RADICALISATION
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA:
A SELECTED CASE STUDY
OF
DAESH IN INDONESIA,
MALAYSIA AND
THE PHILIPPINES

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SEARCCT

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I cannot forget my wife, Amelia Grace William, who also doubles as my best-friend; and my sweet daughter, Naomi Mary Thomas, who is my 'factory-of-joy.' One gives me strength and the other; hope.

Lastly, I am deeply appreciative to the various individuals and organsiations from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines that I met during the roundtable discussions, interviews and meetings. I am inspired by both your passion and devotion. Many do not know, and will never know, the extent that you have gone to keep us safe and I remain humbled by your dedication, perseverance and courage.

FOREWORD

From Mosul to Paris, Ramadi to London, Yemen to the United States, Jakarta and most recently Brussels; the world has not been spared the cruel touch of the Islamic State or *Daesh*. Their ability to attract thousands; men and women, young and old, educated and illiterate from various parts of the world, to join a cause known primarily for its beheading, suicide bombings and stabbing is a testimony of not only their barbarity and cruelty but also of their power to attract, persuade, radicalise and recruit. It is unfortunate that the Southeast Asian region, far removed from the civil war in Syria and the turmoil in Iraq, has not been spared.

In fact, the growing influence and aspirations that *Daesh* has been able to exert in Southeast Asia, is both significant and of great concern. The brazen January 2016 attacks in the heart of Jakarta, the growing number of citizens in this region finding their way to Syria and Iraq to participate in the conflict there, the rising number of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) returning to the region to 'bring back the war to the home front,' the increasing number of terror groups pledging *bai'ah* to *Daesh* and finally the establishment and growing prominence of *Katibah Nusantara* or the 'Malay Archipelago Unit for the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria'; a component of *Daesh* staffed solely by personnel from Indonesia and Malaysia are but some of the indicators of *Daesh*'s influence in Southeast Asia.

Against this backdrop, this study hopes to look at what *Daesh* was and has become and to study their 'fingerprints' in the radicalisation process that they have helped to orchestrate in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. It will also look into the process of *glocalisation*, in this context meaning the ability of *Daesh* to further its ideological goals through the use of local terror groups.

Finally, this study will propose a model, focused not on *Daesh*, but rather focusing on the people of Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. It is predicated on the desperate need to address the fears exploited by *Daesh* and to articulate our story through creative and passionate means, using a myriad of mediums and conduits, all with the hope to tell a better story than that of the extremist, so as to win the 'hearts and minds' of our people.

Let us however not be fooled. The grim reality is that it is going to be a tough battle to counter this quasi state that has yet to be dislodged and at times, seems to thrive.

But we have little choice.

For behind every beheading, burning and killing; behind every bombing, shooting and stabbing, there lies a name, a face, a distraught family and a painful memory. In the midst of our research, our strategies and our intervention, let us never forget that.

Thomas Koruth Samuel
March 2016

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFP	Australian Federal Police
AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
AKS	*Ansar Khalifah Sarangani*
AQI	Al Qaeda in Iraq
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
ASG	Abu Sayyaf Group
BIFF	Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters
BJMP	Bureau of Jail Management and Penology
BNPT	Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terorisme (*Indonesian National Counter-Terrorism Agency*)
CAB	Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
Daesh	*al Dawla al Islamiya fi al Iraq wa al Sham*
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DI	*Darul Islam*
DIM	*Darul Islam Malizia*
DSCD	Digital Strategic Communications Division
EMD	Electronic Monitoring Device
EU	European Union
FAB	Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro
FAKSI	*Forum Aktivis Syariat Islam*
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FNA	Fars News Agency
FTF	Foreign Terrorist Fighters
FTO	Foreign Terrorist Organisation
FU-MUI	*Forum Ukhuwah Islamiyah Majelis Ulama Indonesia*
GMMF	Global Movement of the Moderates Foundation
HMT	*Hizbut Tahrir Malaysia*
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IED	Improvised Explosive Devices
IM4U	1 Malaysia for Youth
ISA	Internal Security Act
ISAFP	Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines
ISI	Islamic State of Iraq
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Sham
ISIS	Institute of Strategic International Studies
ISR	Islamic State Report
JAS	*Jamaah Ansharusy Syariah*

JAT	*Jamaah Anshorul Tauhid*
JI	*Jamaah Islamiyah*
JIM	Justice for Islamic Movement
KFR	Kidnapping for Ransom
KIM	*Khilafa Islamiyah Mindanao*
KMM	*Kumpulan Mujahidin Mujahidin/Malaysia*
KUIB	*Kongres Umat Islam Bekasi*
MCA	Malaysian Chinese Association
MIB	*Mujahidin Indonesia Barat* (West Indonesia Mujahidin)
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MIT	*Mujahidin Indonesia Timur* (Mujahidin of Eastern Indonesia)
MMI	*Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia*
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
MOA-AD	Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OFW	Overseas Foreign Workers
POTA	Prevention of Terrorism Act
RMP	Royal Malaysian Police
RPG	Rocket Propelled Grenade
RSIM	Rajah Solaiman Islamic Movement
RSIS	S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies
SAF	Special Action Force
SB	Special Branch
SEARCCT	Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism
SICA	Special Intensive Care Area
SMATA	Special Measures Against Terrorism in Foreign Countries Act
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SOSMA	Security Offences (Special Measures) Act
UM	University Malaya
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSC	United Nations Security Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research looks at the issue of *Daesh*-type radicalisation in the region, focusing particularly on Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. Having identified that *Daesh*'s narrative was the key driver and catalyst for such radicalisation, the study then goes on to propose a '4-Step Counter-Narrative Developmental Model' to deal with this specific challenge.

A qualitative approach was employed for this study and this encompassed roundtable discussions and both structured and non-structured interviews. Participants were relevant policy makers, law enforcement officials, academics, researchers, the military, experts and civil society leaders mainly, but not limited to Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. Insights were also obtained from various workshops, conferences and seminars both within and beyond the Southeast Asian region. Numerous reports, briefings and commentaries from various sources in this field were also examined. Drafts of the research study were then sent to academics and practitioners both locally and internationally to obtain their feedback and critique.

Chapter One of the research starts by looking at the terms associated with the subject-matter; exploring briefly the concept of radicalisation and FTF and justifying the usage of the term *Daesh* to describe the group in question. The study then traces the history and evolution of *Daesh* from the beginning, looking closely at its leaders, ideology, funding, relations with other groups, its operations and exploitation of the media and its past attacks.

Chapter Two takes a closer look at *Daesh*'s interest in the Southeast Asian region. Based on the group's activities in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, coupled with justifications and reasons by leading experts in this field, this chapter attempts to study the objectives and intentions that *Daesh* has planned for Southeast Asia, discussing the probability and possibility of a member-state/s evolving to become a '*Daesh* satellite state.'

Chapter Three looks at how *Daesh* evolved in Indonesia, tracing its history and the key idealogues that both supported and developed the group to reach its current status. The establishment and subsequent growth of *Katibah Nusantara* and its implications not just to Indonesia but to the region as a whole are given special attention. Issues such as how religion is used by *Daesh*, the method and impact of radicalisation and recruitment in prisons and among students and undergraduates as well as the response and reaction of the Indonesian public and civil society and the push back against *Daesh* measured in terms of the counter-narratives are also studied. The Government's response, particularly through the existing legislature and the proposed

laws together with the deradicalisation programmes conducted by the authorities are also discussed.

Chapter Four then proceeds to study the genesis of *Daesh* in Malaysia. It looks at Malaysia's history with FTF, from the period when Malaysians fought in Afghanistan in the 1980s (the so-called Afghan Alumni) to the current crop of Malaysians in Syria and Iraq. A chronological look at the developments taking place on the ground, and in particular the arrests made upon *Daesh* supporters, sympathisers and recruits and the subsequent response by the authorities, particularly in terms of legislation is also closely examined. Issues related to *Daesh*-type radicalisation such as the motivational factors driving Malaysians to commit to the group's ideology, the pre-radicalisation indicators exhibited by potential recruits and the possibility of non-violent, radical groups acting as "conveyor belts" and subsequently paving the way for violent extremism is touched upon. The characteristics of Malaysian FTF and the impending danger they pose should they return are also considered.

Chapter Five then attempts to study the impact of *Daesh* in the Philippines. Emphasis is placed upon tracing the home-grown terror groups that have pledged their allegiance to *Daesh* as well as to consider the kind of relations that exist between the former and the latter. The Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) is also closely looked at together with the possible impact its failure to pass through Congress would have on the radicalisation process in the Philippines. The issue of motivational factors that could drive people to radicalisation is also discussed.

Chapter Six collates the significant findings from the research in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines and identifies seven areas, which are deemed noteworthy, and these include, the role of religion, *Daesh*'s capacity to disseminate their narrative, the issue of returning FTF, the *Daesh* directed/inspired type of radicalisation models, the dual narrative of shame and the need to do something, the lack of counter-narratives and dissemination channels and lastly, *Daesh*'s push to become a satellite state in the region. Also, the chapter looks at three areas that are in need for further research, not only in terms of qualitative analysis but especially in terms of quantitative research. Among the knowledge-gaps identified include the need for theoretical models that could be used as predictive indicators for those prone to radicalisation, the need to understand the role of ideology and the need for cross cutting research to understand radicalisation in the respective three countries.

The final chapter is predicated on a needs-analysis study, based on the research findings in the three countries. The needs-analysis points to the need for a comprehensive framework to develop and disseminate an effective and robust counter-narrative that has the ability to debunk the narrative composed and

disseminated by *Daesh*. Based on this, the study proposes a '4-Step Counter-Narrative Developmental Model' that seeks to develop four main pillars for an effective counter-narrative to function. These four components include research networks, resource centres, training and dissemination hubs and monitoring groups. The study ends with recommendations for 'value-based needs' in the region, which includes the need for passion, creativity and coordination, without which there can be little success against an organisation like *Daesh*.

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PROJECT

This research initiative was conceived as part of a broader collaborative project, namely the "EU-UNODC Joint Initiative for Supporting Southeast Asian Countries to Counter Terrorism." This joint initiative was launched in April 2012 between the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to more effectively prevent and fight terrorism in accordance with Human Rights and the Rule of Law.

It was in that context that the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), under the purview of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia and UNODC, established a partnership to undertake a study focusing on radicalisation in selected countries in the Southeast Asian region, namely Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. The objective of the study was to understand the phenomenon of *Daesh* radicalisation and to then propose a possible framework to deal with this challenge in these countries.

The methodology employed for this research project was a qualitative approach. Therefore, roundtable discussions followed by interviews were conducted in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (22 – 23 September 2014), Manila, the Philippines (25 – 26 September 2014) and Jakarta, Indonesia (29 – 30 October 2014). A follow-up roundtable and interview sessions were also held again in Jakarta, Indonesia (19 – 20 August 2015). Participants of these roundtable and interviews were mainly from these three countries and they included policy makers, law enforcement officials, academics, researchers, the military, foreign experts and civil society leaders. Literature on the subject in the form of reports, briefings and commentaries from various sources were also used. Besides this, information and insights were also gleaned from various workshops, conferences and seminars that the author attended. The initial drafts were also sent to researchers, academics and practitioners from academic institutions and international organisations to both get their views on the subject as well as their feedback on the work produced.

This study hopes to trace the evolution of *Daesh* at the global level and then consider its impact in Southeast Asia. Emphasis will be placed on understanding the characteristics and dynamics of *Daesh* as a terrorist organisation, with the hope that understanding the dynamics, workings and agenda of this group, will then place us in a better position to counter them. The study also intends to look at the significance and impact that *Daesh* has had on these three countries; highlighting the chronological evolution of *Daesh* in the respective countries, studying how they affected the people and the communities, assessing the individuals and groups that together with *Daesh* have symbiotically fed off each other, weighing the subsequent response of the

authorities, learning the issues and challenges faced in confronting this group and assessing the steps as well as lessons that have been learned thus far.

Finally, after studying the interaction between both the organisation and the environment that it has been placed in, this study suggests a possible way forward, taking into account that since *Daesh*'s radicalisation starts with a story, the answer to bringing it down, could also lie in a story, and more importantly the way to conceptualise, develop and bring that story to the people who need it the most.

PREAMBLE

"Initially, when we saw his picture on the Internet after the Jakarta attacks, we thought that it was him. But they reported that he was from Sumedang (and not from Compreng). However, when I saw a close up of his image, I knew it was him. I knew it was my friend."[1]

Afif alias Sunakim or Nakim to his friends, was in his 30s and from Karawang, West Java.[2] He was one of the four perpetrators responsible for the Jakarta attacks in January this year. His father Zenab, was a graveyard caretaker and his mother Nyai, a vegetable seller.[3] On Thursday, 14 January 2016, clad in a black shirt with the name of the famous Dutch DJ Tiesto[4] emblazoned on it, wearing blue jeans, a baseball cap and carrying a gun and a rucksack; Afif, relatively an unknown man in Jakarta, became the face of terror in Indonesia.

Baby-faced Afif was however not new in terrorism. His foray into terrorism began when he was sentenced in 2010 to seven years in prison for attending a militant training camp in Aceh. He was released early on parole, somewhere between August and September in 2015. In Jakarta's Cipinang prison, he refused to follow the deradicalisation programme[5] and subsequently came into contact with Aman Abdurrahman,[6] who would introduce him to a group that would not only change his life, but also end it. The last images the world would ever see of Afif were that of a man attempting to shoot and kill police officers at the intersection of Jalan Kyai Haji Wahid Hasyim and Jalan MH Thamrin.[7]

The village headman who knew him as a child said wistfully, "If you had seen him when he was young, you would never imagine him doing something like this."[8]

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[1] Yoesoef Adji, *Afif Diyakini Sebagai Sunakim, Anak Penjaga Makam Asal Subang*, Pikiran Rakyat,16 Januari, 2016, http://www.pikiran-rakyat.com/jawa-barat/2016/01/16/357304/afif-diyakini-sebagai-sunakim-anak-penjaga-makam-asal-subang (Retrieved on 21 March 2016).

[2] Kirk D'Souza, *Jakarta Terror Attacks – What do we know?* International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, https://www.ict.org.il/UserFiles/ICT-Jakarta-Terror-Attack-Jan-16.pdf (Retrieved on 21 March 2016).

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Kris Razianto Mada, *Sunakim Alias Afif, Koboi Ganas Jebolan Jalin Jantho*, Kompas, 16 January 2016, http://print.kompas.com/baca/2016/01/16/Sunakim-Alias-Afif%2c-Koboi-Ganas-Jebolan-Jalin-Jant (Retrieved on 21 March 2016).

[5] *From jailbird to IS militant*, New Straits Times, 20 January 2016.

[6] *Indonesian prisons breeding ground for militancy*, The Sun, 20 January 2016.

[7] Kirk D'Souza, *Jakarta Terror Attacks – What do we know?*

[8] Yoesoef Adji, *Afif Diyakini Sebagai Sunakim, Anak Penjaga Makam Asal Subang*, Pikiran Rakyat,16 Januari, 2016, http://www.pikiran-rakyat.com/jawa-barat/2016/01/16/357304/afif-diyakini-sebagai-sunakim-anak-penjaga-makam-asal-subang (Retrieved on 21 March 2016).

1. INTRODUCTION TO *DAESH*

Outline

This chapter will firstly look at the terms used in this study and then delve into the group *Daesh* itself, closely examining, its history and evolution, ideology, key people, reputed numbers, funding, its links with other groups, its media footprint and its operations.

Terminology

Daesh

In warfare, the war begins to be lost when we concede physical ground to the enemy. Similarly, allowing the enemy to hijack the name of the religion is not mere semantics but reverberates greatly among two distinct audiences. Among the Muslims, the term Islamic State, gives the group both credibility and legitimacy, which it neither remotely deserves and/or has earned. Among the non-Muslims, it further polarises and poisons the relations with the Muslims, aiding and assisting the group's devious intentions to bring about hostility, friction and conflict between the two.

US President Barack Obama in response to the kidnapping and subsequent beheading of US journalist Steven Sotloff in September 2014 had this to say, "ISIL is not Islamic . . . and [is] certainly not a state... It is recognised by no government, nor the people it subjugates."[9]

British Prime Minister David Cameron who previously used "ISIL" to refer to the group said, "(the term) *Daesh* is clearly an improvement and I think that it is important that we all try to use this language." He continued by saying, "this evil death cult is neither a true representation of Islam nor is it a state." The British Government's Twitter account which had been called "UK Against ISIL" was now referred to as "UK Against *Daesh*"[10] Other governments, such as those of France and Iraq, prefer the term *Daesh* (*al Dawla al Islamiya fi al Iraq wa al Sham*)[11], the acronym of the group's Arabic name, which also means "to trample down and crush".[12]

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[9] *Statement by the President on ISIL*, Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, 10 September 2014, https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/10/statement-president-isil-1 (Retrieved on 11 December 2015).

[10] *Cameron urges use of 'Daesh' for terrorist group*, The Sun, 3 December 2015.

[11] Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014, http://soufangroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/TSG-The-Islamic-State-Nov14.pdf (Retrieved on 14 December 2015).

[12] *Islamic State*, IHS Jane's 360, Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism. http://www.janes.com/security/terrorism-insurgency (Retrieved on 13 August 2015).

On 2 December 2015, the Malaysian Deputy Home Minister, Datuk Nur Jazlan Mohamed confirmed in Parliament that Malaysia would not use the term Islamic State as it was misleading but would instead call the group *Daesh*.[13]

For the purpose of this study, the author will use the term *Daesh* to describe the groups except when quoting others who have chosen to use other terms such as IS, ISIS or ISIL.

Radicalisation

Similarly, the term radicalisation warrants careful study. Thus far, the search for what 'radicalisation' means has turned out to be a frustrating endeavor.[14] The Expert Group on Violent Radicalisation, established by the European Commission to shed light on the issue, went on to describe the notion of radicalisation as "ill defined, complex and controversial."[15]

This has nevertheless not stopped various governments, security agencies and academics from defining radicalisation. For example, the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET) defined radicalisation as, "a process, by which a person to an increasing extent accepts the use of undemocratic or violent means, including terrorism, in an attempt to reach a specific political/ideological objective."[16] The US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on the other hand defined radicalisation as, "the process of adopting an extremist belief system, including the willingness to use, support, or facilitate violence, as a method to effect social change".[17]

Peter Neumann's definition of radicalisation as "what goes on before the bomb goes off",[18] while being succinct, might lack certain empirical and analytical rigor. In this regard, Alex Schmid proposes two main components when describing radicalisation.

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[13] *Rehab Scheme for Suspected Terrorist Planned*, The Star, 3 December 2015.

[14] Alex P. Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, ICCT Research Paper, International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague, March 2013.

[15] Rik Coolsaet (Ed.), *Jihadi Terrorism and the Radicalisation Challenge: European and American Experience,* 2nd edition (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011).

[16] PET, Danish Intelligence Services, 2009. See also COT, *Radicalisation, Recruitment and the EU Counter-radicalisation Strategy* (The Hague: COT, 17 November 2008).

[17] Homeland Security Institute, *Radicalisation: An Overview and Annotated Bibliography of Open-Source Literature. Final Report* (Arlington: HSI, 2006).

[18] Peter R. Neumann 'Introduction', in P.R. Neumann, J. Stoil, & D. Esfandiary (Eds.), *Perspectives on radicalisation and political violence: papers from the first International Conference on Radicalisation and Political Violence* (London: ICSR, 2008), p. 4, quoted in Alex P. Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, ICCT Research Paper, International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague, March 2013.

Firstly, "advocating sweeping political change, based on a conviction that the status quo is unacceptable while at the same time a fundamentally different alternative appears to be available to the radical". Secondly, "the means advocated to bring about the system-transforming radical solution for government and society can be non-violent and democratic (through persuasion and reform) or violent and non-democratic (through coercion and revolution).[19]

Hence, for the purpose of this study, the author has chosen Schmid's re-conceptualised definition of radicalisation:

> *"an individual or collective (group) process whereby, usually in a situation of political polarisation, normal practices of dialogue, compromise and tolerance between political actors and groups with diverging interests are abandoned by one or both sides in a conflict dyad in favour of a growing commitment to engage in confrontational tactics of conflict-waging. These can include either (i) the use of (non-violent) pressure and coercion, (ii) various forms of political violence other than terrorism or (iii) acts of violent extremism in the form of terrorism and war crimes. The process is, on the side of rebel factions, generally accompanied by an ideological socialization away from mainstream or status quo-oriented positions towards more radical or extremist positions involving a dichotomous world view and the acceptance of an alternative focal point of political mobilization outside the dominant political order as the existing system is no longer recognized as appropriate or legitimate".[20]*

In the author's opinion, the process of *Daesh*'s radicalisation, regardless of it being represented by an individual (i.e. lone wolf) or a collective number of people, fits well in Schmid's definition. Also, the spectrum of confrontational tactics, ranging from "the use of (non-violent) pressure and coercion" to the "acts of violent extremism in the form of terrorism and war crimes" tends to showcase the range of actions carried out by *Daesh* sympathisers, supporters and active recruits in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

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[19] Alex P. Schmid (Ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research* (2011), op. cit. pp. 679-80; and, in part, from Roger Scruton, *A Dictionary of Political Thought* (London: Macmillan, 1996).
[20] Alex P. Schmid, 'Glossary and Abbreviations of Terms and Concepts Relating to Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism', in Alex P. Schmid (Ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research* (London: Routledge, 2011).

Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF)

Schmid in October 2015[21] delved into the issue of what constitutes a 'foreign fighter' by quoting David Malet who defined them as, "non-citizens of conflict states who join insurgencies during civil conflict."[22]

Given the nuances of religion, Jahangir Arasli specified that,

> "*A foreign Islamist fighter is a volunteer combatant actor with no apparent link to the area of the ongoing armed conflict yet bound to it by his sense of the perceived Muslim religious duty.*"[23]

A more general definition that took into account the motivational aspect was issued by the Academy of International Law and Human Rights. Hence a foreign fighter was an;

> "*individual who leaves his or her country of origin or habitual residence to join a non-state armed group in an armed conflict abroad and who is primarily motivated by ideology, religion and/or kinship*."[24]

Thomas Hegghammer's comprehensive definition of a foreign fighter is:

> "*an agent who (i) has joined, and operates within the confines of an insurgency, (2) lacks citizenship of the conflict state or kinship links to its warring factions, (3) lacks affiliation to an official military organisation; and (4) is unpaid*"[25]

It was interesting to note that Hegghammer specifically mentions that the foreign fighter was not financially compensated, which was not necessarily the case with

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[21] Alex P. Schmid, Foreign (Terrorist) Fighters Estimates: Conceptual and Data Issues, ICCT Policy Brief, International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT), The Hague, October 2015, http://icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/ICCT-Schmid-Foreign-Terrorist-Fighter-Estimates-Conceptual-and-Data-Issues-October20152.pdf Retrieved on 14 December 2015.

[22] David Malet, *Foreign Fighters: Transnational Identities in Foreign Conflicts* (Oxford: University Press, 2013).

[23] J.E. Arasli, *Archipelago SYRAQ.*

[24] Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, *Academy Briefing No. 7: Foreign Fighters Under International Law* (Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, 2014), p. 7, http://www.geneva-academy.ch/docs/publications/Briefings%20and%20In%20breifs/Foreign%20Fighters%20Under%20International%20Law%20Briefing%20no7.pdf.

[25] T. Hegghammer, "The Rise of Muslim Foreign Fighters", *International Security*, vol. 35, no. 3 (2010/2011), pp. 57 - 58; S. Gates and S. Podder, "Social Media, Recruitment, Allegiance and the Islamic State", Pe*rspectives on Terrorism*, vol. 9, no. 4 (2015), p. 107.

foreign fighters in *Daesh*, who at times were even motivated to join due to monetary reasons.

The UN defined 'Foreign Terrorist Fighters' in its United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2178 as,

> "… *nationals who travel or attempt to travel to a State other than their States of residence or nationality, and other individuals who travel or attempt to travel from their territories to a State other than their States of residence or nationality, for the purpose of the perpetration, planning, or preparation of, or participation in, terrorist acts, or the providing or receiving of terrorist training, including in connection with armed conflict*".[26]

The Beginning

Understanding *Daesh* is essential should we would want to analyse its development and possible future trajectory in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. Its history, evolution, financing, ideology, ability to attract recruits and sympathisers and its exploitation of the media, in particular the social media are unique and worth exploring.

Daesh was said to have evolved from Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI)[27] and 'stunned the world'[28] in the middle of 2014. Besides its unprecedented depth in utilising violence and its ability to enforce some form of government on large swathes of territory in Syria and Iraq, *Daesh* has been able to project itself in a manner that has been able to attract fighters at an unprecedented level on a global scale.

Practically, *Daesh* knows that it not only needs to capture land but also administer it. Hence, in July 2014, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, *Daesh*'s leader, appealed for "*scientists, scholars, preachers, judges, doctors, engineers and people with military and administrative expertise of all domains*" to consider moving to the Islamic State which

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[26] United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 2178 (2014): Adopted by the Security Council at its 7272nd meeting, on 24 September 2014*, S/RES/2178 (2014), www.un.org/en/sc/documents/ resolutions/2014/shtml.

[27] Rohan Gunaratna, *Global Threat Assessment - New Threats on the Horizon?*, Volume 7, Issue 1, January/February 2015, Counter Terrorist Trends Analysis, International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore.

[28] Ahmed S. Hashim, *The Impact of The Islamic State in Asia*, Policy Report, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, February 2015. https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/PR150211_The_Impact_of_the_Islamic_State_in_Asia.pdf (Retrieved on 14 December 2015).

according to *Daesh* was in great need of their services.[29] As part of its appeal, *Daesh*'s online magazine *Dabiq* in its third issue, entitled, *A Call to Hijra* (migration) promised new recruits accommodation not only for them but also for their families.[30] It is also significant to note that besides accommodation, *Daesh* has also made mention, in the fourth issue of *Dabiq* in early October 2014, the offer for foreign fighters from abroad to gain plunder and to purchase enslaved women, legitimising such actions by referring to Islamic texts on the "seizure of property owned or abandoned" by those who do not support their cause or by considering women and girls as "commodities along with other spoils of war".[31]

Number of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF)

Foreign fighters are not a totally new phenomenon and historically there have been 'close to 100 civil wars since the late 18th century with approximately '100,000 foreign fighters worldwide over the past 250 years'.[32]

Nevertheless, the ability of *Daesh* to recruit foreign fighters has been extraordinary by any measure. According to the US Assistant Attorney General, John P. Carlin, the number of foreign fighters nearly doubled to 28,000 in the twelve months prior to September 2015.[33] By the end of 2015 it was thought that well over 30,000 foreign fighters had joined *Daesh* in Syria and Iraq.

In May 2015, Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations Secretary-General, warned that the flow of FTF to *Daesh* and other extremist groups had increased alarmingly: 15,000 fighters from 80 countries in November 2014 to 25,000 fighters from 100 countries in mid-2015. This translates to a staggering 70% increase.[34] In his October 2015 report[35],

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[29]   *Al-Monitor*,   http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/security/2014/07/iraq-syria-baghdadi-call-muslims-caliphate.html##ixzz3CHcbY6ZL. as quoted in Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014.

[30] Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014.

[31] *Ibid*

[32] David Malet, *What does the evidence tell us about the impact of foreign fighters on home-grown radicalisation?* Radicalisation Research, 6 July 2015. http://www.radicalisationresearch.org/debate/malet-foreign-fighters-home-grown-radicalisation/ (Retrieved on 14 December 2015).

[33] National Security Division, "Assistant Attorney General John P. Carlin Delivers Remarks at the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law's Event on More Effective Responses to the Foreign Terrorist Fighter Threat", *Department of Justice*, 28 September 2015, http://www.justice.gov/opa/speech/assistant-attorney-general-john-p-carlin-delivers-remarks-international-institute-justice?utm_source=%20Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=New%20Campaign&utm_term=%2ASituation%20Report. (Retrieved on 14 December 2015).

[34] '*At debate, UN and Security Council Renew Pledge to Counter Foreign Terrorist Fighters*', UN News Centre, 29 May 2015, http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51005#.VXcikU2Jhdg

[35] Alex P. Schmid, Foreign (Terrorist) Fighters Estimates: Conceptual and Data Issues, ICCT Policy Brief, International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT), The Hague, October 2015, http://icct.nl/wp-

Schmid traced the conceptual and data issues with regard to the estimates of the FTF and came to the conclusion that there were approximately 30,000 militants from nearly 104 countries that had become foreign fighters with *Daesh*. He estimates that FTF make up approximately 40% of *Daesh* fighters and perhaps the ratios are even higher if the Iraqis in Syria are counted as such.

Daesh Leaders

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi al-Husseini al-Qurashi, is an Iraqi national and as mentioned earlier, the current Emir of *Daesh*. He is a native of Samarra, Salah ad-Din province north of Baghdad, and was reportedly a lecturer of Islamic studies and an imam at mosques in both Baghdad and Fallujah before being detained by US forces on 4 June 2004.[36]

Sheikh Abu Abdullah al-Hassani al-Qurashi was said to be the deputy Emir of AQI and prime minister of the ISI and now *Daesh*. His position was announced in an ISI statement released in May 2010 following the deaths of Abu Hamza and Abu Omar in April 2010.

Anu Ayman al-Iraqi is said to be one of the main leaders of *Daesh* and also a member of the organisation's military council. He supposedly worked in air force intelligence prior to the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq and was said to be in jail between 2007 and 2010. After his release, he moved to Syria. He is reportedly commanding *Daesh* forces in Idlib, Aleppo, and Latakia governorates in early 2014.

Waleed Jassem al- Alwani was said to be a member of the Iraqi army prior to the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq and was reported to be a member of *Daesh*'s military council.

It must be noted however, that there are numerous discrepencies with regards to the status of the leaders in *Daesh* as they have multiple aliases and there have been unconfirmed reports of these leaders being killed by coalition air-strikes.

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content/uploads/2015/10/ICCT-Schmid-Foreign-Terrorist-Fighter-Estimates-Conceptual-and-Data-Issues-October20152.pdf Retrieved on 14 December 2015.

[36] *Islamic State*, IHS Jane's 360, Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism http://www.janes.com/security/terrorism-insurgency

The Evolution of *Daesh*

AQI, and by extension *Daesh*, claimed the Jordanian street criminal[37] turned terrorist, Abu Musab al Zarqawi (Ahmad Fadeel al Nazal al Khalayleh) as both its founder and inspiration.[38] In 2004, Zarqawi joined Al Qaeda and changed the name of the group to Al Qaeda in Iraq (*Tanzim Qaidat al Jihad fi Bilad al Rafidayn* in Arabic or 'Al Qaeda Organisation in the Land of the Two Rivers,'[39] i.e. AQI). It was said to be a strategic move by Zarqawi with the hope that an association with Al Qaeda would enable his group to attract both recruits and funds.[40] However, Zarqawi was killed in a targeted American airstrike in mid-2006. He was replaced by Abu Hamza al Muhajir who then merged AQI with other groups to become The Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), which was headed by Abu Omar al Baghdadi. Abu Hamza and Abu Omar were killed together in 2010 and subsequently Abu Bakr al Baghdadi (Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al Badri al Samarrai) took over as head of ISI.[41] Abu Bakar al Baghdadi was said to have refused to follow the instructions of *Al-Qaeda* leader Ayman al Zawahiri (particularly with regard to confining their operations to Iraq and Baghdadi's excessive use of violence[42]) and had stated in an audio statement on 14 June 2013 that "the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant will remain, as long as we have a vein pumping or an eye blinking. It remains and we will not give it up".[43] This led Zawahiri in February 2014 (or October 2013[44], according to some experts) to break its relations with ISI saying that ISIL was "not a branch of *Al-Qaeda* and we have no organisational relationship with it", further adding that it was not responsible for ISIL's "actions and behaviour."[45] However, by then Abu Bakr had already renamed The Islamic State of Iraq and al Sham (the Levant) (ISIS).[46] On 29 June 2014 (also the first day of the month of Ramadan, 1435 in the Islamic calender[47]), *Daesh* declared the revival of the Caliphate, naming it The Islamic State, with territory spanning from the Syrian governorate of Aleppo in the West to

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[37] Ahmed S. Hashim, *The Islamic State: From Al-Qaeda Affiliate to Caliphate*, Middle East Policy Council, Winter 2014, Volume XXI, Number 4.

[38] Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014.

[39] Rohan Gunaratna, *Global Threat Assessment - New Threats on the Horizon?*, Volume 7, Issue 1, January/February 2015, Counter Terrorist Trends Analysis, International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore.

[40] Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014.

[41] *Ibid*

[42] Rohan Gunaratna, *Global Threat Assessment - New Threats on the Horizon?*

[43] *Islamic State*, IHS Jane's 360, Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism http://www.janes.com/security/terrorism-insurgency

[44] Rohan Gunaratna, *Global Threat Assessment - New Threats on the Horizon?*

[45] *Islamic State*, IHS Jane's 360, Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism http://www.janes.com/security/terrorism-insurgency

[46] Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014

[47] Rohan Gunaratna, *Global Threat Assessment - New Threats on the Horizon?*

the Iraqi province of Diyala in the East,[48] with Abu Bakr as Caliph Ibrahim. According to Barrett, theoretically, by his self-appointment as Caliph, he had claimed leadership not just of the Islamic State, but also of every other salafist/takfiri group in the world.[49]

The Ideology of *Daesh*

The ideology behind *Daesh* is essentially based on two of the most influential reactionary scholars; Ibn Taymiyya and Muhammad ibn Abd al Wahhab, who advocated the absolute rejection of any changes since the times of Prophet Muhammad. The understanding of their faith is driven by a literal reading of the Quran and the Hadith, and an attitude that any diversion represents blasphemy which had to be eradicated. Hence, according to them, anyone who does not conform to their rigid interpretation is to be targeted for criticism and punishment. Their legitimacy in doing what they do is based on their perception that they are "reviving Islam, returning it to its pure form, uniting the Muslim world under truly Islamic rule, and so restoring the dignity and greatness of its people". All this is based on their desire to "fulfill the orders of God".[50]

Daesh's Spending and Financing

The UN has labeled *Daesh* as the "world's wealthiest organization."[51] In terms of financing their operations, *Daesh* is unique in its ability to tap a variety of sources in ways unlike any terrorist group before it, among them being "revenue from oil sales in Iraq and Syria, taxes and extortion on businesses and individuals, tolls on commercial road traffic, donations[52], the sale of captured equipment and the operation of stolen factories." They are also involved in activities such as Kidnapping for Ransom (KFR), looting, extortion and the protection money racket.[53] The UN highlights this by reiterating that the group's source of funding is diverse and is derived from both "natural and economic resources of the territories it occupies (including oil fields and refineries and agricultural land)," and also by its activities ranging from "bank robbery,

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[48] *Islamic State*, IHS Jane's 360, Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism http://www.janes.com/security/terrorism-insurgency

[49] Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014.

[50] *Ibid*

[51] *Report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat,* United Nations Security Council, S/2016/92, 29 January 2016.

[52] Kate Brannen, *Pentagon: Oil No Longer the Islamic State's Main Source of Revenue*, The Cable, 3 February 2015, http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/03/pentagon-oil-no-longer-the-islamic-states-main-source-of-revenue/ (Retrieved on 14 November 2015).

[53] Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014

extortion, confiscation of property, donations from foreign terrorist fighters (to) the looting of antiquities."[54]

Given the geographical location, oil is certainly a significant source of income for *Daesh*. In July 2014, *Daesh* seized control of the Al-Omar oil field, said to be the largest in Syria. This was followed by several other oil wells in the Swedan Jazeera Badeya area of Deir ez Zour governorate. The importance of controlling oil for *Daesh* is two-fold. Firstly, it provides the group with a substantial source of funding to finance its operations. Secondly, the seizure of these oil and gas fields means that *Daesh* is also able to strategically deny revenue to the al-Assad's government.[55] The UN estimated that the income *Daesh* has derived from oil and associated products in 2015 was approximately USD400 million to USD500 million.[56] However, it has also been observed that due to the measures taken by both internal and external parties such as "air strikes on oil refineries and tanks, the blocking of smuggling routes and the sale and purchase of oil," *Daesh*'s ability to depend on oil to finance its activities could see a downturn in 2016.[57]

It has also been reported that the group was able to seize approximately USD430 million from the Central Bank in Mosul and other financial institutions after it was captured.[58] The UN reported that cash taken from 90 branches located in the Iraqi provinces under its control totaled USD1 billion.[59] In June 2013, it was estimated that the militants were earning approximately USD1,000,000 to USD1,500,000 per month in the city of Mosul in the Ninawa province by obtaining protection money from small-scale shop owners, pharmacies, gas stations, supermarkets, and goldsmiths, and threatening violence against them unless they complied.[60]

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[54] *Report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat,* United Nations Security Council, S/2016/92, 29 January 2016.

[55] *Islamic State*, IHS Jane's 360, Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism http://www.janes.com/security/ terrorism-insurgency

[56] *Report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat,* United Nations Security Council, S/2016/92, 29 January 2016.

[57] *Ibid*

[58]*Terrence McCoy, ISIS just stole $425 million, Iraqi governor says, and became the 'world's richest terrorist group',* 12 June 2014, The Washington Post, *https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2014/06/12/isis-just-stole-425-million-and-became-the-worlds-richest-terrorist-group/*
(Retrieved on 25 March 2016).

[59] *Report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat,* United Nations Security Council, S/2016/92, 29 January 2016.

[60] *Islamic State*, IHS Jane's 360, Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism http://www.janes.com/security/ terrorism-insurgency

Daesh also was said to be extorting approximately 8 million people living under its control and legitimises this by calling it *zakat* or religious tax. The tax is said to be at least "2.5 per cent of the capital earned from businesses, goods and agricultural products" and also from "services of contractors and traders in Iraq's western and northern provinces and from trucks entering the territories under (*Daesh*) control."[61]

Daesh has also been involved in black market sales[62] such as smuggling various raw materials stolen from government depots as well as plundering and looting architectural sites and selling the antiquities it had found.[63] *Daesh* also obtained funds from ransom payments through its kidnapping activities. The UN estimates that *Daesh* received between USD35 million to USD45 million in 2014.[64]

As seen, their ability to diversify their funding sources has meant that *Daesh* has been able to remain solvent despite the numerous attempts by the US-led coalition (such as targeting *Daesh* held oil refineries) to cripple their finance.[65] All in all, the external estimates of the group's income was approximately USD1 million[66] to USD3 million per day[67] and its assets were estimated to be between USD1.3 to 2 billion[68].

The ability of *Daesh* to pay its recruits is also significant. It was reported in September 2014 that fighters were able to receive a basic salary of approximately USD400 per month, with an additional USD100 for every wife and USD50 for every child.[69] These figures seem to differ depending on the nationality of the fighters. In addition to that, fighters and their families received free housing, medical care, utility services, and regular grocery allowances, as well as pay no tax. It was also said that foreign fighters also reportedly receive a one-off bonus for having emigrated to join the group. In comparison, monthly salaries from other groups in Syria were reported to be lower (approximately USD150) in early 2013 and would often times be unpaid for months.[70]

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[61] *Report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat,* United Nations Security Council, S/2016/92, 29 January 2016.

[62] Kate Brannen, *Pentagon: Oil No Longer the Islamic State's Main Source of Revenue*.

[63] Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014

[64] *Report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat,* United Nations Security Council, S/2016/92, 29 January 2016.

[65] Kate Brannen, *Pentagon: Oil No Longer the Islamic State's Main Source of Revenue.*

[66] *Ibid*

[67] Ken Dilanian, *Islamic State Group's War Chest Is Growing Daily*, The Big Story, 15 September 2014, Http://Bigstory.Ap.Org/Article/Islamic-State-Groups-War-Chest-Growing-Daily-0 quoted in Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014.

[68] *Ibid*

[69] *Islamic State*, IHS Jane's 360, Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism http://www.janes.com/security/terrorism-insurgency

[70] *Ibid*

Alliances and Pledges of Allegiance

When *Daesh* proclaimed on 29 June 2014 that it had re-established the caliphate with Abu Bakar al-Baghdadi as Caliph Ibrahim, it made a global call to all Muslims to give their oath of loyalty and obedience to Baghdadi to support him, and specifically called on "the soldiers of... [other] organisations" to pledge allegiance to the group[71].

In this regard, it is pertinent to note that there has been a significant increase of groups that have pledged allegiance to *Daesh*. The UN reported that as of 15 December 2015, there were 34 groups that had done so and that this number would continue to increase in 2016. According to the UN, this was a grave concern as such groups "appear to be emulating (*Daesh*'s) tactics of carrying out attacks on its behalf."[72]

Daesh and the Media

Daesh has had tremendous success in terms of its ability to exploit the media. This is a carefully crafted, deliberate and calculated move[73]. Its ability to have such a profound influence to the extent of radicalising and recruiting thousands of FTF in a conflict that is essentially an internal one (a Syrian civil war), has been possible, due to a large extent because of its ability to reach such diverse groups of people via the social media. *Daesh* is essentially "crowd sourcing its propaganda"[74] and countering this is extremely challenging.[75]

Through its propaganda, *Daesh* has 'generated a comprehensive brand' that essentially 'offers an alternate way of living.' This brand consists of six different narrative elements: brutality, mercy, victimhood, war, belonging and utopianism.[76] These six components are comprehensively pushed and promoted, through various ways and mediums to its audience.

