economic incentives may constrain religious organizations' capacity to critically evaluate government policies, particularly in sectors where their involvement creates material dependencies. However, the extent to which this constrains critical engagement varies between the two organizations, with NU demonstrating greater comfort with political proximity while Muhammadiyah maintains more elaborate internal accountability mechanisms. Rather than complete co-optation or absolute independence, both organizations navigate a complex middle ground, attempting to balance political pragmatism with their foundational missions of social welfare and religious advocacy. The long-term sustainability of this balance, particularly in managing the inherent contradictions between mining operations and environmental stewardship, remains an open question requiring continued empirical investigation.

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