

National Interest within the Capital City Relocation Project State-Centered Theory Analysis

Khairurrizqo^{*1},

¹ Faculty of Social and Political Science Jenderal Soedirman University
Corresponding author. Email: khairurrizqo@unsoed.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The Indonesian government's proposal to relocate the Capital City (IKN) from Jakarta to East Kalimantan has faced various objections from different sectors. Nevertheless, the government has proceeded with the IKN relocation project despite in criticisms and opposition. This article provides a policy analysis of the IKN relocation using a qualitative approach and state-centered theory assumptions such as national interests, state autonomy, and limitations. The findings indicate that the IKN relocation policy aligns with various state-centered theory assumptions. Although there is public debate and political dynamics among political parties in parliament, there are clear indications of state autonomy in the IKN relocation policy. The state's ability to consolidate executive-legislative power in the IKN relocation policy. However, the state does not have absolute autonomy. There are limitations in realizing the state's interests in the IKN relocation, which must ultimately serve national interests.

Keywords: *State-Centered Theory, Capital City Relocations, State Autonomy, National Interest*

1. INTRODUCTION

On August 26, 2019, President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) gave an official statement regarding the relocation of the National Capital City (IKN) to the East Kalimantan Province, precisely in parts of North Penajam Paser Regency and parts of Kutai Kartanegara Regency [1]. The official statement was delivered by President Jokowi when giving a State Speech in the Joint Session of the Regional Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia (DPD RI) and the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR RI) which is a series of the 74th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Independence of the Republic of Indonesia [2]

Based on an academic and feasibility study by the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas), there are several considerations for moving the IKN. The considerations are; First, Jakarta is already overburdened as the center of government, business center, financial center, trade center, and public service

center, resulting in an environmental degradation and the potential large economic losses. Second, the potential crisis of water availability in Jakarta and Java Island. Third, the increasingly heavy burden of Java Island with a population of 150 million or 54% of Indonesia's total population and the fact that 58% of Indonesia's economic Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is in Java. Fourth, the burden on Java Island as a source of food security will be even heavier if IKN is located in Java [3].

Therefore, East Kalimantan Province was chosen as the location of IKN with the following considerations: (1) East Kalimantan has minimal disaster risk in terms of floods, earthquakes, tsunamis, fires, volcanoes, and landslides. (2) East Kalimantan Province is located in the middle of the Indonesian territory which meets the defense and security perimeter as well. (3) The location of North Penajam Paser and Kutai Kartanegara districts is close to the growing urban areas of Balikpapan and Samarinda. (4) East Kalimantan has relatively complete infrastructure. (5) There is 180,000 hectares of land

available in the two regencies. (6) Large scale of land owned by the government/National Plantation Company are available to reduce investment costs. (7) The potential for social conflict is low and has an open culture towards migrants, and it is believed that the development of IKN has minimal negative impacts on local communities [3].

Concerning those considerations, the government decided the relocation of IKN as urgent national interests. The national interest is in accordance with the objectives of the state as stipulated in the 1945 Constitution where the state must protect the entire Indonesian nation and promote general welfare. The government also considers that the capital city currently located in Jakarta is no longer able to optimally ensure that its citizens are safe and live in decent conditions due to various problems that are getting bigger [4]. With this idea of national interest, the government proposed this plan to House of Representatives (DPR RI).

On January 18, 2022, as the report from the DPR-RI Special Committee (Pansus) of the Bill on the National Capital City (RUU IKN), there are eight political party factions that support the IKN Bill, namely the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), the Golkar Party, the Great Indonesia Movement Party (Gerindra), the Nationalist-Democratic Party (Nasdem), the National Awakening Party (PKB), the Democratic Party, the National Mandate Party (PAN), and the United Development Party (PPP). Only the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) rejected the IKN's Bill [5]

Substantially, various factions of political parties agreed and supported the idea of relocating the IKN as an urgent national interest. However, there are several important notes from the parliament in the IKN relocation policy. For example, various political parties highlighted potential land issues, spatial planning, funding, status specificity, institutions, the authority of the IKN Authority, security, the environment, and the benefits received by the locals and rural regions [5]