The media push by *Daesh* is headed by Abu Amr al Shami (Amr al Absi, Abu al Athir,

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[71] *Ibid*

[72] *Report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat,* United Nations Security Council, S/2016/92, 29 January 2016.

[73] Charlie Winter, *The Virtual 'Caliphate': Understanding Islamic State's Propaganda Strategy*, Quilliam Foundation, July 2015 http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/the-virtual-caliphate-understanding-islamic-states-propaganda-strategy.pdf (Retrieved on 14 November 2015).

[74] Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014.

[75] *Online activism and social media usage among Indonesian extremists*, Report No. 24, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC), 30 October 2015.

[76] Charlie Winter, *The Virtual 'Caliphate': Understanding Islamic State's Propaganda Strategy*.

Abu al Asir), a Syrian born in Saudi Arabia.[77] He controls numerous "writers, bloggers and researchers" who focus on global media in general and social media in particular. The modus operandi is for the bloggers to tweet links of videos, which are subsequently disseminated to a wider audience. While the official spokesman for *Daesh* is Abu Mohammad al Adnani (Taha Sobhi Falaha); his role is relatively limited as *Daesh* employs the 'crowdsourcing of messages' technique.[78] Vis-a-vis this technique, the media wing of the *Daesh* produces numerous types and kinds of 'slickly made and shocking'[79] media material that is subsequently disseminated to radicalise, gain sympathy and support, act as a propaganda tool, spread fear amongst its perceived enemies and to recruit. Also, by allowing its propaganda to be outsourced, *Daesh* achieves the strategic aim of countering the authorities' power to curtail its content.[80]

Nevertheless, *Daesh*'s spokesman, Abu Mohammad al Adnani played a very prominent role in response to the US efforts to form a coalition against his organisation. He released a detailed statement online on 21 September 2014 entitled *Indeed Your Lord Is Ever Watchful*,[81] in which he threatened retaliatory attacks against Western civilian and military personnel in their homelands, as well as urging Sunni Muslims in the Middle East and North Africa to "rise against" its army and government forces. He also warned that the US involvement in Iraq would draw the country into a protracted conflict with the group, stating, "*O Obama, you claimed that the hand of America was long and could reach wherever it willed. Then know that our knife is sharp and hard. It cuts off the hands and strikes the neck*." On behalf of *Daesh*, al-Adnani also warned that they would directly retaliate inside the US, claiming that the conflict "*will come to your homeland by Allah's permission*".[82]

Daesh's practice of publishing propaganda videos depicting the execution of foreign nationals continued into early 2015. On 13 January 2015, *Daesh* released a video showing a Russian national and a Kazakh national being shot dead by a child.[83]

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[77] http://www.treasury.gov/ofac/downloads/prgrmlst.txt. Quoted in Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014

[78] Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014

[79] *Tracking Islamic State's media output: The IS media machine*, The Economist, 8 October 2015, http://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2015/10/tracking-islamic-states-media-output (Retreived on 14 November 2015).

[80] Charlie Winter, *The Virtual 'Caliphate': Understanding Islamic State's Propaganda Strategy*.

[81] *Islamic State*, IHS Jane's 360, Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism http://www.janes.com/security/ terrorism-insurgency

[82] Robert Spencer, *Islamic State: "We will conquer your Rome, break your crosses, and enslave your women, by the permission of Allah*", Jihad Watch, http://www.jihadwatch.org/2014/09/islamic-state-we-will-conquer-your-rome-break-your-crosses-and-enslave-your-women-by-the-permission-of-allah (Retrieved on 11 December 2015).

[83] *Islamic State*, IHS Jane's 360, Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism http://www.janes.com/security/ terrorism-insurgency

On 24 January 2015, *Daesh* released a video statement showing kidnapped Japanese journalist Kenji Goto holding an image purportedly showing the beheaded body of fellow hostage and Japanese national Haruna Yukawa. The statement added that Goto would be killed if Jordanian authorities did not release Saijida al-Rishawi, a female alleged would-be suicide bomber who took part in a failed suicide attack in Jordan's capital Amman in 2005. In a subsequent audio statement released by the group on 26 January, a man identifying himself as Goto stated that Jordanian pilot Lieutenant Moaz Youssef al-Kasasbeh, who was captured by the *Daesh* in Al-Raqqah in Syria's Al-Raqqah governorate on 24 December 2014, would be killed if al-Rishawi was not released. A video purportedly showing Goto's beheading was released online on 31 January 2015.[84] The Jordanian pilot Lieutenant Moaz Youssef al-Kasasbeh was later burned alive in an elaborately staged execution video released on 3 February 2015.[85]

On 15 February 2015, *Daesh* released a video showing the beheading of 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians, kidnapped in two attacks in December 2014 and January 2015 on a beach reportedly near the capital Tripoli in Libya. On 19 April 2015, *Daesh* released a 29-minute video showing the killing of at least 28 Ethiopian Christians in two separate areas of Libya. The video showed 16 of the captives being shot dead in a desert area in the South, while 12 others beheaded on a beach in the East of Syria.[86] Hence, their "high-definition depictions of the most abhorrent brutality on an industrial scale" has been "digitalised and brought firmly into the 21st century".[87]

The Al Hayat Media Centre has been used extensively to obtain foreign support and sympathy. It plays the role of a "multilingual recruitment channel" while simultaneously providing huge amounts of media material. For example, "Mujatweets," is a high-definition propaganda video series targeting supporters and recruits from the West. The effectiveness of such propaganda is disconcerting particularly when we note that Neumann indicated that the number of Western European fighters had increased from 500 in April 2013 to nearly 4,000 in 2015, which translated to an eight-fold increase in less than two years.[88] The Al Hayat Media Centre also provides English subtitles for videos disseminated by other *Daesh* media channels.[89] It is also significant to note that each province under *Daesh* has its own

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[84] *Ibid.*

[85] *Jordan pilot hostage Moaz al-Kasasbeh 'burned alive'*, BBC News, 3 February 2015 ,http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-31121160

[86] *Islamic State*, IHS Jane's 360, Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism http://www.janes.com/security/ terrorism-insurgency

[87] Charlie Winter, *The Virtual 'Caliphate': Understanding Islamic State's Propaganda Strategy*.

[88] Peter R. Neumann, *Western European Foreign Fighters in Syria: An Overview* in Countering Violent *Extremism: Developing an Evidence-Base for Policy and Practise*, edited by Sara Zeiger & Anne Aly, Curtin University, 2015.

[89] Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014.

media outlet, thereby allowing it to put out messages that resonate with the local populace.[90] While *Daesh* has yet to have a province in Southeast Asia, it is significant to note that *Katibah Nusantara* has been able to translate *Daesh* material from Arabic into Bahasa Indonesia and has also been able to sub-title extremist videos, even "setting a record of 20 videos in a month" under the Al Hayat Media Centre.[91]

Daesh also has its own newspaper, the Islamic State News (ISN), which is a six-page PDF picture-based commentary in English[92] that can be found on "independent, free, web-hosting sites." There is also the Islamic State Report (ISR), also known as "An Insight into the Islamic State," which contains news about IS events and opinions.

Daesh issued its magazine *Dabiq* on 8 July 2014. It bills itself as a "periodical magazine focusing on the issues of *Tawhid* (unity), *Manhaj* (truth-seeking), *Hijrah* (migration), *Jihad* (holy war) and *Jama'ah* (community). [93] The name *Dabiq* is said to refer to a location in Northern Syria where it was said that the Ottoman Empire was victorious over the Egyptian Mamluk Empire. However, Abu Musab al Zaqawi was said to have referred to the Hadith which predicts that *Dabiq* would be the place where Islam would emerge triumphant 'over the infidels' that would subsequently lead to Islamic world domination and the end of times.[94]

It is significant that we consider the intended audiences for *Daesh*'s propaganda. Winters from the Quilliam Foundation, highlights that *Daesh*'s audience can be categorised into (i) the international public, (ii) its own active members, (iii) potential recruits, (iv) disseminators, (v) proselytisers and (vi) enlisters.[95] Ironically, the main purpose of targeting the *international public* is to cause a sense of moral outrage that inevitably leads to condemnation. This action often times has the unintended consequence of polarising public opinion that could subsequently pressure their

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[90]   *Al-Monitor*, http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/08/is-clinton-atrocities-social-media-baghdadi-mccain.html. Quoted in Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014

[91] V. Arianti and Jasminder Singh, *ISIS' Southeast Asia Unit: Raising the Security Threat*, RSIS Commentary, 19 October 2015, https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/CO15220.pdf (Retrieved on 18 March 2016).

[92] *New ISIS Media Company Addresses English, German and French-Speaking Westerners*, Jihad and Terrorism Threat Monitor, 23 June 2014. http://www.memrijttm.org/new-isis-media-company-targets-english-german-and-french-speaking-westerners.html (Retrieved on 20 March 2016).

[93] The Clarion Project, http://www.clarionproject.org/news/islamic-state-isis-isil-propaganda-magazine-dabiq# (Retrieved on 9 November 2015).

[94] *Dabiq: What Islamic State's New Magazine Tells Us about Their Strategic Direction, Recruitment Patterns and Guerilla Doctrine*
http://www.jamestown.org/programs/tm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news
%5D=42702&cHash=0efbd71af77fb92c064b9403dc8ea838#.U-JY7FYkhZg.
Quoted in Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014

[95] Charlie Winter, *The Virtual 'Caliphate': Understanding Islamic State's Propaganda Strategy*.

respective governments to limit their offensive against *Daesh*. Given the diversity of its own *active members*, *Daesh* has developed a 'buffet' of themes which has the potential to appeal to each specific type of member. The primary focus has been two-fold. Firstly, highlighting the religious legitimacy of *Daesh* as the caliphate and secondly, *Daesh* as the revolutionary movement resisting the enemy. Given its need for continuous recruits, *Daesh*'s pitch for *potential recruits* mirrors its appeal for its own active members. Numerous narratives are developed and disseminated, thereby allowing its message to reach and impact a wide field of potential recruits. An essential target audience for *Daesh* is its *disseminators*, without whom, the group's reach would have been limited to Syria and Iraq and most likely confined to just the Arabic language.

The disseminators play the crucial role of 'feeding the proselytisers, securing their commitment, fertilising their environment with new ideas and, crucially, facilitating the Islamic State echo chamber by opening it up to others.' While disseminators support *Daesh*, they essentially act on their own. *Proselytisers,* on the other hand, willfully join the group with the express intention to identify susceptible individuals, cajoling them to join, planting in them seeds of doubt on the efficacy and viability of the current situation in international politics and finally attempting to persuade them that in such situations, *Daesh* offers the best alternative. While the disseminators and proselytizers are pushing an idea, the actual task of getting potential recruits to take up specific roles in *Daesh* falls onto the *enlisters*, who provide detailed, specific logistical information for would-be recruits. Through *Daesh*'s propaganda on the social media, they play the crucial role of bridging the gap from the 'bedroom to the battlefield.' [96]

While a direct link between the effectiveness of the media campaign strategy and the increase of recruits has yet to be clearly demonstrated, it can nevertheless be argued that *Daesh* materials, particularly through the social media,[97] are gaining a greater reach. For example, on 16 September 2014, *Daesh* issued an hour-long video through its al Hayat Media called "Flames of War" and subsequently posted the links in several places on the file sharing site *justpaste.it*. These links were then tweeted out to tens of thousands of online supporters, who subsequently re-tweeted the links and created new pages and links on justpaste.it. Added to that, the video was also uploaded to YouTube via numerous accounts.[98] It is disconcerting to note that just "one randomly

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[96] Charlie Winter, *The Virtual 'Caliphate': Understanding Islamic State's Propaganda Strategy*.

[97] Ahmed S. Hashim, *The Impact of The Islamic State in Asia*, Policy Report, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, February 2015.

[98] Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group.

selected page promoting the video among dozens of others, recorded 18,034 views within seven hours on 18 September 2014.[99] Winters sums it up well when he says,

> "*with all its complexity and gloss, the organisation's propaganda is not singularly responsible for radicalising individuals, let alone their joining the jihadist cause abroad or carrying out attacks at home. That being said, it does catalyse the Islamist extremist's passage from tacit supporter to active member.*"[100]

Daesh Attacks

Daesh, after being declared a caliphate by Al Baghdadi in June 2014 was reported to have conducted or inspired more than 70 terrorist attacks in 17 countries outside Syria and Iraq. These attacks have led to at least 1,200 killed and more than 1,700 injured.[101] It was reported in the New York Times that the first such attack outside Syria and Iraq was carried out in Melbourne, Australia when "an 18-year old ISIS sympathizer was shot dead after stabbing two counterterrorism officers outside a Melbourne police station."[102] Among the countries that have been attacked include Afghanistan, Algeria, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, France, Indonesia, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States and Yemen. [103] [104]

A significant attack in Europe was seen in November 2015, when *Daesh* inspired recruits killed 130 people in several locations across Paris. The French authorities were of the opinion that *Daesh* in Syria planned the attacks, and that the operation was planned in Belgium. *Daesh* stated that it had attacked Paris in order to punish "crusader" France for its air strikes against "Muslims in the lands of the Caliphate" -

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[99] *Ibid*.

[100] Charlie Winter, *The Virtual 'Caliphate': Understanding Islamic State's Propaganda Strategy*.

[101] Ray Sanchez, Tim Lister, Mark Bixler, Sean O'Key, Michael Hogenmiller and Mohammed Tawfeeq, *ISIS goes global: Over 70 attacks in 20 countries*, CNN, 18 February 2016, http://edition.cnn.com/2015/12/17/world/mapping-isis-attacks-around-the-world/ (Retrieved on 18 March 2016).

[102] Karen Yourish, Derek Watkins, Tom Giratikanon, *Recent Attacks Demonstrate Islamic State's Ability To Both Inspire And Coordinate Terror*, New York Times, 14 January 2016, http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/06/17/world/middleeast/map-isis-attacks-around-the-world.html?_r=0 (Retrieved on 19 March 2016).

[103] Ray Sanchez, Tim Lister, Mark Bixler, Sean O'Key, Michael Hogenmiller and Mohammed Tawfeeq, *ISIS goes global: Over 70 attacks in 20 countries*.

[104] Karen Yourish, Derek Watkins, Tom Giratikanon, *Recent Attacks Demonstrate Islamic State's Ability To Both Inspire And Coordinate Terror*.

their language for Iraq and Syria and that the attack "targeted the capital of prostitution and obscenity, the carrier of the banner of the Cross in Europe: Paris."[105]

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[105] Laurence Peter, *Paris attacks: Key questions after Abaaoud killed*, BBC News, 24 November 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34866144 (Retrieved on 11 December 2015).

2. *DAESH* IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Outline

This chapter will narrow the focus to *Daesh*'s presence in the Southeast Asian region taking into consideration the statements and justifications given by leaders and leading academics in the field on the potential of countries in this region being a '*Daesh* satellite state' or even a 'distant caliphate.'

Introduction

In May 2015, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong highlighted that Southeast Asia had emerged as a "key recruitment center" for ISIS. Prime Minister Lee highlighted that, "The threat is no longer over there; it is over here."[106] What was significant however, was Prime Minister Lee's observation on the possibility of *Daesh* establishing a base here, saying, "it is not-so far-fetched that ISIS could establish a base somewhere in the region, in a geographical area under its physical control like in Syria or Iraq…That would pose a serious threat to the whole of Southeast Asia."[107]

This was further echoed by Gunaratna who was of the view that "ISIS is determined to declare at least one province in Asia in 2016," warning that should *Daesh* gain such a foothold, it would subsequently "present far-reaching security implications for the stability and prosperity for a rising Asia."[108] Gunaratna had even singled out the Philippines and specifically Mindanao as the possible epicenter of *Daesh* activity in Southeast Asia saying, "the next step ISIS is likely to take is the proclamation of *wilayat* (*Daesh* satellite state)[109] in Mindanao.".[110]

In November 2015, in the wake of the Paris attacks, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong warned Singaporeans that such an attack could happen in Singapore and that they had to be psychologically prepared for such an eventuality. What was

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[106] Prashanth Parameswaran**,** *Singapore Warns of Islamic State Base in Southeast Asia*, The Diplomat, 30 May 2015. http://thediplomat.com/2015/05/singapore-warns-of-islamic-state-base-in-southeast-asia/ (Retrieved on 27 February 2016).
[107] *Ibid*
[108] *Ibid*
[109] Rohan Gunaratna, *Islamic State branches in Southeast Asia*, Pacific Forum, CSIS, Number 7, 19 January 2016. http://csis.org/files/publication/160119_PacNet_1607.pdf (Retrieved on 27 February 2016).
[110] Maria A. Ressa, *Experts warn PH: Don't underestimate ISIS*, Rappler, 13 January 2016, http://www.rappler.com/nation/118850-experts-warn-ph-not-to-underestimate-isis. (Retrieved on 27 February 2016).

significant was Prime Minister Lee's observation that, "we are in the middle of a region (where) ISIS is active," referring to the Southeast Asian region.[111]

Why Southeast Asia?

Extremism is Southeast Asia however, is not a new phenomenon but was particularly seen in the 1990s, when the mostly local militant groups were exposed to groups beyond the region. This was due to several reasons, chiefly among them being increased contact between local groups in the region and those beyond, the growing desire among certain elements in the region to create a pan-Islamic Southeast Asia, frustration with the perceived secular governments and the return of the 'Afghan Alumni or terrorist veterans who had fought the Soviet Union in Afghanistan.[112]

Daesh places importance in a particular geographical area by normally expanding its activities through the setting up of its branches in those areas. The act of setting up its branches is determined by how strategically significant and important is that particular locality in furthering its interests and/or by the acceptance or willingness of home-grown groups to be part of the organisation; submitting to its leadership and sharing its aspirations.

However, it is also significant to note that not all groups that have pledged their allegiance to *Daesh* have been officially accepted by the organisation. For example, there are groups that have pledged *bai'ah* to Al Baghdadi but have yet to get a response from *Daesh*. On the other hand, it is possible that the relationship between *Daesh* and a local group is deemed to be credible and has reached a significant mile-stone, should there be mutual and public recognition between the two entities.

This mutual and public recognition between *Daesh* and certain groups have clearly taken place in Southeast Asia.

Impact to Southeast Asia

In the case of the Philippines, there were lengthy discussions and negotiations in 2014-2015, between local groups (that had already pledged its allegiance to Al Baghdadi) and *Daesh*'s *Shura* Council. In January 2016, *Daesh* made an announcement through its official channel *Al-Naba'* on the unification of the "battalions" of God's fighters

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[111] Walter Sim, *Be mentally prepared to deal with terror attack if it happens: PM Lee*, The Straits Times, 17 November 2015, http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/be-mentally-prepared-to-deal-with-terror-attack-if-it-happens-pm-lee

[112] Akash S. Goud, *Rise of Islamic State in Southeast Asia: What it Means for the Region*, India Writes, http://www.indiawrites.org/diplomacy/rise-of-islamic-state-in-southeast-asia-what-it-means-for-region/

("mujahidin") in the Philippines.[113] Four groups had pledged the *bai'ah* to al Baghdadi and they include[114] :

➢ The *Ansar Al-Shariah* Battalion that was led by Abu Anas Al-Muhajir (alias Abraham). This battalion was tasked to be in charge of laws and other matters pertaining to jurisprudence ;
➢ The *Ma'rakah Al-Ansar* Battalion that was led by Abu Ammar;
➢ The *Ansarul Khilafah Battalion* that was led by Abu Sharifah; and
➢ The *Al Harakatul Islamiyyah Battalion* based in Basilan that was led by Isnilon Hapilon.

Daesh's *Shura* Council then decided to appoint Isnilon Hapilon, the leader of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in Basilan to lead the so-called Islamic State in the Philippines.[115] The formation of *Katibah Nusantara* and its growing significance both in the Southeast Asian region as well as in Syria and Iraq further strengthens the importance that *Daesh* has placed on this region. The objective of the *Katibah Nusantara* is to assist *Daesh* to establish an Islamic state in Iraq and Syria. The unit comprises militant fighters from both Indonesia and Malaysia.

Australian Attorney-General George Brandis warned that *Daesh* was working to boost its presence with dreams of creating a 'distant caliphate' in Indonesia.[116] He was quoted to have said that, "ISIS has ambitions to elevate its presence and level of activity in Indonesia, either directly or through surrogates." He went on to say that, "ISIS has a declared intention to establish caliphates beyond the Middle East, provincial caliphates in effect. It has identified Indonesia as a location of its ambition." According to Australian authorities, while the possibility of *Daesh* creating a caliphate in Indonesia was still low, they were nevertheless 'deeply worried' that the group might establish a 'permanent foothold' in Indonesia.[117]

The issue of returning Indonesian, Malaysian and possible Filipino FTF is also of great concern and as the UNSC noted, they have the potential "to pose a serious threat to their States of origin."[118] Jasminder Singh outlines the three-fold danger posed by them.[119] Firstly, the returnees, after being exposed to *Daesh* would subsequently then

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[113] Rohan Gunaratna, *Islamic State branches in Southeast Asia*.
[114] *Ibid*
[115] It is significant to note that Radulan Sahiron and not Isnilon Hapilon is the leader of the ASG. Yet it was Isnilon Hapilon that was appointed to lead the so-called Islamic State in the Philippines. This could signify a possible split in the ASG.
[116] *IS sets sight on Indonesia*, The Star, 23 December 2015.
[117] *Ibid*
[118] *Statement by the President of the Security Council*, S/PRST/2015/11, 29 May 2015, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/PRST/2015/11 . (Retrieved on 7 March 2016).
[119] Jasminder Singh, *IS returnees pose a danger*, New Straits Times, 22 January 2016.

work towards promoting the 'ISIS-ification'[120] of Islamic tenets and practices, possibly leading to cognitive and ideological shifts that could promote inter and intra-religious conflicts in this region. Secondly, there is the clear and present danger that these returnees would be viewed as heroes by the locals and accepted as 'natural leaders' of their respective home-based militant organisations. Having the 'street-cred' and prestige of being a fighter in *Bumi Allah* (God's land), could enhance their capacity and capability to be a drawing magnet for *Daesh* and further radicalisation in the region. Finally, their presence in their home countries, coupled with their experience in battle, their skills in weapons handling and bomb-making, their established networking with other *Daesh* fighters in the region and their higher threshold for violence gained when fighting in Syria and Iraq could all translate to them planning and executing terrorist attacks in the three countries.

Singh then hypotheses three possible actions by the returnees. Firstly, they 'regroup in the Philippines' utilising established networks such as *Jamaah Islamiyah* in Indonesia and the ASG in the Philippines. Secondly, they 'resume violent and sectarian conflict' in Indonesia and possibly other parts of Southeast Asia. Thirdly, they target foreigners and foreign-interests such as embassies, hotels and shopping centres in the region. Fourthly, they revive dormant groups such as *Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia* (KMM) and Rohingya Solidarity Organisation and escalate domestic violence against governments they deem to be secular or pro-West.[121]

The ability of *Daesh* to further its ideological goals through the use of local terror groups or by utilising the returning FTF is of concern. This phenomena of glocalisation'[122], whereby *Daesh* is able to bring its global agenda to a very local level is something that warrants serious attention and will be considered in greater detail.

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[120] *Ibid*

[121] Jasminder Singh*, Katibah Nusantara: Islamic State's Malay Archipelago Combat Unit*, RSIS Commentary, No. 126, 26 May 2015, https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/CO15126.pdf (Retrieved on 2 December 2015).

[122] *Ibid*.

3.   *DAESH* IN INDONESIA

Outline

This chapter traces the history, evolution and operations of *Daesh* in Indonesia. It looks at the key idealogues, significant developments on the ground and the subsequent reaction of both the population and other terror organisations towards *Daesh*. Specific issues such as prison radicalisation, the formation of *Katibah Nusantara* and the way religion is used by *Daesh* are also explored. Finally, the Indonesian Government's response, particularly in terms of its deradicalisation programmes and legislation, is considered.

Introduction

The spread and influence of *Daesh* in Indonesia will have a significant impact not only on the radicalisation and recruitment in the country but also in neighbouring Malaysia and to a lesser extent, in the Philippines and Singapore as well.

Developments on the Ground

Building the *Daesh* Base

The support for *Daesh* that has been visibly seen include the *Daesh* Declaration by *Kongres Umat Islam Bekasi* (KUIB) at Muhammad Ramadhan Mosque Bekasi on 15 February 2014; the support rally for *Daesh* at Bundaran HI, Jakarta on 16 March 2014; the pledge of allegiance (*bai'ah*) to *Daesh* at UIN Jakarta Hall on 6 July 2014; *Daesh* declaration at Baitul Makmur Mosque, Sukoharjo, on 15 July 2014 and the support for *Daesh* in Ambon by *Ansharu Khilafah Islamiyah Jazirah al Muluk.*[123]

The Syrian crisis had been closely followed by radical groups in Indonesia since 2012[124] as indicated by former JI leader Abu Bakar Bashir's statement describing the conflict in

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[123] Petrus Reinhard Golose, Police Inspector General, National Counter-Terrorism Agency (BNPT) in a lecture titled "*Indonesian Perspectives - Challenge and Lessons Learned in Developing and Implementing Strategies and Measures for Countering Crime Related to Terrorism and Violent Extremism, and for Deradicalisation and Reintegration of Radicalized Individuals*" at the *Expert Group Meeting (EPG) on Implementing Effective Criminal Justice Responses to Counter Crimes Related to Terrorism and Violent Extremism*' in Vienna, Austria, 16 – 18 November 2015.

[124] Andrew Zammit, Muhammad Iqbal, *Indonesia's New Counter-Terrorism Challenges*, Terrorism Monitor Volume: 13 Issue: 18, 4 September 2015, http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=44335&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=7&cHash=d0733001ec5260e22fbdd0c5de5118b3#.Vl6yxqShddg (Retrieved on 2 December 2015).

Syria as a "university for jihad education."[125] The first Indonesian martyr, Riza Fardi (who studied at Al Mukmin, Ngruki), died fighting in Eastern Ghouta, Syria in November 2013 and was said to belong to the Suqour al-Izz Brigade.[126]

It was reported on 1 August 2014 in the *Jakarta Post*[127] that there was an eight-minute video on YouTube titled '*Join the Ranks*', which was posted on 23 July 2014.[128] In the video, a man named Abu Muhammad al-Indonesi (aka Bahrum Syah) gave a speech in Bahasa Indonesia claiming that it was "an obligation mandated by Allah for Muslims to participate in the fight" in Syria and Iraq.

In a 'public declarations of support for ISIS' session, he went on to say,

> "*We want everyone to understand that there is a far better option for the prosperity of all Muslims. This is not an empty offer but a genuine one that Allah is offering, a Muslim State. We have come to promote this state so that people will understand that the State already exists. At the same time, we want to tell the State that we, the Muslims of Indonesia, are with you, and that if you ask us to pledge allegiance, we are ready to do so.*"[129]

While such pledges were general in nature, on 16 April 2014, Aman Abdurrahman, a prominent ideologue, jailed for a failed terror plot[130], made an online pledge, stating:

> "*This is from your brothers and devoted followers, announcing our loyalty and pledge to our Amir, Commander of the Faithful Abu Bakar Al-Baghdadi, may Allah make him victorious, upon the law of Allah and the traditions of his Prophet, peace be upon him, in accordance with our capabilities, because we are far away from you and some of us are oppressed, incarcerated in the prison*

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[125] V. Arianti, *Indonesian Jihadists and Syria: Training Ground*? No. 193/2013, RSIS Commentary, 14 October 2013, http://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/CO13193.pdf (Retrieved on 2 December 2015).

[126] Solahudin, *Syria as Armageddon*, Inside Indonesia, http://www.insideindonesia.org/syria-as-armageddon (Retrieved on 2 December 2015).

[127] Ina Parlina, *ISIL endorsement videos draw public anxiety*, The Jakarta Post, Jakarta, 1 August 2014, http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/08/01/isil-endorsement-videos-draw-public-anxiety.html#sthash.aBYAJ8jz.dpuf (Retrieved on 19 October 2015).

[128] Sydney Jones, *Counter-terrorism and the rise of ISIS in 2014*, Tempo, 5 January 2015, http://www.understandingconflict.org/en/conflict/read/33/Counter-Terrorism-and-the-Rise-of-ISIS-in-2014 (Retrieved on 15 November 2015).

[129] Peter Chalk, *Black Flag Rising: ISIL in Southeast Asia and Australia*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), December 2015, https://www.aspi.org.au/publications/black-flag-rising-isil-in-southeast-asia-and-australia/Black-flag-rising_ISIL.pdf (Retrieved on 20 March 2016).

[130] Rendi A. Witular, *The rise of Aman Abdurrahman, IS master ideologue*, The Jakarta Post, 25 January 2016, http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2016/01/25/the-rise-aman-abdurrahman-is-master-ideologue.html (Retrieved on 18 March 2016).

of the Indonesian idolators (thaghut). And as we announce this bai'at of ours, we invite all those committed to the purity of the faith in Indonesia and all over the world to defend this State in any manner possible, whether by sending personnel, contributing wealth, spreading true news about the State, its religious precepts and its achievements, as well as exposing the conspiracies to undermine it through denials and lies. We must also take care of the families of the people who are going to fight for the State and teach their children so they will grow up to be mujahidin like their fathers".[131]

According to Ansyaad Mbai, the former National Counter-Terrorism Agency (BNPT) chairman, "Aman is IS's master ideologue in Indonesia. He has longed preached the *takfiri* doctrine, and IS has served his cause."[132]

When *Daesh* announced on 29 June 2014 the establishment of a caliphate with Abu Bakar Al-Baghdadi as its leader, pro-*Daesh* groups in Indonesia immediately jumped onto the band-wagon. Many allegiance ceremonies were held in Malang, Solo, Makassar, Mukomuko (Bengkulu), Lampung, East Kalimantan and other places. It was estimated that by the end of August 2014, an estimated 2,000 Indonesians had sworn such oaths. It must, however, be highlighted that not all who were present during such ceremonies knew what they were attending or the implications of what they were reciting. There was nevertheless criticism from other rival groups.[133] This opposition increased further when *Daesh* showcased its brutality claiming their actions in the name of Islam. Hence, it is significant to note that *Daesh* has had a tremendous impact on the internal dynamics of terrorist and extremists groups in Indonesia even to the extent that its arrival led to fissures and divisions among extremist leaders translating to the splintering of extremist organisations such as *Jamaah Anshorul Tauhid* (JAT).[134]

According to Indonesian National Police, JAT has produced four prominent figures. Firstly, Santoso, who reportedly leads the East Indonesia Mujahidin (MIT) based in Poso, Central Sulawesi. Secondly, Bachrumsyah, commander of the West Indonesia Mujahidin (MIB) who joined *Daesh* in Syria but is said to still have followers in greater Jakarta. Thirdly, Bahrun Naim, said to be behind the recent January attacks in Jakarta. Fourthly, Salim Mubarak At Tamimi, (aka Abu Jandal) who is also reported to have joined *Daesh* in Syria.[135] However, it must be noted that there remain discrepencies with regards to the names and the organisations they lead.

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[131] Reproduced at prisonerofjoy.blogspot.com/2014_04_01_archive.html. quoted in *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC).

[132] Rendi A. Witular, *The rise of Aman Abdurrahman, IS master ideologue*, The Jakarta Post.

[133] *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC).

[134] *Ibid*

[135] *The rise of IS idealogues*, The Star, 26 January 2016.

Counter-terrorism authorities in Indonesia[136] point to a schism among the terrorist organisations; between the groups that support *Daesh* and the groups that maintain support for *Al-Qaeda*. The groups that have aligned themselves with *Daesh* include *Mujahidin Indonesia Timur* (MIT), *Mujahidin Indonesia Barat* (MIB), *Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid* (JAT), *Forum Aktivis Syariat Islam* (FAKSI)/*Tauhid Waljihad*, *Garis Gerakan Reformis Islam/Tauhid Waljihad, Negara Islam Indonesia, Laskar Jundullah (KPSI Sulawesi*) and *Wahdah Islamiyah*. On the other hand, the groups that have still maintained their loyalty to *Al-Qaeda* include *Jamaah Ansharusy Syariah* (JAS)*, Jamaah Islamiyah* (JI) and *Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia* (MMI).

Abu Bakar Bashir and his Position on *Daesh*

The rivalry and division between the pro- *Daesh* and anti- *Daesh* groups was very prominent in the prison setting. Leaders like Aman Abdurrahman supported *Daesh* while others such as senior JI leaders like Abu Dujana, Zarkasih and Abu Tholut, were against *Daesh* and leaned towards the pro-Al Qaeda, Al-Nusra Front.

Hence, the position that would be taken by Abu Bakar Bashir in either supporting *Daesh* or otherwise was closely watched. The stakes were high because Bashir was so well known and the side that won him over would certainly have a valuable asset on their hands, with the potential of being able to draw not only his supporters but also others, who had yet to have taken a position with regards to supporting *Daesh* or otherwise.

Initially, Bashir took a 'wait-and-see' approach as both factions tried to win him over. While fellow inmates in the anti-*Daesh* group were too junior to have any influence on him, several senior JAT leaders such as Fuad Al Hazimi and Muhammad Achwan, as well as Bashir's sons, Abdurrahim and Abdur Rasyid, paid regular visits to the prison, trying to explain the 'details of the conditions' in Syria whilst urging him to 'stay neutral'.

However, the leaders of the pro-*Daesh* group in prison were 'very aggressive' in pushing their views and had the distinct advantage of meeting Bashir every day. Added to that, Aman Abdurrahman was said to have called Bashir from the Kembang Kuning prison in Nusa Kembangan for lengthy discussions via mobile phones to persuade him

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[136] Petrus Reinhard Golose, lecture titled "*Indonesian Perspectives - Challenge and Lessons Learned in Developing and Implementing Strategies and Measures for Countering Crime Related to Terrorism and Violent Extremism, and for Deradicalisation and Reintegration of Radicalized Individuals.*"

to support *Daesh*. In the end, the intense battle to get Bashir's support was won by the pro-*Daesh* group.[137]

Hence, on 2 July 2014, Bashir and other *Daesh* supporters took the pledge of allegiance to Al-Baghdadi[138] reiterating that they considered themselves 'part of his army and ready to obey the orders of the caliphate'.[139] In the letter pledging his loyalty, Bashir and his friends also requested that *Daesh* try and secure their freedom. Understandably, reports of Bashir's pledge of allegiance quickly spread, and the executive members of JAT went to the Kembang Kuning prison to seek clarification from Bashir. In a meeting on 10 July 2014, Bashir told the board that he had indeed supported *Daesh* but had withheld from taking the pledge of allegiance. He was also of the opinion that JAT members should be free to decide whether they supported *Daesh* or otherwise.

The uncertainty continued when Bashir's refusal to 'admit' that he had taken the pledge of allegiance to *Daesh* was not seen favourably by the pro-*Daesh* groups in prison, and they subsequently 'leaked the text of his pledge' which was then published the next day.[140] In a tit-for-tat retaliation, the JAT leadership then countered by issuing a statement that the news of Bashir's pledge was not true and that Bashir had denied ever making such a pledge when the JAT leadership had met with him. However, seeds of doubt were already planted among the JAT leadership on Bashir's integrity with regard to his affiliation to *Daesh*. They were also concerned about the possibility that Bashir could have been manipulated by pro-*Daesh* inmates and that he was not in a position to obtain a more balanced assessment on what was happening in Syria. Given this situation and in order to preempt any drastic decisions by Bashir, the religious and executive councils of JAT decided on 13 July 2014, that in the event a decision of the Amir (i.e. Bashir) was in 'violation of Islamic law', it was then 'forbidden for members to follow it'. The purpose of this ruling was to protect JAT members from any potential decision by Bashir to pledge support for *Daesh*.

This course of action naturally did not go well with Bashir, who saw it as an attempt 'to limit his authority'. Hence, on 17 July 2014, Bashir acknowledged that he had indeed pledged allegiance to Al-Baghdadi and further added that it was also mandatory for all JAT members to do the same, stating that those who refused would be asked to leave JAT. To consolidate his position, Bashir fired key JAT leaders and replaced them with

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[137] *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC).
[138] Petrus Reinhard Golose, lecture titled "*Indonesian Perspectives - Challenge and Lessons Learned in Developing and Implementing Strategies and Measures for Countering Crime Related to Terrorism and Violent Extremism, and for Deradicalisation and Reintegration of Radicalized Individuals.*"
[139] "*Bai'at Ikhwan Masjunin Di LP Pasir Putih Yang Mendukung Khilafah Islamiyah*", Al-mustaqbal.net, 11 July 2014 quoted in *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC).
[140] *Ibid*.

his allies. This led to a split, in which a few JAT leaders, including Bashir's own son Abdurrahim decided to form a new organisation called *Jamaah Ansharusy Syariah* (JAS) in August 2014. [141]

It was interesting to note that in January 2016, Abu Bakar Bashir had applied for a judicial review of his earlier conviction. In 2011, Bashir had been sentenced to 15 years in jail for helping fund a paramilitary group in Aceh. He had applied for a review on the basis that the funds he had collected were intended to assist the people in Palestine but had inadvertently gone to the Aceh paramilitary group without his knowledge. He however undermined his own case by admitting to know about the paramilitary group's training camp in Aceh. He was quoted to have said that, "the physical and weapons training in Aceh were aimed at defending Islam and Muslims in Indonesia and overseas, and were obligations Muslims must fulfill because it is God's order."[142] However, there were also reports from his lawyers that Bashir had withdrawn support for Daesh.[143]

Significant Developments

Indonesia's most wanted jihadist, Santoso, was a former JI member who became the head of JAT's Central Sulawesi affiliate in 2010. Describing himself as the 'Abu Musab al-Zarqawi of Indonesia,' he was said to be one of the earliest militants to pledge allegiance to *Daesh*.[144] In 2012, he was instrumental in the setting up of *Mujahidin Indonesia Timur* (MIT), a coalition of local jihadist groups in Poso.[145] His ability to attract recruits and support was not only confined to Indonesia, as demonstrated when the Indonesian police arrested four Uyghurs trying to join MIT.

It was reported that President Joko Widodo had made the arrest of Santoso, who had been on the run for the last three years, one of his national security priorities and had given his security forces until 9 January 2016 to arrest him.[146] However, he has yet to

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[141] *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC).

[142] *Jailed ulama fights conviction for aiding rebels*, New Straits Times, 13 January 2016.

[143] Wahyudi Soeriaatmadja, Bashir withdraws support for ISIS, The Straits Times, 9 January 2016, http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/bashir-withdraws-support-for-isis (Retrieved on 23 March 2016).

[144] *Indonesia's Lamongan Network: How East Java, Poso And Syria Are Linked*, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC), Report No. 18, 15 April 2015 http://file.understandingconflict.org/file/ 2015/04/IPAC_18_Lamongan_Network.pdf (Retrieved on 2 December 2015).

[145] Andrew Zammit, Muhammad Iqbal, *Indonesia's New Counter-Terrorism Challenges*, Terrorism Monitor Volume: 13 Issue: 18, 4 September 2015, http://www.jamestown.org/single/ ?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=44335&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=7&cHash=d0733001ec5260e22fbdd0c5de5 118b3#.Vl6yxqShddg (Retrieved on 2 December 2015).

[146] *Indonesian forces regroup to hunt 'high-profile' Santoso*, The Star Online, 12 January 2016, http://www.thestar.com.my/news/world/2016/01/12/terrorist-still-on-the-run-indonesian-forces-regroup-to-hunt-highprofile-santoso/ (Retrieved on 18 March 2016).

be captured and Indonesian security forces were planning to bring in 500 more police and military officers to reinforce the 1,600 personnel already looking for him. According to Harry Suprapto, spokesman for the Central Sulawesi Police, "a new operation called *Tinombala*……..will focus on Poso and the surrounding areas."[147] It was reported that Santoso and 31 of his followers, affiliated with the MIT, were said to be hiding in the forests of Central Sulawesi.[148] It was also reported in February 2016 that following the death of two suspected MIT couriers, the other group members were cornered as they were running low on supplies which subsequently led them to leave their hideouts in search for food. This was credited to Operation *Tinombala*, which was reported to have narrowed the MIT's 'space of movement.'[149] It is also significant to note that the operation conducted by the authorities will not just be focused on capturing Santoso but also to create awareness among the community on the *Pancasila* doctrine.[150]

There were several alleged *Daesh*-inspired incidents, including an explosion of a small chlorine bomb in a mall in the outskirts of Jakarta allegedly perpetrated by Syrian returnees on 23 February 2015 and the arrest of three men on 12 August 2015, allegedly planning an attack on police as well as several places of worship in Central Java during the Independence Day celebrations.[151] They were also said to be in possession of 21 improvised explosives and *Daesh*-related items.[152]

In late December 2015, it was reported that the Indonesian authorities had foiled separate plots to bomb *Syiah* communities and to target Christmas and New Year celebrations in Jawa and Sumatra. The authorities had arrested six men in Central and West Jawa who were either supporters or members of *Daesh*. Bomb-making materials and 'terror manuals' were seized while chemicals and weapons were found buried at one raid site in Solo.[153]

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[147] *Terrorist still on the run*, The Star, 12 January 2016.
[148] Ruslan Sangadji, *Police hunting IS leader Santoso and to launch new operation*, The Jakarta Post, 11 January 2016, http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2016/01/11/police-hunting-is-leader-santoso-launch-new-operation.html#sthash.XFKgUcSP.dpuf (Retrieved on 5 March 2016).
[149] *One killed as army corners terror group*, The Star, 2 March 2016.
[150] Yoanes Litha, *Operasi Tinombala 2016 Cegah Pengaruh Kelompok Santoso pada Masyarakat*, Voice of America, 20 January 2016. http://www.voaindonesia.com/content/operasi-tinombala-2016-cegah-pengaruh-kelompok-santoso-pada-masyarakat/3154434.html (Retrieved on 5 March 2016).
[151] Achmad Ibrahim, *3 Chinese Uighurs get 6 years over terrorism in Indonesia*, Associated Press, 13 July 2015, http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/07/13/3-chinese-uighurs-get-6-years-over-terrorism-indonesia.html#sthash.sDg0JSb9.dpuf (Retrieved on 2 December 2015).
[152] *RI, China hunting down Xinjiang terrorism suspects in Poso,* The Jakarta Post, 10 February 2015, http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/02/10/ri-china-hunting-down-xinjiang-terrorism-suspects-poso.html#sthash.QdFevfxC.dpuf (Retrieved on 2 December 2015).
[153] *Indonesia foils terror plots*, The Star, 21 December 2015.