On February 15, 2022, President Jokowi signed the ratification of the Law on the National Capital City (UU IKN) as the Law No. 3 of 2022. After the IKN Law was passed and followed by the inauguration of the Head of Authority and Deputy Head of Authority, the IKN Nusantara Authority will immediately begin the stages of preparation, construction, and relocation of the IKN [1]

Despite being legalized, the plan to relocate the IKN has drawn a number of objections from various levels of

society. For example, a public lawsuit about Law No. 3 of 2022 to the Constitutional Court which is considered formally and materially flawed (Detiknews, 2022). Furthermore, environmental activist groups also consider that there is potential damage to the carrying capacity and capacity of the environment, such as threats to water systems, the risk of climate change, threats to flora and fauna, and threats to environmental pollution [6]

The relocation of IKN is perceived as having inappropriate timing when many other national problems are considered more important and required the state budget [6]. Even a group of activists who are members of the Mining Advocacy Network (Jatam) sees the relocation of IKN as an oligarchy project because of the alleged collusion between the government and several corporations whose concession areas are included in the IKN area [7]. Several public opinion surveys have also revealed rejection and negative views towards the relocation of IKN. For example, the Association of Indonesian Sociology Study Programs (APSSI) released a survey explaining that there were 48.2% of people who asked for the relocation of IKN to be postponed [6].

However, Rifaldi and Taufik Rachman research in public conversation on twitter regarding IKN find that public have trust on government policies to develop IKN. They find that positive trust was influenced by the idea of developing IKN, which was predicted to become an example of a world city. Public trust in the policy was identified as 54.1%. Positive public trust has a good impact on sustainable development plans. According to Rifaldi and Taufik Rachman, There are several factors of trust. The idea of developing IKN is predicted to be an example of a world city (33.42%); IKN can influence economic equality (32.13%), encouraging welfare or prosperity (32.09%), and other influential factors, the leadership of Joko Widodo (Jokowi) as President of Indonesia (2.36%). [8]

Facing the potential for agrarian conflict in the development of IKN, Sholahudin and Sair provide recommendations to potentially minimize legal conflicts. First, there needs to be a new interpretation and understanding of the relationship between state law and indigenous law. The state is considered necessary to recognize, respect and protect the existence of indigenous law. In this case, residents who have been landowners in IKN for generations. [9].

Second, to overcome legal bottlenecks, the government needs to build an appropriate and negotiated

communication system to avoid prolonged legal dualism and so that there is no far disparity between the law as a law maker and the socio-cultural conditions of the community to be regulated. [9].

At the end of November 2022, President Joko Widodo through the Ministry of Law and Human Rights (Kemenkumham) proposed to revise the IKN Law and include it in the 2023 priority National Legislation Program (Prolegnas). The government proposes to revise several materials as part of an effort to strengthen the authority of the IKN, so that the process of organizing the government of the IKN Special Region can be carried out immediately. The proposal to amend the IKN Law is considered too soon considering that the law was only passed in February this year [10].

After having joint meeting with the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, six factions accepted the government's proposal to include the revision of the IKN Law as the 2023 National Legislation Program priority. The factions are PDI-Perjuangan, Golkar, Gerindra, PKB, PAN and PPP. There are two political party factions that rejected the proposal, namely the Democratic Party Faction (Partai Demokrat) and the Prosperous Justice Party Faction (PKS). Only the Nasdem Party abstained from the proposal [10]. This indicates a slight decrease in parliamentary support for the government's idea to amend the IKN Law.

2. RESEARCH PROBLEMS

From the explanation above, there are at least three interesting facts that can be highlighted. First, the idea of moving the national capital is a contested idea, an idea that is discussed and debated by various parties. This can be seen from the various views related to the relocation of IKN from the government, parliament, and various community groups. There are a number of views that criticize the relevance and urgency of relocating the IKN as a national interest, while some other views provide some important notes to ensure the IKN relocation project.

Second, there is a dynamic political support between the executive-legislative. In January 2022 almost all factions in parliament supported the government's steps in relocating the IKN. However, in November 2022 there was a slight weakening of parliamentary factions' support for the government's policy in relocating the IKN, as shown in the case of the proposed revision of the IKN Law.

Third, the government determined and pursued its own national interests despite strong opposition from various elements of society. This can be seen from the government's initial inception of the idea of relocating the IKN as an urgent national interest and the government's ability to obtain majority support from the parliament. Various elements of society that criticize the policy seem to have less influence to stop the IKN relocation project.

This article aims to describe the various views on the substance of the national interest, outline the political dynamics between the executive-legislature and explain the reasons why the government has a strong influence in the policy of relocating the IKN. Questions in this research are following:

1. How is the idea of national interest discussed and debated between the government, legislative and society?
- 2.. Why did the relocation of the national capital go ahead despite strong resistance from the public?

3. METHODOLOGY

This research will use qualitative approach to describe the conversations and debates on the substance of the idea of national interest in the policy of moving IKN between the executive, legislative, and various elements of community groups. This article will also explain the political dynamics that occur between the executive-legislative through the assumption of the state's unique capabilities and its limits. Furthermore, this article will also explain what factors affect the sustainability of the IKN relocation project in the midst of strong rejection from the community.

This research applies data collection techniques in the form of documentation studies with a content analysis approach from various studies and news related to the IKN relocation policy. Data analysis is carried out simultaneously which includes data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and verification.

The analysis in this study will use the assumptions of state-centered theory to define national interests and state capabilities and their limits. The following table outlines the concept and discussion of this article:

Table 1. Concept and Discussions for State-Centered Theory

| Concept | Ideas | Discussions |
|-------------------|--|---|
| National Interest | Discourse on the Idea of National Interest in the National Capital Relocation Policy | The ideas of national interest in the IKN relocation policy from the perspectives of the executive, legislative, and society. National economic interests in the policy of relocating IKN as a way to strengthen the collective prerogatives of state officials [9]. |

| Concept | Ideas | Discussions |
|----------------|--|--|
| State Autonomy | The State's Distinctive Capabilities in the Policy of Relocating the IKN Constitutional and Institutional Rules that Limit the State's Distinctive Capabilities in the Policy of Relocating the IKN | The state's capacity to consolidate political power and influence between the executive-legislative to reach a decision that is binding and regulates the articulation of interests according to the notion of national interest [9]. Constitutional and institutional limitation for policymaking in presidential-multiparty systems [9]. Legitimacy from the public as a prerequisite for policy support |

4. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

State-centered theory focus on the state as the main actor in policies. The State-centered theories assume that the state is a separate actor that has the autonomy and capacity to control its territory and its people, so that the stance and actions of the state do not always reflect the interests of certain social groups, social classes, or communities [11].

Skocpol explains that the state has its own autonomy because fundamentally the state has capacities that are different from other organizations. The capacities are;

First, the state has the administrative power to legislate binding decisions. Second, the state can organize institutions, organize group formations, articulate interests, strengthen political capacity, and form ideas of national interests. Third, shaping interests and strengthening the capacity of state actors. These three capacities are derived from the state's unique political resources (legal sanctions, police and army) that can be used to control, supervise and discipline society. These capabilities of the state are the focus of state-centered theories to explain political phenomena [11].

However, Skocpol explains that the degree of autonomy between countries is different because there are variations in the scope of their powers and authorities. This is because countries have constitutional rules that follow different structural changes over time. Therefore, the analysis of state-centered theories also needs to consider the institutional rules that are applied [9]. Evans, Rueschemeyer and Skocpol also explains that various kinds of state actions and policies fundamentally have limitations since any state policy has a potential to affect significant backlash from certain parts of society. For example, coercion and the discrepancy between the interests of the state and the interests of society have its potential to trigger collective action such as large-scale demonstrations. This is very likely to happen when the state and policy-making structures (state managers) do not have a solid and organized political unity [11].

Krasner argues that the state can basically determine the national interest, which is anything that is decided by the state, made by policy makers and considered to be in line with the public interest . Based on this definition of national interest, the state appears as an autonomous organization that has its own will to determine its national interest. This means that the idea of national interest created by the state may be at cross purposes with public opinion [12].