Separately, it was reported that Indonesian police had stopped a major terrorist plot with the arrest of several men on 15 and 16 December 2015, who were planning to conduct a suicide bombing in Jakarta during the 2016 New Year celebrations. Indonesian police had arrested 13 alleged terrorists[154] over five islands in Jawa[155], among them being Asep Urip, a 31-year old teacher at an Islamic boarding school in central Jawa and his 35-year old student Zaenal; who was groomed as a candidate for a suicide bombing to be conducted on New Year's day in Jakarta. The authorities also seized chemicals, laboratory equipment, fertilizers, buckshot, spikes and a black flag inscribed with text 'similar to an ISIS flag.'[156] They were reported to have received funding from Syria.[157] The operation was reportedly sparked by a tip-off from the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).[158]

In this regard, it was reported that counter-terrorism officials were searching for the leaders of sympathisers across Indonesia as the earlier arrests had captured 'only subordinates' of *Daesh*.[159] According to Indonesian National Police spokesman, Anton Charliyan, the *Daesh*-linked group was based in Solo, Jawa and had spread its ideology to more than 1,000 supporters in the country.[160]

What was also of significance was the capture of a Muslim Uyghur, identified as Alli,[161] with a suicide bomb-vest on 23 December 2015 during the recent arrests. Saud Usman Nasution, the former head of Indonesia's National Counter-Terrorism Agency or *Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terorisme* (BNPT) was reported to have said that several Uyghurs had responded to the call by Santoso to join him. This development led Bilveer Singh to highlight the "external dimension to the existing homegrown terrorist threat."[162]

On 14 January 2016, nine militants linked to *Daesh* staged a coordinated bomb and gun attack on Thamrin Street in Jakarta's Central District. At 10.55 in the morning, the first attacker blew himself up at a Starbucks coffee shop. Two other terrorists outside the shop then started opening fire, killing a Canadian and wounding an Indonesian.[163]

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[154] *Indonesia working with China to stop Uighurs joining jihadist*, New Straits Times, 7 January 2016.
[155] *Terror plotters linked to IS*, New Straits Times, 28 December 2016.
[156] *New Year terror plot foiled- five held*, The Sun, 21 December 2015.
[157] *Terror plotters linked to IS*, New Straits Times, 28 December 2016.
[158] *Boost for anti-terror efforts*, The Star, 22 December 2015.
[159] *Australia: IS wants to build a distant caliphate*, New Straits Times, 23 December 2015.
[160] *Indonesia buru pemimpin militant IS tempatan*, Utusan Malaysia, 23 December 2015.
[161] Ruslan Sangadji, *Police hunting IS leader Santoso to launch new operation*, The Jakarta Post, 11 January 2016, http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2016/01/11/police-hunting-is-leader-santoso-launch-new-operation.html#sthash.XFKgUcSP.dpuf (Retrieved on 5 March 2016).
[162] *Indonesia working with China to stop Uighurs joining jihadist*, New Straits Times, 7 January 2016.
[163] *IS militants attack shopping mall*, New Straits Times, 15 January 2016.

The authorities then proceeded to engage them and the two attackers responded by throwing two grenades at the police. Minutes later, another two attackers rode a motorcycle towards a police post near the Sarinah shopping centre and blow themselves up there. In total, there were five explosions. Subsequently, the police found another six homemade bombs[164] and two pistols in the area.[165] At the end of the attacks, four terrorists and four civilians were killed with 30 more injured.[166]

Indonesian National Police Spokesman, Anton Charliyan reportedly said that based on the amount of bombs that the terrorists were prepared to use, "the plan was to attack people and follow it up with a larger explosion when more people gathered. But, thank God, it didn't happen."[167] General Tito Karnavian, the former Chief of the Jakarta Provincial Police reportedly said that the terrorists were members of *Katibah Nusantara*. He also identified Bahrun Naim (aka Singgih Tamtomo aka Abu Rayan)[168], as having orchestrated the attack from Syria, to prove he was capable of leading Katibah Nusantara.[169] Indonesia's Coordinating Minister for Security, Political and Legal Affairs, Luhut Panjaitan reportedly said that the weapons used in the attacks were smuggled from Mindanao, Southern Philippines to Poso, Indonesia.[170] Interestingly, in the same forum, the Minister added that USD800,000 was sent to Indonesian extremist groups. From that amount, USD100,000 came from Raqqa, Syria while the remaining USD700,000 came from Australia.[171]

General Karnavian was quoted saying that, "Bahrun Naim's role is crucial because he is the main link between the IS and elite groups and foot soldiers and cells in Indonesia."[172] He is also said to be an expert in the Information Communication Technology (ICT) field and that has allowed him to communicate and instruct those under him with greater ease. The Police have even been persuaded that this particular skill of Bahrun has enabled him to recruit more people.[173] He was also alleged to be the mastermind and the source of funding for several terrorist attacks in Indonesia.[174]

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[164] *Ibid*

[165] Kathy Quiano, Euan McKirdy and Ed Payne, *Jakarta attacks: Deadly blasts, shootout hit Indonesian capital*, CNN, 14 January 2016. http://edition.cnn.com/2016/01/13/asia/jakarta-gunfire-explosions/ (Retrieved on 5 March 2016).

[166] *Death toll climbs to eight*, New Straits Times, 18 January 2016.

[167] *IS militants attack shopping mall*, New Straits Times, 15 January 2016.

[168] *Jakarta attack planner has crucial role in IS, says cops*, The Star, 20 January 2016.

[169] Joe Cochranejan, *Many in Jakarta Seem to Shrug Off Terrorist Attack*, 15 January 2016, The New York Times, http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/16/world/asia/jakarta-bomb-attacks.html?_r=0 (Retrieved on 5 March 2016).

[170] *Funds coming from abroad*, The Star, 26 January 2016.

[171] *Indonesia terror groups get funds from Syria*, Australia, New Straits Times, 26 January 2016.

[172] *Jakarta attack planner has crucial role in IS, says cops*, The Star, 20 January 2016.

[173] *Kelicikan Bahrun Naim*, Utusan Malaysia, 22 January 2016.

[174] *Jakarta attack planner has crucial role in IS, says cops*, The Star.

Bahrun has also been actively blogging. In a post in August 2014, he praised an attempted attack in Solo and called for the so-called "lone wolves" to "rise up against the Indonesian archipelago". He was quoted to have written,

> *"Be lone wolves by whatever means you can. Bamboo sticks, lighters, sand, knives, glass and even stones will demand you act out on your pledge of allegiance. The earth and sky will witness if you were honest in your pledge or not."*

Following the Paris attacks in November 2015, he described the tragedy in which 130 people were killed as "astounding," and praised the perpetrators for their discipline, meticulous planning and willingness to sacrifice themselves. He was quoted to have written,

> *"Why were the attacks inspirational? First, a large number of people fell victim to the attack in Paris. Second, the attack was well planned in terms of target, timing and a courageous end to the attack. Only elite soldiers would use suicide vests rather than be captured or cornered."*[175]

Daesh claimed responsibility, saying that the attacks were carried out by "soldiers of the caliphate" who targeted citizens from the "crusader coalition."[176] Indonesian National Police Spokesman, Anton Charliyan, said that *Daesh* had issued a cryptic warning before the attacks and was quoted saying, "the warning (from *Daesh*) said that there will be a concert in Indonesia and it will be in the international news."[177]

The Jakarta attacks, like the ones in Paris, Istanbul and numerous other examples of *Daesh* targets demonstrate the group's Modus Operandi of targeting tourist attractions or urban centres that have many civilians.

Indonesians in Syria and Iraq

In November 2015, the authorities said that there were 129 confirmed Indonesian fighters in Iraq and Syria while 37 Indonesians had been killed in Iraq and Syria. Unconfirmed estimates of Indonesians in Syria and Iraq varied widely from 200 to

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[175] *Jakarta attacks: Profile of suspect Bahrun Naim,* BBC News, 14 January 2016. http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35316915 (Retrieved on 5 March 2016).
[176] *Jakarta attacks: Islamic State says it was responsible*, BBC News,14 January 2016 http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35312794 (Retrieved on 18 March 2016).
[177] *IS militants attack shopping mall*, New Straits Times, 15 January 2016.

more than 800[178] with conservative estimates putting the figure at 400[179]. At this point, six Indonesians were facing prosecution while one Indonesian fighter had been convicted. It was also significant to note that at least 11 FTF had entered Indonesia, with four of them (Ahmed Bozoglan, Ahmet Mahmut, Altinci Bayram and Tuzer Abdul Basit) were from Xinjiang, China. Also, 252 individuals were serving sentences in 24 prisons spread across Indonesia for their involvement in terrorism.[180]

For the Indonesian authorities, the main threats of returning Indonesians were the high likelihood that they would propagate *Daesh* ideology in Indonesia, their ability to train other terror groups in Indonesia with their newly acquired skills, the ability to now recruit potential Indonesian FTF to be sent to Iraq and Syria and finally their ability to be involved in terrorist activities in Indonesia.[181]

Katibah Nusantara

A development of great significance for both Indonesia and Malaysia with regard to *Daesh* was the formation of the *Katibah Nusantara Lid Daulah Islamiyah* or the 'Malay Archipelago Unit for the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria' which was formally launched on 26 September 2014. Based in Al-Shadadi, in the Syrian province of Hasaka,[182] the *Katibah Nusantara* was basically a special unit within *Daesh* that catered specifically for the Malay-speaking fighters from both Indonesia and Malaysia.[183]

The *Katibah Nusantara*'s primary goal is to assist *Daesh* to establish an Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. It is reported to be headed by Abu Ibrahim al-Indunisiy, an Emir. The group is involved in combat operations, snipers, heavy weaponry, tactics, strategy as well as military management. [184]The capability and capacity of the group was seen when it captured five Kurdish-held locations in Syria. It is also significant to note that this particular success story was highlighted in the social media, especially in both the

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[178] Petrus Reinhard Golose, lecture titled "*Indonesian Perspectives - Challenge and Lessons Learned in Developing and Implementing Strategies and Measures for Countering Crime Related to Terrorism and Violent Extremism, and for Deradicalisation and Reintegration of Radicalised Individuals.*"

[179] Participant during the Expert Workshop on Southeast Asia Collection of Counter-Narratives for Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) in Semarang, Indonesia on 22 Mac 2016.

[180] Petrus Reinhard Golose, lecture titled "*Indonesian Perspectives - Challenge and Lessons Learned in Developing and Implementing Strategies and Measures for Countering Crime Related to Terrorism and Violent Extremism, and for Deradicalisation and Reintegration of Radicalised Individuals.*"

[181] *Ibid*

[182] Jasminder Singh*, Katibah Nusantara: Islamic State's Malay Archipelago Combat Unit*, RSIS Commentary, No. 126, 26 May 2015, https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/CO15126.pdf (Retrieved on 2 December 2015).

[183] *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC).

[184] Jasminder Singh*, Katibah Nusantara: Islamic State's Malay Archipelago Combat Unit*.

Indonesian and Malay languages,[185] ostensibly to attract and possibly recruit Indonesians and Malaysians.

Reports indicate that in August 2014, at least 22 Malaysian and Indonesian fighters had come together to consider the possibility of 'forming a *katibah* or company of about 100 men to fight under *Daesh*. This was a strategic decision as the language barrier between the Indonesians fighting in Syria was a serious problem due to their general inability to comprehend either English or Arabic.[186]

Tom Plate puts it very succinctly when he highlighted,

"*Katibah Nusantara embodies a direct link between the global ideology of IS and its regional aspirations, much as Jemaah Islamiyah, the Southeast Asian offshoot of Al-Qaeda, once envisaged returning fighters from Afghanistan providing the battle-hardened backbone of the militant advance into Southeast Asia*." [187]

Hence, the Katibah can be seen as the possible forerunner for *Daesh*'s extension into Southeast Asia.

Reaction of the Indonesian Public and Civil Society

It is significant to note that extremism and radicalisation in Indonesia, particularly in the form of *Daesh*, have generally not found reception and traction in the country. Every mainstream Muslim organisation has condemned *Daesh*. In August 2014, the leaders of the major Muslim organisations grouped together as the Brotherhood Forum of the Indonesian Council of Religious Scholars (*Forum Ukhuwah Islamiyah Majelis Ulama Indonesia* or FU-MUI) and made the following declaration:

➢ The Islamic State of Iraq and Sham (ISIS) is a radical movement in the name of Islam but does not put forward the compassionate and merciful aspects of Islam. On the contrary, it tries to impose its will using violence, murder of innocents, and destruction of places considered holy by Muslims and seeks to bring down states that came into being as the result of the struggle of the Muslim community against colonialism.

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[185] *Ibid*.
[186] *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC).
[187] Tom Plate, *Guest Opinion: Why Indonesia's Secular Society Is Endangered By U.S. Indecision About 'ISIS'*, Asia Media International, Issue No. 87, November 2015, 18 September 2015, Http://Asiamedia.Lmu.Edu/2015/09/18/Guest-Opinion-Why-Indonesias-Secular-Society-Is-Endangered-By-U-S-Indecision-About-Isis/ (Retrieved on 2 December 2015).

- Muslim mass organisations and other institutes reject the existence of the *Daesh* movement in Indonesia that has a great potential to divide the Muslim community and shake the Unitary Republic of Indonesia based on Pancasila.
- We urge all Muslims not be incited by the agitation and provocations of ISIS that is trying to impose its teachings in Indonesia and the rest of the world. We warn all Muslim organisations, institutes, mosques and families to be vigilant and prevent the development of the ISIS movement in all corners of our country.
- We support the speedy, appropriate and firm action of the government to ban the *Daesh* movement in Indonesia and urge the government to enforce the law.[188]

Interestingly, even some extremist organisations, such as the *Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia* (MMI), *Hizb ut-Tahrir* and *Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia* have taken a divergent standpoint from *Daesh*. Some of them are even convinced that the *Daesh* issue is being orchestrated by the intelligence agencies to 'divide the Muslim community.'[189]

Issues in Radicalisation

Religion

There has been a possible shift with regard to the drivers of radicalisation in Indonesia. In the past, the triggers have been very much internal.[190] Hence, when Indonesians participated in the conflict in Afghanistan in the mid-1980s and early 1990s, there was a push factor from home, coupled with the hope to develop the capacity to battle the Suharto regime. Likewise, the operations carried out by JI in the late 1990s and early 2000 was said to be due to the communal conflict in both Ambon and Poso.

Daesh has however changed this dynamic as external factors such as the religious prophecies involving *al Sham* and the caliphate of a bygone era, the existence of a seemingly tangible state which has even been able to extend its boundaries, and the creative exploitation of the social media; has made it possible to attract, radicalise and recruit Indonesians to fight in both Iraq and Syria. Terrorists in Indonesia have welcomed this development and have attempted to legitimise the conflict in Syria by portraying it as a sectarian battle between the Sunni and Shia, which they highlight, is a precursor before the end of times.[191]

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[188] Majelis Ulama Indonesia, press release, "*Pernyataan Sikap FU-MUI tentang ISIS*", 7 August 2014 quoted in *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict.
[189] *Ibid*.
[190] *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC).
[191] Navhat Nuraniyah, *How ISIS Charmed the New Generation of Indonesian Militants*, Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS), S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) – Singapore, 9 January

In general, the narrative that *Daesh* affiliated individuals and groups have put forth in Indonesia is that democracy has failed to deliver in Indonesia and that the new system proposed by *Daesh, that is,* the Islamic caliphate is the best alternative.[192]Specifically, *Daesh* in Indonesia tends to focus on three key areas to persuade and convince their potential audience, namely the narrative of the Islamic State as a caliphate; *Daesh*'s battleground achievements; and the ideological affinities.[193]

Firstly, they highlight the narrative of *Daesh* as a caliphate prophesied by Prophet Muhammad. They substantiate this by quoting the *hadith* explaining that Islam unfolded in five stages. The first stage was the Prophet's era. The second stage was the caliphate which applied the prophetic way (interpreted as the first four caliphs). The third stage was the Umayyad dynasty to the Ottoman Empire. The fourth stage was the rulers of the postcolonial Muslim states and the final stage will be the restoration of the caliphate, which they say is seen by the advent of *Daesh*[194]. The hold of this idea can be seen through the testimonies of some Indonesians who believe that they "are not joining a terrorist group like *Al-Qaeda* but…a caliphate as part of Prophet Muhammad's prophecy….."[195]

The second thing that has been highlighted in Indonesia is *Daesh*'s achievement in the battlefield. *Daesh* is seen to be the one group that has considerably accomplished what other groups only set out to do but failed to achieve; maintaining and governing territory. As explained by Nuraniyah, the theological underpinnings of this is based on the jihadi concept of *qital tamkin*, which is defined as an armed struggle with the purpose of seizing territories and subsequently applying Islamic law in its governance. This concept focuses on building governing institutions and developing the economic system in the areas it has seized and not just targeting and destroying the enemy. According to Nuraniyah, this concept was brought to Indonesia through the translated works of Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, a Jordanian. It grew in popularity when people began to doubt Al Qaeda's method of *qital nikaya,* which focused more on continuous attacks to weaken the enemy without the express purpose of instituting a replacement Islamic government. The latter form of *jihad* was practised in Indonesia

2015.   http://www.mei.edu/content/map/how-isis-charmed-new-generation-indonesian-militants (Retrieved on 22 March 2016).

[192] Professsor Jamhari Makruf, Interview with Author on 20 August 2015.

[193] Navhat Nuraniyah, *How ISIS Charmed the New Generation of Indonesian Militants*, 9 January 2015. http://www.mei.edu/content/map/how-isis-charmed-new-generation-indonesian-militants (Retrieved on 22 March 2016).

[194] Abu Fatiah Al-Adnani, *Nubuwat Perang Akhir Zaman* (The Armageddon Prophecy) (Solo: Granada, 2014), 17-18 quoted in Navhat Nuraniyah, *How ISIS Charmed the New Generation of Indonesian Militants*, 9 January 2015.

[195] Noor Huda Ismail, *To Stop Islamic State Spreading to Indonesia, Target the Young and Reform Prisons*, *The Conversation*, 15 August 2014, https://theconversation.com/to-stop-islamic-state-spreading-to-indonesia-target-the-young-and-reform-prisons-30406 (Retrieved on 15 November 2015).

by the likes of Noordin Mat Top and the Bali Bombers, which not only led to Muslims being killed but also led to a negative perception of JI. Hence, *Daesh*'s concept of *qital tamkin,* coupled with the victories that it was purportedly achieving in Syria and Iraq, was seen to be strategically more superior and appropriate than AQ's concept of *qital nikaya.*

The third theme is the idea of ideological affinities. There were two contrasting schools of thought that were based on the issue of whether Muslims working for the 'enemy' (i.e. the secular government) could be branded as 'infidels'.[196] The older traditionalists were in favour of using the 'apostate' label only on the institution (*takfir 'aam)* and not the individual, on the grounds that there was always hope that an individual could be persuaded to join the jihad, as long as they remained Muslim.[197] However, extremists such as Aman Abdurrahman were of the opinion that any Muslim who was not overtly supporting the implementation of the Islamic law (this would include all Muslims working in a government institution) should be individually excommunicated (*takfir ta'yin)*[198] and could be killed. Therefore, while the traditionalists viewed *Daesh* as excessively extreme for killing Muslims in other groups such as the al-Nusra Front, Abdurrahman was of the view that *Daesh* was theologically sound in its application of *takfir ta'yin*.[199]

Also, there was the perception, according to Jajat Burhanudin, that should Indonesia be an Islamic state with syariah enforced, it would lead to a better Indonesia, seen for example, in terms of reduced corruption.[200]

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[196] *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC).