Skocpol explained state-centered theories hypothesize that the primary interest of the state is strengthening the prerogatives of the state official collectivity. Thus, a range of state policies are actually directed towards strengthening state authority, extending the period of the state regime, and maintaining social control [11]. This idea of self-centered interests is based on the assumption that the state has threats, which consist of other countries' influence on sovereignty (external) and the threat of society's rejection of power (internal). These threats make the state activate mechanisms to strengthen the integrity of territorial sovereignty, administrative-military stability, and the strengthening

of its financial resources. By doing so, the state has its own mechanism to elevate its instrumental capabilities and economic power [12]

Jack Goldstone extended Skocpol analysis of early modern revolutions era in several ways. First, where Skocpol had argued that war and economic competition were the main fiscal and burdens on the state, Goldstone substituted the broader concept of *fiscal and administrative stress*. Second, where Skocpol had argued that elites needed positions of leverage against states to block and paralyze state administrations, Goldstone emphasized *divisions and alienation among elites* as the critical factor leading to revolution. Third, while noting that administrative failures, elite dissension, and popular grievances are critical elements leading to revolt, the argument is made that state crises also comprise “a situation in which significant numbers of elites and popular groups believe that the central authorities are acting in ways that are fundamentally ineffective, immoral, or unjust” [13].

State-centered theory also has impact on local politics level. Sharp explained that the analysis of state centered-theory usually used to predict citizen participation, greater country involvement with means-tested and universal social programs yields parallel demobilizing and enhancing effects on local forms of political involvement [14].

In contrast with the idea of national interest, there is an ideal view of the concept of national interest by Hans Morgenthau which can be divided into four aspects, namely survival, vital, major, and peripheral. National interest in the survival aspect refers to security interests that ensure the survival of a nation. National interests in the vital aspect refer to economic and welfare interests that ensure the future of a nation. Major and peripheral interests refer to the interests of peace and the promotion of virtuous values [12]. In contrast to the idea of state-centered theories that drive national economic interests as a result of private interests and state autonomy to survive, Morgenthau drives the concept of national economic interests as a public interest.

5. EXECUTIVE INTEREST AND LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT

According to academic paper on the relocation of IKN prepared by the government through the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas), there are a number of substantial ideas of national interest that the government is trying to formulate. First, in principle, the relocation of the capital city is the government's effort

to protect the entire Indonesian nation and promote general welfare.

The government argues that Jakarta as the capital currently has a very heavy burden in terms of its supporting capacity and environmental capacity. This can be seen from the threats of natural disasters that are threatening Jakarta. Furthermore, the government argues that an equitable distribution of development can be done by moving the IKN so that it is not centered on the island of Java alone. Secondly, on a sociological basis, the government argues that the relocation of IKN can have a positive impact on people's access to universal needs. Third, from a judicial point of view, the government can legitimately fill the legal void of the absence of a law specifically regulating the National Capital City [3, 4].

Based on the idea of national interest, the parliament as an institution that decides the sustainability of the IKN relocation policy provides a number of important notes. The following are the notes and arguments of the factions against the IKN Bill [5].

Table 2. Summary of Arguments from Factions in Parliament on the IKN Bill

| Political Party Factions | Positioning of Arguments |
|--|---|
| Factions of Political Parties Supporting the IKN Bill (PDI-P, Golkar, PAN, PKB, PPP, Nasdem, and Gerindra) | The relocation of IKN should consider the essential needs of security and defense to guarantee the sovereignty of the government. |
| | The relocation of IKN should pay attention to potential financial and funding problems that burden the State Budget (APBN) |
| | The relocation of IKN should pay attention to mitigating potential land, environmental, and social problems. |
| | The relocation of IKN should consider the fulfillment rights of indigenous peoples. |
| | The relocation of IKN should consider the distributional impact of development |

| Political Party Factions | Positioning of Arguments |
|--------------------------------|---|
| | <p>The relocation of IKN should consider the sustainability of Jakarta's specialty as the economic center of Indonesia</p> <p>The relocation of IKN should consider the specificity of the IKN Authority as a special regional government</p> |
| Faction Against IKN Bill (PKS) | <p>PKS considers that the idea of the IKN Authority has mistaken because nomenclature of the head of the IKN government should be the governor, not the head of the authority. The existence of the IKN Authority also removes regional representative institutions such as the DPRD which is contrary to the 1945 Constitution Article 18 paragraph 3</p> <p>PKS considers that there are potential problems in fulfilling the rights of indigenous peoples, major environmental problems, and land issues from the IKN relocation project.</p> <p>PKS believes that the IKN Bill should not overburden the state budget, there should be no additional loans for the IKN relocation project, and it should be mindful of the country's fiscal capacity.</p> |

Based on an analysis conducted by the various political party factions, it was apparent that the majority of the parties agreed and supported the idea of relocating the IKN. However, parliamentary concerns cannot be ignored. This is because there are various potential problems that can arise from the IKN relocation project such as security, finance and funding, land, environment, social, fulfillment of community rights and guaranteeing the distribution of development impacts.