[197] Muhib al-Majdi, "*Fenomena perdebatan seputar takfir ta'yin terhadap anshar thaghut, quo vadis*?" (*The Phenomenon of Debate on Takfir Ta'yin towards the Assistants of Idolatrous State, Quo Vadis*?), Arrahmah.com, May 10, 2012, http://www.arrahmah.com/read/2012/05/10/20013-fenomena-perdebatan-seputar-takfir-tayin-terhadap-anshar-thaghut-quo-vadis.html#sthash.BdS1z5t1.dpuf as quoted in Navhat Nuraniyah, *How ISIS Charmed the New Generation of Indonesian Militants*, 9 January 2015, http://www.mei.edu/content/map/how-isis-charmed-new-generation-indonesian-militants (Retrieved on 22 March 2016).

[198] Aman Abdurrahman, *Tanggapan ustadz Aman Abdurrahman hafizhahullah atas artikel 'Fenomena perdebatan seputar takfir ta'yin terhadap anshar thaghut, quo vadis*? (*The Response of Ustadz Aman Abdurrahman on the Article "The Phenomenon of Debate on Takfir Ta'yin towards the Assistants of Idolatrous State, Quo Vadis*?), Arrahmah.com, May 14, 2012, http://www.arrahmah.com/read/2012/05/14/20124-tanggapan-ustadz-aman-abdurrahman-hafizhahullah-atas-artikel-fenomena-perdebatan-seputar-takfir-tayin-terhadap-anshar-thaghut-quo-vadis.html#sthash.LFbkZYaw.dpuf quoted in Navhat Nuraniyah, *How ISIS Charmed the New Generation of Indonesian Militants*, 9 January 2015. http://www.mei.edu/content/map/how-isis-charmed-new-generation-indonesian-militants (Retrieved on 22 March 2016).

[199]Muttaqin, *Mujahidin Council Declared al-Baghdadi's Caliphate State Deviant and Misleading* quoted in Navhat Nuraniyah, *How ISIS Charmed the New Generation of Indonesian Militants*, 9 January 2015.

[200] Jajat Burhanudin, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Indonesia organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 29 October 2014.

Given the ability of *Daesh* to manipulate and at times even hijack the religion, there was therefore the need to educate the people on the real tenets of Islam. Professor Dr. Irfan Idris spoke on how certain radicals in Indonesia had monopolised the translation and interpretation of the Quran, claiming that the moderate religious leaders who speak on jihad had no 'street credibility', never having fought in any conflict.[201] Given this situation, Saud Usman Nasution the former head of BNPT,[202] focused on the efforts of the authorities to bring in Middle Eastern religious clerics and to get them to work with local religious leaders to reach out to the people. Professor Jamhari Makruf was of the opinion that the poor understanding of jihad coupled with the exposure towards radical groups was playing a major role in the radicalisation process In Indonesia.[203] The lack of spiritual guidance among the youth was also allowing extremists to take the lead in moulding their thoughts.[204]

Professor Sarlito Wirawan Sarwono[205] emphasised the need to monitor and control the sermons delivered on Friday in the mosques and also the need to monitor curriculum and religious teachers in public schools, as there were cases where teachers brought in their own extremist ideas into the curriculum[206]. Prof Jamhari Makruf[207] also highlighted the need to look at the Islamic education in Indonesia that was very much Middle East centric.

Ahmad Baedowi in his interviews with terrorists in prisons in Indonesia found that the majority of them were from public schools and not religious schools or pesantrens.[208] Nevertheless, with approximately 40,000 religious boarding schools, there was still the need to monitor the possibility of *Daesh*-inspired radicalisation occurring due to wrong interpretations of Islam.[209]

Interestingly, Robi Gumilang was of the opinion that based on the response from communities that he was involved with, it was not religion that was driving radicalisation but instead the 'non-responsiveness of the authorities'.[210] Dina Afriantly

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[201] Professor Dr. Irfan Idris, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.

[202] Saud Usman Nasution, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 29 October 2014.

[203] Professor Jamhari Makruf, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 20 August 2015.

[204] Professor Sarlito Wirawan Sarwono, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Indonesia organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 29 October 2014.

[205] *Ibid*.

[206] Dina Afrianty, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Indonesia organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 29 October 2014.

[207] Professor Jamhari Makruf, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 20 August 2015.

[208] Ahmad Baedowi, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Indonesia organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 29 October 2014.

[209] Professor Dr. Irfan Idris, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.

[210] Robi Gumilang, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Indonesia organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 29 October 2014.

also echoed this sentiment highlighting that religion was simply a 'tool' used to recruit individuals who at the very onset possessed a poor understanding of the faith.[211]

Prison Radicalisation

The politics and interactions that take place in prisons in Indonesia between individuals and terrorist organisations are both dynamic and complex. It, however, cannot be denied that the dealings and developments in these prisons have a momentous impact on the evolution of terrorism in general in Indonesia and the process of radicalisation in particular. Abu Bakar Bashir for example was allowed to receive visitors and often times gave lectures which were recorded[212] and presumably passed outside.

Initially in Indonesia, all prisoners, regardless of their crimes, were allowed to receive visitors during visiting hours from Monday through Friday. Bashir, as mentioned, was visited by approximately 900 people every year.[213]

Aman Abdurrahman was said to habe been able to command 200 followers with just a few couriers and cell phones. He is serving a nine-year jail term for aiding a militant training camp in Indonesia but has nevertheless managed to encourage hundreds of Indonesians to join the fight in Syria and Iraq. According to Raykan Adibrata, the terrorists in Indonesia were able to run the organsiation from inside the prisons. As with Bashir, Aman Abdurrahman had couriers to bring cell-phones to record his messages. It was reported that although prison authorities had repeatedly tried to prevent him from disseminating his views, he had nevertheless been able to convey his message to the outside world. This was seen when ten phones were confiscated from his cell in September 2014 but subsequently a month later, in October 2014, Aman was able to get a new phone, resuming his sermons to followers both inside and outside of the prison.[214]

In this regard, Central Jawa Justice and Human Rights Agency spokesman Molyanto was quoted to have said that, "we have been informed that there is a connection between the Sarinah terrorist attack perpetrators and Aman Abdurrahman. Therefore, we are stepping up security measurers there involving Indonesian military and Police personnel."[215]

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[211] Dina Afrianty, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Indonesia organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 29 October 2014.
[212] Professor Dr. Irfan Idris, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.
[213] *Spreading ideology from prison*, The Star, 20 January 2016.
[214] *IS plan for Jakarta base hits a wall*, New Straits Times, 18 January 2016.
[215] *Spreading ideology from prison*, The Star, 20 January 2016.

Things are however changing. It was reported in February 2016 that the authroities were now isolating terrorists such as as Bashir and Abdurrahman to prevent them from spreading their views and also to cut their access to 'terror networks.' They were moved from Kembang Kuning prison to Pasir Putih prison and were no longer allowed to have visitors.[216]

At present, it is ironic that the prisons seem to play a major role in directing and facilitating the radicalisation process in Indonesia. Given this, there is an urgent need to review the government regulation and policy with regards to the incarceration of terrorists in prisons.[217]

Given the high possibility of *Daesh* gaining traction in the prisons, the Corrections Directorate took the following measures in August 2014[218]:
➢ instructed all officials to increase supervision of terrorist prisoners;
➢ discipline any inmate who took an oath of loyalty to *Daesh*;
➢ to search visitors and prisoners (nearing the end of their sentences) who were allowed to leave the prison during the day;
➢ to carry out regular searches of cell blocks;
➢ to confiscate any items with the word "*Daesh/*ISIS" on it;
➢ to prevent any provocative words or actions on the part of prisoners; and
➢ Isolating high-risk prisoners like Bashir and Abdurrahman.[219]

In the recent Jakarta incident in January 2016, National Police Chief, Badrodin Haiti reportedly highlighted that at least five jailed militants were believed to have been in communication with the plotters in the lead-up to the attacks.[220]

Radicalisation of Students and Undergraduates

The pull of radicalisation in general and *Daesh* in particular among students and undergraduates cannot be taken lightly. They were actively recruiting youth and university undergraduates.[221] Jajat Burhanudin, a lecturer at the State Islamic

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[216] Fedina S. Sundaryani and Ina Parlina, *Top terrorists isolated on Nusakambangan*, The Jakarta Post, 19 February 2016. http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2016/02/19/top-terrorists-isolated-nusakam bangan.html (Retrieved on 23 March 2016).

[217] Jajat Burhanudin, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Indonesia organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 29 October 2014.

[218] Ministry of Law and Human Rights, Corrections Directorate, *Surat Ederan No. Pas-330.PK.01.04.03 tahun 2014 tentang Peningkatan Kewaspadaan Terkait Aktivitas Narapidana Teroris di Lapas dan Rutan*, 5 August 2014 quoted in *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC).

[219] Fedina S. Sundaryani and Ina Parlina, *Top terrorists isolated on Nusakambangan*, The Jakarta Post, 19 February 2016.

[220] *From jailbird to IS militant*, New Straits Times, 20 January 2016.

[221] Interview with Indonesian NGOs in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.

University of Jakarta, explained that a survey that he had carried out with undergraduates showed that a significant number of them believed in 'violent jihad.'[222] Professor Dr. Irfan Idris stressed the need for 'priority targeting' focusing particularly on youths in junior and senior high schools as well as pesantrens. Also of significance was the possibility of Indonesians studying in the Middle East being radicalised and recruited.[223]

Alfindra Primihalda[224] highlighted that for many university undergraduates in Indonesia, it was their first experience to live away from their homes and they were in need of a social support structure, which was then provided by the extremist networks. Professor Jamhari Makruf gave the examples of how in the university settings, radical groups were good in offering hospitality in terms of food and boarding, thereby being able to attract new recruits.[225] Professor Dr. Sarlito Wirawan Sarwono spoke on how extremists took advantage of students from rural areas who, when they arrived in Jakarta, had no families or relatives but were quickly accepted and treated well by extremists.[226]

Professor Makruf also spoke on how there were situations when student organisations were no longer active in universities and that the vacuum was very quickly filled by extremist groups. Ahmad Suaedy spoke on cases of extremists being linked to groups in campuses, allowing them both a budget and the access to undergraduates.[227] Thus, exposure to such radical thinking was significant as highlighted by Jajat Burhanudin who spoke on how individuals were exposed and familiar with radical networks and how this particular exposure over a period of time led them to being radicalised.[228]

Other Drivers of Radicalisation

Besides the factors mentioned above, there was an urgent need to understand the processes and triggers of radicalisation in specific areas and communities. Jones was of the opinion that with regards to this, former terrorists in Indonesia possessed a wealth

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[222] Jajat Burhanudin, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Indonesia organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 29 October 2014.
[223] Professor Dr. Irfan Idris, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.
[224] Alfindra Primihalda, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 20 August 2015.
[225] Professor Jamhari Makryf, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 20 August 2015.
[226] Professor Sarlito Wirawan Sarwono, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 20 August 2015.
[227] Ahmad Suaedy, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Indonesia organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 29 October 2014.
[228] Jajat Burhanudin, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Indonesia organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 29 October 2014.

of information which could be tapped to better understand these specific drivers of radicalisation, which differed based on the environment.[229]

Political instability, [230] perceived grievances[231] such as the 'burning of mosques in Papua's Tolikara district'[232] and perceived injustice[233] was also said to have a direct impact on *Daesh*-led radicalisation and the subsequent recruitment.

<u>*Daesh* Recruitment</u>

It was also significant to note that the target audience being recruited by *Daesh* had changed significantly from those that were targeted by JI. While JI was more selective and preferred religious leaders, the Afghan alumni and individuals taught in madrassahs, *Daesh* had very loose criteria to join and recruited any individual that was willing. This led an NGO activist to remark that *Daesh* had slightly altered Air Asia's business model and introduced the idea that "Now, everyone can fight."[234]

Dr. Irfan also highlighted that while JI and *Darul Islam* went door-to-door to recruit potential members, *Daesh* utilised the Internet for recruitment.[235] This was also confirmed by the Indonesian Counter-Terrorism authorities based on the confession of an Indonesian man who was deported from Turkey.[236]

According to the counter-terrorist authorities[237], the Internet was used to showcase to potential recruits in Indonesia a prosperous life in Syria and Iraq, images glorifying terrorism, propaganda and showcasing the major roles played by Indonesians during the conflict in Syria and Iraq. The Internet was also used to train terrorists in Indonesia on war and in particular bomb-making. Besides bomb-making guides in the Indonesian language, *The Mujahideen Explosives Handbook* was the e-book used by terror groups to assemble nitroglycerine bombs in Central Java.

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[229] Sydney Jones, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Indonesia organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 29 October 2014.

[230] Professor Sarlito Wirawan Sarwono, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Indonesia organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 29 October 2014.

[231] Interview with Indonesian NGOs in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.

[232] *Officials Fear Backlash after Papua Mosque Burning*, Jakarta Globe, 21 July 2015. http://jakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/news/officials-fear-backlash-papua-mosque-burning/ (Retrieved on 3 December 2015).

[233] Professor Dr. Irfan Idris, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.

[234] Interview with Indonesian NGOs in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.

[235] Professor Dr. Irfan Idris, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.

[236] Petrus Reinhard Golose, lecture titled "*Indonesian Perspectives - Challenge and Lessons Learned in Developing and Implementing Strategies and Measures for Countering Crime Related to Terrorism and Violent Extremism, and for Deradicalisation and Reintegration of Radicalized Individuals.*"

[237] *Ibid*.

The authorities, in response to the threat of terrorist radicalisation with the Internet that focused on the youth subsequently organised the 'Peace in Cyber Space Workshop' for the young people in Yogyakarta on 28 October 2015. The authorities conducted a seminar and discussion on how terrorists used the Internet. The authorities also encouraged young people to participate in promoting peace through the Internet.[238]

Countering the terrorist narrative

Daesh was extremely adept, 'tech savvy and understood social media'[239] especially at using Internet platforms such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter.[240] Counter-Terrorism officials in Indonesia responded with the *Damailah Indonesiaku*[241] (Be peaceful my Indonesia) campaign, which was centered on a pro-peace website that focused on creating awareness and engaging with the people to counter the terrorist rhetoric. Nevertheless, there were still those who felt that the authorities were losing the battle on the Internet.[242] Therefore, NGO activists that the author spoke to[243] mentioned that counter-radicalisation in Indonesia could not be left solely to the Government to handle and gave the example of how private and religious organisations in Indonesia were in a better position to counter the narrative put forth by the extremists. Hence, what was proposed was not just an initiative conducted solely by the government but rather a whole-of-society' approach involving multi-stakeholders.[244] It was also mentioned that there was also a lack of counter-narratives, particularly narratives that focused on Indonesia's Pancasila to counter the propaganda put up by the extremists.[245] There was a need to stress on the uniqueness and significance of being 'Indonesian Muslims' rather than 'Muslims in Indonesia' in developing such counter narratives. [246]

The possibility of utilising former terrorists in on-line counter-messaging[247] was another potentially promising way to stem the growing influence of terrorists on the

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[238] *Ibid*.

[239] Alfindra Primihalda, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 20 August 2015.

[240] Professsor Jamhari Makruf, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 20 August 2015.

[241] *Damailah Indonesiaku: Bersama Cegah Terorisme*, http://damailahindonesiaku.com/ (Retrieved on 13 December 2015).

[242] Professor Dr. Irfan Idris, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.

[243] Interview with Indonesian NGOs in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.

[244] Professsor Jamhari Makruf, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 20 August 2015.

[245] Professor Sarlito Wirawan Sarwono, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Indonesia organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 29 October 2014.

[246] Participant from the WAHID Institute, Expert Workshop on Southeast Asia Collection of Counter-Narratives for Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) in Semarang, Indonesia on 22 Mac 2016.

[247] Sarlito Wirawan Sarwono, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 20 August 2015.

Internet[248]. The blog by Ali Amron, who was involved with the Bali Bombing was a case in point.[249] Religious scholars were also seen as a very effective way to counter the narratives of the terrorists.[250]

Given the drawing power of emotions, it was also highlighted[251] that in developing counter narratives in Indonesia, it was vital to focus on the emotional aspect of the narrative. Emotional arguments, particularly from the victims of terrorism, had the potential of 'connecting' and making an impact with the target audience. This was based on the premise that numerous individuals were joining *Daesh* based on the exploitation of their emotions by the terrorists, and it could then follow, that they had the potential to be disengaged by also using the emotional approach.

In this regard, it was reported in December 2015 that Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesia's largest Muslim organisation had produced a documentary entitled *Rahmat Islam Nusantara* (The Divine Grace of Islam Nusantara), which sought to showcase the Islam that had been practiced in Indonesia for decades and highlight how the adherents of the faith had harmoniously and peacefully blended and co-existed with other religions and beliefs.[252]

It was also stressed[253] that there was not only the need to counter the terrorist narrative but it was also imperative to challenge their narrative by asking difficult questions and getting the audience to think critically on issues such as how Indonesia would function with a *Daesh*-like system of governance and how would that system work to resolve conflict or disagreements in Indonesia.

The Response from the Government

The 'Joining the Ranks' video on 23 July 2014 and the subsequent reaction to it was seen as a catalyst that spurred a host of measures and steps on the part of the authorities. This was because the video was a stark challenge to the Indonesian authority and way of life, as the video openly 'urged Indonesians to join a political entity other than the Indonesian republic.'[254]

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[248] Petrus Reinhard Golose, lecture titled "*Indonesian Perspectives - Challenge and Lessons Learned in Developing and Implementing Strategies and Measures for Countering Crime Related to Terrorism and Violent Extremism, and for Deradicalisation and Reintegration of Radicalized Individuals.*"

[249] *Ali Imron: Sebuah Cerita*, http://www.aliimron.com/ Retrieved on 31 December 2015.

[250] Interview with Indonesian NGOs in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.

[251] Alfindra Primihalda, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 20 August 2015.

[252] *Indonesia terbit dokumentari lawan ideology IS*, Berita Harian, 17 December 2015.

[253] Professsor Jamhari Makruf, Interview with Author on 20 August 2015.

[254] *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC).

In August 2014, the *Jakarta Post* reported[255] that the Indonesian Government had announced a ban on *Daesh*. Djoko Suyanto, the former Minister for Coordinating Political, Legal and Security Affairs had stated that *Daesh* had to be curbed as it posed a serious threat to Indonesia's cultural and religious diversity and was not in line with the state's *Pancasila* ideology.

Given this, the Minister reiterated that 'there would be an all-government effort to prevent the establishment of *Daesh* branches and the dissemination of its teachings'. The Minister highlighted that former President Yudhoyono has instructed the Minister of Religion to 'work with community leaders to explain to the public the dangers of *Daesh*; it was not a question of religion but one of ideology.'[256]However, it was unclear, which specific law would be used to counter the threat of *Daesh* in Indonesia.

The then-BNPT Head, Ansyaad Mbai had suggested that Indonesia had the capacity to revoke the citizenship of Indonesians under Article 23 of the 2006 Citizenship Law which punishes anyone who "voluntarily takes an oath or declares loyalty to a foreign state or part of such a state".[257]This was again highlighted by Harry Purwanto from the Indonesian Foreign Ministry who reiterated that two Indonesian laws prohibited its citizens from joining resistance movements in foreign countries. Firstly, it was stated in 'The Citizenship Law' that 'a person will lose citizenship if, among other [reasons], he or she joins a resistance group against the legitimate government.' Secondly, Article 139A of the Criminal Code also stated "that a person who joins a resistance movement against the legitimate government can be jailed".[258]

However, it remains unclear how this law will be specifically translated into action. This conundrum was seen when in an interview where Afif Abdul Majid, a *Daesh* supporter had challenged the authorities stating, "What are they going to do, deport me?" While, this particular individual was subsequently arrested, he was nevertheless charged with an earlier crime with no mention being made of the citizenship law.[259] Securing convictions have proven to be difficult.[260]

[255] Yuliasri Perdani and Ina Parlina, *Govt bans support, endorsement of ISIL*, The Jakarta Post, 5 August 2014, http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/08/05/govt-bans-support-endorsement-isil.html#sthash.4XjKDwd8.dpuf (Retrieved on 19 October 2014).

[256] *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC).

[257] *BNPT: Pendukung ISIS Terancam Hukuman*, *Kompas*, 1 August 2014 quoted in *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC).