As has been pointed out by factions in parliament, one of the problems arising from the IKN Law is the position of the Head of the IKN Authority. Based on the IKN Law, Nugrohosudin reviewed the position of the Head of the IKN Authority as a new nomenclature which, when examined from the constitutional aspect, is neither a regional head nor a head of government [11]. Nugrohosudin argues that the position of the Head of the IKN Authority is equal to the minister because the appointment and dismissal process is based on the president's authority in consultation with the DPR. This implies that the IKN transfer policy politically strengthens the collective prerogatives of state officials in state administration [11].

The elements of society who rejected the IKN Law filed a judicial review to the Constitutional Court. At least there are several material claims submitted as the argument of the community on the basis of the rejection, including First, the Petitioners consider that the plan to relocate the IKN has no clarity of purpose because it seems to be 'inserted' in the 2020-2025 Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN). Second, the petitioners are concerned that the implementation of the IKN Law cannot be carried out properly. Third, the petitioners are concerned about IKN funding which could affect the ongoing post-pandemic recovery. However, the various arguments for the revocation of the IKN Law could not be accepted by the Constitutional Court because the applicants were considered to lack strong evidence to prove that the IKN Law was unconstitutional [12].

Based on this observation, it can be seen that the idea of national interest from the IKN relocation policy has a strong foundation and is supported by various parliamentary factions. However, it needs to be realized that there are a number of notes and a number of rejections from the public on the policy of moving the IKN.

As explained earlier, President Joko Widodo through the Ministry of Law and Human Rights (Kemenkumham) proposed a revision of the IKN Law and submitted it to the 2023 priority Prolegnas program to strengthen the authority of the IKN Authority. Many believe that the request for amendment is too soon considering that the law was just passed in February this year [8]. This is reflected in the statements of the Democratic Party and PKS, which rejected the proposal, and the Nasdem Party, which abstained [8]. This indicates a slight weakening of parliamentary support for the government's idea to amend the IKN Law.

The Democratic Party, which initially supported the IKN Law proposed by the government, also rejected the revision of the IKN Law together with PKS. The Democratic Party argues that the government is too rushed, unprofessional, and premature. Moreover, the IKN Law has just reached the age of nine months [13].

Unlike before, the Nasdem Party as a political party that is part of the government cabinet chose to abstain. The Nasdem Party argued that the abstain position was taken to examine the materials of the proposed revision of the IKN Law in more detail. Some analysts believe that another reason for the Nasdem party's stance was influenced by the upcoming general elections (Era.id, 2022). As it is known, in October 2022 the Nasdem Party officially endorsed Anies Baswedan as a presidential candidate. In this case, Anies Baswedan is often considered part of the opposition to Joko Widodo's government and his supporters are considered to resist the policy of moving the IKN [14].

It appears that the state's autonomy to direct policy in accordance with the idea of its national interest has limitations based on these political changes. These limitations refer to political party and parliamentary support for the executive. Although the government can still ensure that the revision of the IKN Law is included in the National Legislation Program (Prolegnas), the changing political circumstances leading up to the general election seem to have weakened the support of political party factions for the government.

This article shows the state's ability to consolidate political power between the legislative executive to enforce decisions and make binding policies. The ability to consolidate political power between the executive-legislative is due to Indonesia's presidential-multiparty system. The presidential-multiparty system allows a strong cooperative relationship between the executive-legislative. Djayadi Hanan explained that the multiparty presidential system in Indonesia has a president majority pattern, which is a pattern of a president who builds an accommodative and compromising political model with a range of political parties to create stability and easiness in forming policies or laws [15]. This has been shown since PAN joined the cabinet in 2021, which led President Joko Widodo to build a coalition of various political parties supporting the government with a strength of 81.9% of all seats in the DPR-RI. With such strength of support, it is not surprising that there is an ease for the government to smooth out the formation of legislation.

6. IKN RELOCATION AND STATE-CENTERED THEORY

The findings in the explanation above show that a number of IKN relocation policy processes are in line with state-centered theory. First, the idea of the state's national interest in relocating IKN arguably comes from the autonomy of the state itself. This is in line with Krasner's statement in his book *Defending The National Interest* which explains that the state can determine its own national interests. This also implies that the state is an autonomous organization that has its own will to determine its national interests even though it is against public interest. This is apparent from the strong alignment between the executive-legislative in the idea of the national interest of moving IKN.

The initiative to relocate IKN also aligns with other national interest orientations. Evans, Rueschemeyer, & Skocpol in their book *Bringing the State Back In* explain that there is a tendency for states to direct their national interests to economic development and social redistribution. In that context, the policy of relocating IKN can be seen as a national interest for economic development and redistribution of social welfare. This is in line with the idea of moving the IKN, which is to overcome problems in Jakarta, the distribution of national development, strengthening national identity, and national defense concerns [9].

Second, the idea of national interest in the relocation of IKN is characterized by the intention to strengthen the collective prerogatives of state officials. Under the Law on IKN, the position of the Head of the IKN Authority is similar to the status of the Chief of Police or the Commander of the TNI because the appointment and dismissal process is based on the president's authority in consultation with the DPR. This allows central government to fully determine the Head of the IKN Authority. In fact, the IKN Authority has a function that tends to be more comparative to that of a regional head than a Minister. With the direct election of the central government in consultation with the DPR, it appears that high-ranking state officials have more control over the governance of IKN than the people where there is no legislative institution as representative [16].

Third, the IKN relocation policy shows the state's strong autonomy to implement its own agenda of national interest. This can be seen from the state's ability to consolidate executive-legislative power in the IKN relocation policy. Through the cooperation of the two institutions, the idea of relocating the IKN can be

implemented smoothly. This cooperative relationship is due to Indonesia's presidential-multiparty system and President Joko Widodo's ability to consolidate the power of 81.9% of seats in the House of Representatives in 2021 [17].

Fourth, Indonesia's strong state autonomy is not unlimited. Under the Indonesia's constitution, the President of Indonesia does not have absolute authority over the relocation of the capital city. The President cannot make unilateral decisions regarding the relocation of the capital city without the approval of other state institutions, especially the people's representative institutions. The executive, especially the President, only has the authority to propose the relocation of the national capital. Meanwhile, approval for the relocation of the National Capital City, both from the approval to state the relocation, determine the location, financing scheme, and legal consequences for the area concerned, must still be approved by the people's representative institutions or parliament [18]. Fifth, political dissent leading up to general elections can limit the ability of state autonomy. As shown by the case of weakening support from several parliamentary factions for the revision of the IKN Law, which shows the fragility of legislative group support for executive policies.

Finally, another important limitation that can be considered to control state autonomy is public participation. The state's autonomy in realizing its national interests must consider the legitimacy and input of the society so that its national interests are truly aligned [19]. For example, although the policy of relocating the IKN can be seen as state autonomy for its national interests, public criticism must still be accommodated and harmonized with the plans and stages of the IKN Nusantara development.

7. CONCLUSIONS

IKN relocation policy fulfills various assumptions of state-centered theories. The idea of national interest in the relocation IKN can be viewed as a form of state autonomy. Furthermore, the idea of national interest in the relocation of the IKN encourages the collective prerogatives of state officials through the establishment of the IKN Authority. The successful implementation of this national interest idea is the result of the state's ability to consolidate executive-legislative power in the IKN relocation policy. However, the state does not necessarily have absolute autonomy. There are constitutional limits and public legitimacy can influence the idea of national interest in the relocation of IKN.

This article recommends the Government of Indonesia continue to engage in socialization, hearings, and public discussions with various elements of society regarding the relocation of IKN. This is needed to accommodate various inputs and ensure the alignment of public interests between the state and the community. The government also needs to consolidate political party factions to ensure the sustainability of the IKN relocation policy for a few government periods.

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