[258] Ina Parlina, *ISIL endorsement videos draw public anxiety*, The Jakarta Post, Jakarta, 1 August 2014, http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/08/01/isil-endorsement-videos-draw-public anxiety.html#sthash.aBYAJ8jz.dpuf (Retrieved on 19 October 2015).

[259] *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, IPAC Report Number 13, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC), 24 September 2014.

[260] Andrew Zammit, Muhammad Iqbal, *Indonesia's New Counter-Terrorism Challenges*, Terrorism Monitor Volume: 13 Issue: 18, 4 September 2015, http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%

With *Daesh* making further inroads and realising the growing gravity of the situation, former President Yudhoyono, in September 2014, issued a seven-point instruction[261] to curtail the growing influence of *Daesh* teachings. They were as follows:

➢ Enhancing and upgrading efforts to prevent Indonesian citizens from travelling to join *Daesh* by being 'more selective' in the issuance of passports while also urging embassies in Jakarta to scrutinise the issuance of visas to the Middle East.
➢ Improving the monitoring of Indonesians already in Syria including those with the intention to return to Indonesia.
➢ Stricter monitoring of foreigners in Indonesia.
➢ Better supervision of prisons where terrorists were held, given the fact that pledging ceremonies were known to have occurred there.
➢ Enhanced and beefed-up security in areas 'known to be home to radical networks such as Poso, Ambon, East Java and Central Java'.
➢ Utilising the Minister of Religion to lead 'soft power' efforts involving community leaders and clerics to try and curtail the influence of ISIS rhetoric and propaganda.
➢ Enhanced punitive action against those involved in terrorist activities.

In light of this, the Indonesian National Counter Terrorism Agency (BNPT), came up with the 'Terrorism Prevention Blueprint' (*Blueprint Pencegahan Terorisme*) and the 'Deradicalisation Blueprint' (*Blueprint Deradikalisasi*) to serve as guidelines for the counter-terrorism and deradicalisation programmes. Specifically, the Indonesian counter-terrorism policy has the vision to be part of the 'universal prevention against terrorism', with the express intention to 'protect national honour and dignity' and to ensure that Indonesia is free 'from any threat of violence.' The counter-terrorism strategies include components such as 'enhancing the counter terrorism regulations to ensure that prevention efforts are included', initiating the 'Terrorism Prevention Coordination Forum', enhancing the 'participation of the public', studying the 'approach to radical groups', 'monitoring people, goods, firearms, ammo, explosives', 'countering counter-propaganda through the mass-media', increasing 'synergy between intelligence agencies', conducting 'counter terrorism training for educators, religious communities & the public', 'monitoring and evaluation of the security systems, critical infrastructures, transportation, VVIP and the neighborhood', initiating

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5Btt_news%5D=44335&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=7&cHash=d0733001ec5260e22fbdd0c5de5118b3#.Vl6y xqShddg (Retrieved on 2 December 2015).

[261] *Ini Tujuh Instruksi Presiden Untuk Pencegahan Paham ISIS*, *Kompas*, 14 September 2014 quoted in quoted in *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, IPAC Report Number 13, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC), 24 September 2014.

'Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for terror prevention' and 'improving the rehabilitation, re-education and development programmes' for prisoners in prisons.[262]

Deradicalisation Programme

The deradicalisation programme envisioned by the counter-terrorism authorities[263] is a five-stage programme that involves i) identification, ii) re-education, iii) re-socialisation, iv) rehabilitation and v) monitoring and evaluation.

At the *identification stage*, three specific audiences are targeted and they include the actual terrorist suspect/prisoner, the family, and the network. The goal at this stage is to identify their perceptions and worldviews, map their network and collect data. This is done by engaging the suspect/prisoner and the family, NGOs working on this subject, former terrorists, academics and even community leaders.

At the *re-education stage*, two primary audiences are targeted and they include the actual terrorist suspect/prisoner and the family. The goal at this stage is to strengthen the moral and ethical foundations of the terrorist suspect, to give correct religious education and to provide 'life skills' and vocational training. This is done through 'persuasion and dialogue' facilitated with former terrorists and victims of terrorism, separating terrorist prisoners from other prisoners and continuously 'adapting and adjusting the programme' to ensure that it fits the needs.

At the *re-socialisation stage*, four primary audiences are targeted and they include the actual terrorist suspect/prisoner, the family, former terrorists, and the community. The goal at this stage is to prepare former terrorists prisoners to now 'reintegrate to the community', prepare the community to 'accept back' and receive the former terrorists, to provide vocational training, to strengthen 'moderate religious' teachings, to 'eradicate suspicion between former terrorists and their family with the community' at large.

At the *rehabilitation stage*, two primary audiences are targeted and they include the actual terrorist suspect/prisoner and the family. The goal at this stage is to change the 'terrorist's mindset', change the 'terrorist's family's mindset', moderate the radical thought and attitude of both the incarcerated terrorist and the family members and to provide religious education. This is done by 'engaging with former terrorists and victims of terrorism', placing terrorism prisoners in deradicalisation centres,

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[262] Petrus Reinhard Golose, lecture titled "*Indonesian Perspectives - Challenge and Lessons Learned in Developing and Implementing Strategies and Measures for Countering Crime Related to Terrorism and Violent Extremism, and for Deradicalisation and Reintegration of Radicalized Individuals.*"
[263] *Ibid*

continuously adapting and adjusting the programme to fit the needs of the terrorist prisoners, providing individual assistance to terrorism prisoners and engaging with penitentiary officers, religious and community leaders, psychologists, counselors and researchers.

Given the various entities and stakeholders involved in this process, there is therefore a need to coordinate and collaborate. At the governmental level, the stakeholders involved include the National Counter-Terrorism Agency (BNPT), Ministry of Religion, Ministry of Communication and Information, Ministry of Manpower, Ministry of Cooperatives and SME, Indonesian Police, Indonesian Armed Forces, Press Council, Ministry of Education & Culture, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Youth & Sports, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Finance, Supreme Prosecution Office, State Crypto Agency, Broadcast Commission, Ministry of National Development Planning (Bappenas), Social Ministry, Ministry of Law and Human Rights, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Commission for Child Protection, National Resilience Institution and the Center for Financial Transaction Reporting & Analysis (PPATK).

The authorities in Indonesia have also realised the need to include civil society in countering terrorism and the stakeholders include the *ulama* or moderate Muslim scholars, influential religious mass organisations in the community, universities, the private sector, public and civil society leaders, NGOs, the mass media, former terrorists and victims of terrorism. These stakeholders form the 'Coordination Forum for the Prevention of Terrorism'[264](FKPT) which is tasked with 'preventing the propagation of radical ideas closely associated with terrorism'.[265]

Thus far, such forums have been created in 32 provinces in Indonesia including in Aceh, Riau, North Sumatra, South Sumatra, Lampung, West Java, West Kalimantan, South Kalimantan, Central Java, Yogyakarta, Central Sulawesi, North Sulawesi, South Sulawesi, Southeast Sulawesi, Bali, West Nusa Tenggara, North Maluku, DKI Jakarta, Banten, South Sulawesi, East Java, East Kalimantan, Riau Islands, South Kalimantan, South Sumatra, West Sumatra, North Sumatra, Bengkulu, Gorontalo, West Sulawesi, Bangka Belitung and East Nusa Tenggara.[266]

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[264] *Ibid*.

[265] Apriadi Gunawan, *BNPT sets up anti-terrorism forum in North Sumatra*, The Jakarta Post, 30 November 30 2012. http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2012/11/30/bnpt-sets-anti-terrorism-forum-north-sumatra.html (Retrieved on 13 December 2015).

[266] Petrus Reinhard Golose, lecture titled "*Indonesian Perspectives - Challenge and Lessons Learned in Developing and Implementing Strategies and Measures for Countering Crime Related to Terrorism and Violent Extremism, and for Deradicalisation and Reintegration of Radicalized Individuals.*"

Legislation

While numerous steps and measures have been taken by the authorities, the Bureau of Counterterrorism, under the US Department of State in its Country Report on Terrorism 2014[267] highlighted that Indonesia still lacked the legal provisions to 'criminalize and prosecute acts of, and support for, terrorism committed abroad'. They cited that prosecutors had in certain instances 'used other laws and criminal statutes not specific to terrorism to prosecute and convict terrorists' which led to 'individuals not being counted or tracked through the justice system as convicted terrorists'. This, according to the report, could in turn create 'potential loopholes in disengagement and de-radicalisation efforts'. For example, Professor Dr. Irfan Idris, the Director of the Deradicalisation Programme at BNPT highlighted that there was no specific law against incitement and that para-military training was not criminalised[268] and that these weak laws[269] were often times exploited by radicals and extremists. Professor Jamhari Makruf also mentioned that there were no laws banning and restricting Indonesians from travelling to Iraq and Syria to join *Daesh*[270] Dr. Irfan cited the example of Chep Hermawan[271] a businessman, who proclaimed himself as the leader of the Indonesian chapter of *Daesh* and who claimed that he had "personally overseen the departure of scores of fighters" from Indonesia to Syria and Iraq. Though he was detained, he was nevertheless released as the Police were not able to charge him with a crime. Former National Police spokesman Brig. Gen. Boy Rafli Amar had said that with regards to this case, the Police "could only monitor ISIS supporters" and "if they have no record of terrorism activities then they can't be charged under our criminal law."[272] This led Dr. Irfan to remark that it was easier to deal with terrorist bombing rather than incitement and hate speech.[273]

Arianti[274] similarly argued that despite the Indonesian Government's ban on *Daesh*, the 'existing legal regime in Indonesia' was not in a position to "confer upon authorities the power to arrest supporters of ISIS without proven evidence of their involvement in terrorist acts." Arianti was also of the opinion that this seemingly

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[267] *Chapter 2, Country Reports: East Asia And Pacific Overview*, Bureau of Counterterrorism, US Department Of State, Country Report on Terrorism 2014, Http://Www.State.Gov/J/Ct/Rls/Crt/2014/239405.Htm, (Retrieved on 19 October 2015).
[268] Professor Dr. Irfan Idris, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.
[269] Professor Dr. Azyumardi Azra, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 20 August 2015.
[270] Professor Dr. Jamhari Makruf, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 20 August 2015.
[271] Professor Dr. Irfan Idris, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.
[272] *The Muslim nation where ISIS is free to recruit*, Associated Press, 5 October 2014, http://www.cbsnews.com/news/isis-leader-indonesia-chep-hernawan-recruiting-muslim-impunity/ (Retrieved on 3 December 2015).
[273] Professor Dr. Irfan Idris, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.
[274] V, Arianti, *Southeast Asia-Indonesia*, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analysis, Volume 7, Issue 1, Journal of the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research January/February 2015.

insufficient legislation to prosecute individuals under suspicion of terrorism was a serious hindrance to Indonesia's ability to counter terrorism.

This was seen again when Indonesian police detained 38 men at a suspected militant camp at Mount Sumbing in Central Jawa. The authorities were also reported to have seized air rifles, knives, religious material and flags in the raid. However, according to provincial police spokesman, Colonel Liliek Darmanto, they were released after 24-hours as "police were unable to prove terrorism-related allegations." This, according to Saud Usman Nasution, "is the weakness of our laws," adding that the authorities, "cannot arrest before they (the terrorists) have committed a crime even though we can detect a radical network."[275]

However, the Indonesian authorities are adapting. As a result of the Jakarta attacks on 14 January 2016 and the growing fear that returning Indonesian FTF could cause far greater mayhem, it was reported that the Indonesian Parliament was now considering anti-terrorism laws[276] as at present there are no laws covering the issue of Indonesians getting trained to fight in conflicts abroad or joining radical groups abroad and subsequently returning back to Indonesia. According to Parliamentary Speaker Zulkifli Hasan, proposed laws would also include tightening prison sentences for terrorism related offences. Significantly, the Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs Minister, Luhut Pandjaitan added that the proposed new regulations would also give police the authority to preemptively and temporarily detain a suspect to obtain information to prevent possible future attacks.[277] Specifically, the draft bill is said to contain provisions that would allow an individual suspected of plotting to carry out an act of terrorism to be detained for up to six months without charges. Also, it would be an offence for an Indonesian to join a militant group overseas or to recruit others and there was even a proposal to strip Indonesians of their citizenship should they join such 'overseas militant organisations.'[278] There would also be proposed provisions that would allow the anti-terrorism squad to execute raids and arrest suspects for interrogation based on intelligence reports.[279]

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[275] *Weak terror law sees 38 walk free*, New Straits Times, 22 February 2016.

[276] Kanupriya Kapoor, *Activists raise concerns over Indonesia's proposed anti-terrorism law, Reuters,* 18 March 2016, http://in.reuters.com/article/indonesia-security-idINKCN0WK0M2 (Retrieved on 23 March 2016).

[277] *Indonesia mulls tighter anti-terror laws*, The Star, 21 January 2016.

[278] Kanupriya Kapoor, *Activists raise concerns over Indonesia's proposed anti-terrorism law, Reuters,* 18 March 2016, http://in.reuters.com/article/indonesia-security-idINKCN0WK0M2 (Retrieved on 23 March 2016).

[279] *Weak terror law sees 38 walk free*, New Straits Times, 22 February 2016.

Conclusion

It is important to note that while radicalisation in Indonesia represents a serious issue, it has to be seen through a broader context. Only a very small minority of Indonesians had been radicalised and that besides trying to comprehend how people were radicalised in Indonesia, there was also a need to comprehensively map out and study why, despite the various factors, the vast majority of Indonesians were *not* getting radicalised.[280] This was also echoed by Inspector General Dr. Petrus Reinhard Golose who stated that Muslims made up 87.8% of Indonesia but only a fraction of them were radicalised.[281]

It was also important to note that many of Indonesia's success stories had been achieved through unofficial, informal and community-based approaches. For instance, many prisoners had moderated their positions via dialogue with other prisoners and also through introspection[282] and self-awareness.[283] Communities in numerous areas, realising that extremists were infiltrating and hijacking mosques had planned and successfully wrested back control of such mosques.

The challenge posed by returning Indonesian FTF was significant as they had experience in warfare and possessed certain skills. Indonesia already had such experience when it came to the Afghan Alumni and the authorities were rightly concerned on the impact these particular groups of people had upon their return home. In this light, it was also chilling to note that *Daesh* was no longer just looking for Indonesian recruits to fight in the conflict in Syria and Iraq but was also marketing the idea of fighting for jihad within Indonesia itself.[284] In this regard, the battle between *Pancasila* and *Khilafah* will take centre stage in the future.[285]

The need for Indonesia to implement a "unified counter-terrorism strategy" that is equipped with a range of tools against terrorism, ranging from 'prevention, deterrence, rehabilitation, punishment, and re-assimilation into society is of paramount importance. For this to happen, it is imperative that there be greater coordination between the relevant stakeholders such as the "Coordinating Ministry for

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[280] Hernan Longo, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Indonesia organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 29 October 2014.

[281] General Dr. Petrus Reinhard Golose, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Indonesia organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 29 October 2014.

[282] Nasir Abas, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 5 April 2011.

[283] *Countering Violence in Indonesia: Need for a Rethink*, IPAC Report Number 11, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC), 30 June 2014.

[284] Professor Dr. Irfan Idris, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.

[285] *Ibid*.

Political, Legal, and Security Affairs; the national intelligence and counter-terrorism agencies; special detachments set up to fight terrorism; the religious affairs ministry; and non-governmental groups." [286] NGO activists[287] and scholars[288] also reiterated the need to urgently enhance and upgrade the cooperation and collaboration between various Indonesian agencies involved in countering terrorism. Dr. Irfan summed up the situation very well when he remarked, "*sama-sama kerja, tetapi bukan bekerjasama*" which translates to 'working with each other but not working together.'[289]

There is also the critical need to develop and further enhance the reintegration process. For this to happen, all the relevant stakeholders need to work together. The impact and significance of former terrorists and victims of terrorism reaching out to those that were radicalised in the Indonesian context was also repeatedly highlighted.[290] This was further echoed by Max Boon[291], a survivor of the 2009 terrorist attack on Jakarta's JW Marriott Hotel, whose own work in this field has inspired many. Various NGO activists also highlighted the possibility of utilising former rehabilitated terrorists in disengagement and deradicalisation programmes.[292]

The dilemma of walking the fine-line between hard and soft power is also of significance. It was pertinent to note that while it was essential to pursue the hard approach when tackling the terrorists, there was also the need to realise that such kinetic approaches had certain limitations.[293] As Ambassador Harry Purwanto[294] wryly remarked, "the tougher we crush them, the more militant they become." Hence, the need to complement the hard with the soft approach.[295]

Indonesian NGOs also stressed on the need for good governance and conveyed that clean and competent administration played both a direct and indirect role in countering terrorism. They highlighted that corruption and the lack of integrity could severely hamper the intervention programmes that were being carried out.[296] Interestingly, in a survey conducted by an organisation in Jakarta,[297] various

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[286] Tom Plate, *Guest Opinion: Why Indonesia's Secular Society Is Endangered By U.S. Indecision About 'ISIS'*, 18 September 2015.

[287] Interview with Indonesian NGOs in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.

[288] Professor Dr. Azyumardi Azra, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 20 August 2015.

[289] Professor Dr. Irfan Idris, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.

[290] Saud Usman Nasution, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 29 October 2014.

[291] Max Boon, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 30 October 2014.

[292] Interview with Indonesian NGOs in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.

[293] Professor Dr. Azyumardi Azra, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 20 August 2015.

[294] Harry Purwanto, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Indonesia organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Jakarta on 29 October 2014.

[295] Professor Dr. Irfan Idris, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.

[296] Interview with Indonesian NGOs in Jakarta on 19 August 2015.

[297] Interview with an Indonesian organisation in Jakarta on 29 October 2014.

communities were asked on the reasons and root causes of conflicts in Indonesia and their response was not 'socio-economic factors' (that took second place) but rather, in their mind, the main reason for conflicts was due to the 'non-responsiveness' of the authorities, citing the example of 'reporting a crime but getting no response from the authorities'.

There is an urgent need to strengthen the laws in Indonesia, particularly focusing on 'prevention, protection, enforcement, deradicalisation, counter-radicalisation, international cooperation and the ability of terrorists to utilise the Internet'.[298] There is also a need to improve on the various existing deradicalisation programmes to ensure that coverage was comprehensive both in terms of substance as well as in geography. Also of equal importance, is the human capital component, particularly with regards to 'planning, organising, implementing, oversight, evaluation and reporting in the field of deradicalisation.[299]

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[298] Petrus Reinhard Golose, lecture titled "*Indonesian Perspectives - Challenge and Lessons Learned in Developing and Implementing Strategies and Measures for Countering Crime Related to Terrorism and Violent Extremism, and for Deradicalisation and Reintegration of Radicalised Individuals.*"
[299] *Ibid*.

4. *DAESH* IN MALAYSIA

Outline

This chapter explores the history of FTF in Malaysia, the evolution of *Daesh* to its current state as seen by events on the ground and the response by the Government, particularly with regards to legislation. Issues such as motivational factors that lead to one being radicalised, their recruitment process, their use of the Internet and efforts to counter their narrative are also considered.

Introduction

The issue of Malaysian citizens being radicalised and going to fight in foreign conflicts is not a new phenomenon. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980's, led to numerous Malaysian individuals fighting in the conflict there. This 'Afghan Alumni' returned to Malaysia after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and some of them continued their 'struggle,' either by supporting or directly participating in acts of terrorism within the country or in the region. Together with their children, as in the case of the *al-ghuraba* cell[300] and relatives[301], they were said to be part of other terrorist organisations including groups such as *Darul Islam* (DI), JI and *Kumpulan Militan Mujahidin* (KMM)[302].

Through either direct participation or training given to other terrorists, these Afghan Alumni were reported to be involved in the first and second Bali bombing, the Australian Embassy bombing, the Marriott Hotel bombing and the Ritz Hotel bombing. Individuals such as Nasir Abas, who trained and fought in Afghanistan, went on to play leading roles in groups such as JI.[303]

Threat of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF)

A major concern was the possibility that Malaysians who had fought or are fighting in Syria and Iraq would decide to bring the conflict back to Malaysia[304] as in the case of

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[300] The *al-ghuraba* (meaning 'foreigners') cell consisted of children of JI members that were trained to be the next generation of JI leaders.

[301] Kennimrod Sariburaja, *Al-Jamaah Al-Islamiyah*, a publication of the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, October 2013.

[302] Ahmad El-Muhammady, Interview with Author in Kuala Lumpur on 4 December 2015.

[303] Nasir Abas, Interview with Author in Jakarta on 5 April 2011.

[304] Ahmad El-Muhammady, 1st Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

the Afghan Alumni. This fear was founded on three main reasons[305]. Firstly, the experience of Malaysians who had fought in Syria and Iraq would be significant, not only in terms of battlefield experience, but also the prestige and the allure that came in certain circles as a result of fighting in a conflict abroad. The own memories of the fighters themselves proved to be a significant motivator as seen, according to Ahmad El-Muhammady, by Yazid Sufaat reminiscing about his 'experience in Afghanistan' and the 'special feeling,' according to him, that came from that battle experience. The impact and power of those 'feelings' could have played a part in his later involvement with *Daesh* in Syria, despite him having gone through the rehabilitation programme. Also, the experience in war, including the violence and brutality exhibited by groups such as *Daesh*, compounded with their new-found religious fervor, could desensitise these Malaysians, allowing them the cognitive opening to contemplate such violent acts in Malaysia. Secondly, the skills and technical knowledge gained in weapon handling, warfare and bomb-making, particularly Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) could have the potential to greatly impact the course of conflict, should they decide to carry out their acts of violence in Malaysia. Thirdly, the exposure to *Daesh* ideology and its subsequent translation into action in the battlefield could have a significant and lasting impact on those individuals, who prior to this, had never known let alone experienced 'ideology in action.'

Developments on the Ground

With regards to the pull of *Daesh* in Malaysia, the statistics warrants concern. As of 25 March 2016, there have been 175 arrests that have been made in Malaysia with regards to the threat. 16 have been deported and 107 have been charged with 14 convicted.[306] 17 have been killed, of which six died as suicide bombers.[307]

As early as 2012, the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) had already detected Malaysians wanting to recruit other Malaysians to fight in the conflict in Syria. Specifically, Yazid Sufaat was alleged to have been trying to initiate '*Tanzim Al-Qaeda Malaysia*' with the intention of using it as a vehicle to bring Malaysians to join the conflict. According to the Royal Malaysian Police, the ideology of Malaysians who are involved in the conflict in Syria or Iraq was based on '*Salafi Jihadiyah*'. *Salafi* in this context refers to the intention and purpose of these individuals to return to the original teachings of the *salaf* generation or the generation that existed 300 years following the demise of

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[305] Ahmad El-Muhammady, Interview with Author in Kuala Lumpur on 4 December 2015.
[306] Discussions with the Royal Malaysian Police, 11 March 2016.
[307] Mazwin Nik Anis, *NSC: No need for alarm*, The Star, 20 January 2016.

Prophet Muhammad. They believe that the *salaf* generation was perfect in their practice of Islam.[308]

In April 2015, it was reported that the RMP had arrested twelve suspected individuals with links to *Daesh* just as they were making chemicals to test a bomb. They were reported to have been planning to conduct several bombings in strategic places with government interests and places with elements of vice and gambling in the Klang Valley and also in retaliation to the RMP's punitive action against them. It was the first time that *Daesh* militants had been caught red-handed with bombs and was reported to possibly signal a "new stage for the movement in the country."[309] According to the Police, the individuals were acting in response to the call of *Daesh* to conduct attacks on Islamic states that practiced secularism in its governance. Several items such as 27 kilograms of Ammonium Nitrate, 25 kilograms of Potassium Nitrate, two liters of kerosene and a *Daesh* flag, were found to be in the group's possession. It was also reported that the group had learnt to make bombs through the Internet, in which one of the arrested individuals, a technician, was tasked to make the bombs.[310]

Discussions with senior Royal Malaysian Police (RMP)[311] officers indicate that between 2013 and 2015, there were seven groups in Malaysia that were formed or linked with *Daesh*. These groups include :
- *Tandzim Al Qaeda Malaysia* which was formed in 2013 by Yazid Sufaat ;
- *Briged Khalid Al-Walid* (2014) ;
- *Darul Islam Malizia* (DIM) formed by University Malaya lecturer Dr. Mahmud Ahmad ;
- *Briged Darul Islamiyah* (2014) ;
- *Arakan Daulah Islamiyah* (2014) ;
- *Fisabilillah* (2015) ;
- *Daulah Islamiyah Malaysia* (2015).

The Abu Sayyaf Group's (ASG) activities, particularly with regards to Kidnapping for Ransom (KFR) has been a major concern to both Malaysia and the Philippines. However, it is important to note that the ASG have been involved in such activities even before pledging their allegiance to *Daesh*. On 14 May 2015, Bernard Then Ted Fen and Thien Yoke Fun were kidnapped from the Ocean King Seafood Restaurant in Sandakan, Sabah, Malaysia. Thien Yoke Fun was released from captivity on 8

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[308] Kennimrod Sariburaja, *Al-Jamaah Al-Islamiyah*, a publication of the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), October 2013.
[309] Farik Zolkepli, *Suspected militants nabbed while they were making bombs*, 27 April 2015, http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2015/04/27/cops-foil-terror-attack-plans-suspected-militants-nabbed-while-they-were-making-bombs/ (Retrieved on 3 December 2015).
[310] *Ibid*.
[311] Discussions with Special Branch, RMP on 17 February 2015.

November 2015. However, on 17 November 2015, Bernard Then was reported to have been beheaded, just before the APEC Summit in the Philippines. This would be the first beheading case involving a Malaysian.[312] It was later reported that the Philippine security forces had arrested Kadaffi Muktadil (aka Kadaffy Kamsa) and Saddam Jailani who were suspected of Bernard Then's beheading. They were reportedly part of an ASG component headed by Alhabsy Misaya and Idang Susukan.[313] Kadaffy was arrested at a Jolo hospital where he was seeking treatment after he was injured in a motorcycle accident while Saddam was arrested on 25 November 2015. Kadaffi and his twin brother Mindas was said to have been involved in the actual kidnapping on 14 May 2015. Mindas was reported to have been killed on 21 May 2015 in Jolo.[314]

In July 2015, two Malaysians were arrested for their suspected links with *Daesh* and for planning terror attacks on VIPs and entertainment outlets in Kuala Lumpur. They were said to have been in communication since 2014 with "senior members of the terrorist group Islamic State" in Syria and were given orders by two senior *Daesh* Europeans to "launch attacks on Western interests in Kuala Lumpur and entertainment spots around the Klang Valley."[315]

In August 2015, ten people, including six security forces personnel, with links to *Daesh* were arrested after being suspected of spreading *Daesh* ideology, collecting funds and arranging for Malaysian *Daesh* members to go to Syria. The Police also alleged that "they were planning to acquire weapons to launch attacks in Malaysia" and were also involved in assisting returning *Daesh* fighters to enter the country.[316]

It was reported on 1 October 2015, that three Malaysians who joined *Daesh* had been killed in Iraq. Zid Saharani Mohamed Esa @ Abu Hoor went to Turkey via Bangkok by flight in July 2014 before making his way to Syria by land. He was a former member of Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia (KMM) and was detained under the Internal Security Act (ISA) in 2002. Muhamad Syazani Mohd Salim @ Abu Aydan, 28, was also killed in Bayji, Iraq, in a battle with Iraqi forces on 18 September 2015. He was believed to be part of a *Daesh* infantry trained to conduct specific missions. The third Malaysian was Fadzly Ariff Zainal Ariff @ Abu Ubaidah who died on 26 September 2015 after driving a truck filled with seven tonnes of explosives towards a bridge in Buhayrat, Fallujah.

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[312] Muguntan Vanar and Stephanie Lee, *Beheaded by Abu Sayyaf*, The Star, 18 November 2015.

[313] *Philippine Army may have found Then's headless body*, The Sun, 16 December 2015.

[314] *Green Light to Question Kadafi*, The Star, 3 December 2015.

[315] *IGP: Two IS-linked Malaysians nabbed over terror plots in Klang Valley*, Malay Mail Online, 9 July 2015, http://www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia/article/igp-two-is-linked-malaysians-nabbed-over-terror-plots-in-klang-valley#sthash.VFMmmj2Z.dpuf (Retrieved on 3 December 2015).

[316] Farik Zolkepli, *Ten with IS links nabbed*, The Star, 20 August 2015, http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2015/08/20/crime-is-ten-detained/ (Retrieved on 3 December 2015).

Bukit Aman Special Branch Counter-Terrorism Division head SAC Datuk Ayub Khan said that Malaysians recruited by *Daesh* were leaving their lower positions to take a more prominent role in the group, for example to become snipers and suicide bombers.[317]

On 14 November 2015 it was reported, that Dr. Mahmud Ahmad, who was based in Southern Philippines and was seen as a keen *Daesh* supporter had plans to form a "bigger IS terror bloc in Southeast Asia," which would "unite different terror cells in Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. Before that, (in January 2014), it was reported that Dr. Mahmud had arranged a meeting between the region's militant leaders to form the *Daulah Islamiyah Asia Tenggara*. Dr. Mahmud or Abu Handzalah, who trained with *Al-Qaeda* in Afghanistan in the late 1990s, was said to be "actively training with the ASG as well as taking part in terror operations in the Southern Philippines." He was suspected to have been involved in bomb attacks against the Philippine Army.[318] He was said to have used his position as a lecturer "to lure students into militancy" in a private college prior to joining University Malaya (UM). Dr. Mahmud is also said to be responsible in convincing Ahmad Tarmimi to become Malaysia's first suicide bomber in Iraq, in which he managed to kill 25 special force personnel.[319]

Dr. Mahmud Ahmad's right-hand man was said to be 37-year old Mohd Najib Hussein (aka Abu Anas). It was reported on 17 December 2015, that he had been killed in Basilan by the military. He was married with five children and had obtained a degree in Electrical Engineering from UM. Prior to fleeing to the Philippines in July 2014[320], he was a member of the *Arakan Daulah Islamiyah* and was reported to have been an expert bomb maker for the ASG. He was also alleged to have been involved in numerous activities such as assisting Dr. Mahmud in arranging meetings with other terrorist leaders, being responsible for several attacks on the Philippines' security forces, arranging safe travel passage to Syria for four Malaysian militants to join *Daesh* (one of whom was Ahmad Tarmimi, Malaysia's first suicide bomber), communicating with pro-*Daesh* youths in Malaysia and subsequently giving them on-line tutorials on how to construct bombs. Najib was said to have taken the *Bai'ah* to support *Daesh* alongside other ASG members.[321]

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[317] Farik Zolkepli, *Malaysians in IS trained to become Snipers and Suicide Bombers*, The Star, 1 October 2015. http://www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2015/10/01/Recruited-for-special-ops-Malaysians-in-IS-trained-to-become-snipers-and-suicide-bombers/ (Retrieved on 19 November 2015).

[318] Farik Zolkepli, *Regional Faction T\to Unite Different Terror Cells From Here, Indonesia And Philippines*, The Star, 14 November 2015 http://www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2015/11/14/Msians-plan-SouthEast-Asian-IS-Regional-faction-to-unite-different-terror-cells-from-here-Indonesia/ (Retrieved on 20 November 2015).

[319] *Ex-lecturer Trained with Al-Qaeda While Studying*, The Star, 14 November 2015 http://www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2015/11/14/Exlecturer-trained-with-alQaeda-while-studying/ (Retrieved on 20 November 2015).

[320] Faisal Asyraf, *Malaysian jihadist believed dead*, New Straits Times.

[321] Farik Zolkepli, *Malaysian terrorist killed in clash*, The Star, 17 December 2015.

It was reported on 14 December 2015 that there was a possibility of Malaysian children undergoing training in a militant camp in Syria. The Special Branch (SB), Royal Malaysian Police had indicated that 500 children from Southeast Asian countries were being trained by *Daesh*. The camp, believed to have been set up approximately in 2012 used Bahasa Indonesia as the medium of communication. The Special Branch highlighted that Malaysian children as young as two years old were brought there by their parents who had joined *Daesh* or were born to Malaysian parents already based in Syria. The Special Branch also registered their concern on the marked increase of local women who were joining *Daesh,* highlighting how women were promised "strapping good-looking Middle Eastern husbands, fighting in the name of Islam."[322]

The RMP also warned on the lack of monitoring of the entry of foreign preachers into Malaysia, stating that many such individuals had joined as the academic staff in institutions of higher learning or in religious institutions.[323]

In January 2016, the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) President Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai warned that even non-Muslims were at risk of being recruited by *Daesh*. He highlighted that, "they (*Daesh*) are looking at ways to penetrate the local Chinese community to influence our people towards terrorism." The Minister went on to say that *Daesh* were trying to recruit local Chinese Muslims to spread the group's influence in the community.[324]

It was reported that two Malaysian suicide bombers, Mohd Amirul Abdul Rahim and Mohamad Syazwan Mohd Salim killed themselves and others on 29 December 2015 and 3 January 2016 respectively. 26-year old Mohd Amirul (aka Abu Uqashah Malizi), left his family for Syria in October 2014 and died when *Daesh* launched an offensive on the 44th Syrian Democratic Forces coalition which saw 21 of its Kurdish fighters killed. 31-year old Mohamad Syazwan, on the other hand, was one of seven suicide bombers who targeted police forces undergoing training at the Speicher military base, approximately 160 km north of Baghdad. He was reported to have been shot while detonating his suicide bomb that subsequently killed 12 policemen and wounded 20. Syazwan, together with his younger brother, 28-year old Mohamad Shahzani Mohd Salim, left via Istanbul on 23 September, 2014. Younger brother Mohd. Shahzani (aka Abu Aydan) was also reported to have died in a suicide mission in Bayji, northern Iraq in September 2015. Both brothers were said to have been part of the *Katibah Nusantara*.[325]

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[322] Faisal Asyraf, *Malaysian kids at IS training camp*, New Straits Times, 14 December 2015.

[323] *Militan: Kerenah biokrasi jadi halangan*, Utusan Malaysia, 14 December 2015.

[324] Adrian Chan, *Liow: IS targeting non-Muslims too*, The Star, 11 January 2016.

[325] Aliza Shah, *Malaysian suicide bomber kills 33*, New Straits Times, 11 January 2016

In January 2016, a 16-year old school boy launched what was deemed as the first 'lone cub' attack by *Daesh* in Malaysia when he tried to kidnap a sales assistant in the northern state of Kedah. However, in the middle of the attack, the suspect surprisingly asked the victim to alert the police. He then did not even attempt to escape when the police arrived at the scene. Malaysian Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar later said in a press conference that the suspect had been detained under the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act (SOSMA) 2012. Tan Sri Khalid went on to say that the suspect had been "brainwashed into following Islamic State ideology through e-mail and social media, and wanted to prove that he was capable of such an act." It was also reported that he viewed non-Muslims as *kafir harbi* (those that can be justifiably killed)."[326]

It was reported in January 2016 that *Katibah Nusantara* had issued a video which was posted in Bahasa Malaysia threatening revenge on Malaysia, for the arrest of its members. The video, titled *Mesej Awam Kepada Malaysia* (Public Message to Malaysia), warned that, "If you catch us, we will only increase in number but if you let us be, we will be closer to our goal of bringing back the rule of the *Khalifah* (caliph)."

The video shows *Katibah Nusantara* member, Abdul Halid Dari, watched by another member, Mohd Nizam Arifin, informing that, "*those who brand us as khawarij (dissenters), Daesh and even as Mossad agents are in fact Syiah and its allies*". He further warned that "*we will never bow down to the democratic system of governance as we will only follow Allah's rules*."

Datuk Ayob Khan, from the Malaysian Police commented that the threat and direct challenge to the Malaysian Government, reflected Katibah's brazen stance. He was quoted as saying, "*it further proves that IS, especially the Katibah group, views our country (Malaysia) as secular, and as such makes the government and the people as its targets. This is no doubt in retaliation against our security forces' actions against them*." Interestingly, the 1-minute video also called upon members of Somalia's *Al-Shabaab* to pledge their allegiance to *Daesh* leader Abu Bakar Al-Baghdadi, quoting Prophet Muhammad's teaching to join the 'real' fight in Syria.[327]

The video threat was significant as it was perceived, firstly, as a specific call to Malaysians (as seen by them using the Malay language) to heed the call of *Daesh* and

[326] G.C Tan, Farik Zolkepli, Nadirah H. Rodzi and Danial Albakri, *Teen stages IS 'lone cub' attack,* The Star Online, 13 January 2016, http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2016/01/13/teen-stages-is-lone-cub-attack/ (Retrieved on 5 March 2016).
[327] Farik Zolkepli, *Militants threaten revenge*, The Star online, 25 January 2016, http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2016/01/25/militants-threaten-revenge-is-wing-warns-malaysia-for-stepping-up-campaign-against-group/ (Retrieved on 11 March 2016).

to challenge the democratic system in Malaysia, replacing it with their version of a caliphate. Secondly, the call in Malay, for members of the *Al-Shabaab* to pledge their allegiance to *Daesh* leader Abu Bakar Al-Baghdadi led Datuk Ayob Khan to suspect the possibility of Malaysians or Malay-speaking militants being members of the Somalian group. He was quoted saying that, *"It is certainly alarming, if true. Why would the militants speak in Bahasa Malaysia if they were not calling out to their fellow countrymen?"* Finally, most threats or warning of attacks by *Daesh* or other sources have been followed by subsequent terrorist attacks. Prior to the Jakarta attacks on 14 January 2016, *Daesh* had warned "*that there would be a concert in Indonesia and that the city would be in the international news.*" A day before the Paris attacks in November 2015 that killed more than 130 people, there were warnings by the Iraqi intelligence on an imminent attack. This coupled with Malaysia's participation in the *Global Coalition to Counter ISIL* could be viewed as a catalyst to make the country a possible target.

The response of the Government however, was firm. A day after the video emerged, the Malaysian Prime Minister was quoted saying that, "*Here in Malaysia, we are firm in our resolve and fully committed to fight violent extremism.*"[328] The Special Branch Director from the Royal Malaysian Police, Commissioner Datuk Seri Mohamad Fuzi, in response to the video threat, was quoted to have said that, "*We are ready to face any threat despite the grave nature of the threat.*" His colleague, Datuk Ayob Khan was more explicit, "*Their message (from the video clip) is quite simple – they will attack Malaysia if their threat is not heeded…….Mark my words, we will use all our resources to prevent these terrorists from carrying out their threats.*"[329]

In September 2015, Prime Minister Datuk Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak announced at the *Leaders' Summit on Countering IS and Violent Extremism* in Washington that Malaysia was part of the 'Global Coalition to Counter ISIL.'[330]

Prime Minister Najib also announced during that Summit that "*Malaysia is actively exploring the possibility of establishing a regional digital counter-messaging communications centre*" as one of the efforts to countering and preventing the spread of violent extremism. The proposed Digital Strategic Counter-Terrorism Division (DSCD) under the purview of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would focus on the soft approaches in countering the online narrative put forth by *Daesh*. The objectives of

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[328] Farik Zolkepli, Jastin Ahmad Tarmizi, Akil Yunos, Muguntan Vanar, *Najib: We're not shaken by threat*, The Star, 26 January 2016.

[329] *Bukit Aman ready to face threat issued by IS wing*, The Star, 26 January 2016.

[330] Leaders' Summit to Counter ISIL and Violent Extremism, Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, September 29, 2015 https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/09/29/fact-sheet-leaders-summit-counter-isil-and-violent-extremism (Retrieved on 7 December 2015).

the division would be two-fold. Firstly, to contest the terrorist rhetoric and agenda in this region at the digital space by exposing their misinformation and disinformation, and secondly, to produce counter narrative end-products to win the hearts and minds of the people. Specifically, the division would look into four core areas, which include monitoring the terrorist messaging, developing counter-narratives, developing counter-messaging end products and disseminating the digital products to best reach and impact the audience.[331]

On 20 November 2015, Defence Minister, Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein stated that the Government was "aware of the involvement of certain military personnel in IS," and considered them as 'enemies of the state'. He added that the Defence Ministry would go all out to counter this "sick trend" and reiterated that the Ministry had put in place measures and steps to both identify and catch those involved.[332]

On 23 October 2014, the Malaysian National Council for Islamic Religious Affairs issued a *fatwa* banning any Malaysian Muslim from being involved with *Daesh*. Subsequently, on 20 April 2015, a related *fatwa* was issued banning any Malaysian Muslim from even supporting *Daesh*.

Legislation

In 2012, Malaysia repealed the Emergency Ordinance and the Internal Security Act. In its place, the Malaysian Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 or SOSMA was put in place, taking into effect in July 2012.

SOSMA was however deemed inadequate, particularly in countering the FTF phenomenon and this led to a need to recalibrate the legislation to deal with the changing terrorist landscape.

In June 2014, the Malaysian Government classified *Daesh* as a terrorist group and supported UN Resolution 2170 and 2178. UN Resolution 2170[333] essentially expanded the counter-terrorism framework by imposing obligations on member states to

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[331] Discussion with Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia on 1 March 2016.
[332] Farik Zolkepli, *Mindef vows to fight 'sick trend'*, 20 November 2015, http://www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2015/11/20/Mindef-vows-to-fight-sick-trend-Military-personnel-linked-to-IS-are-enemies-of-the-state-says-Hisham/ (Retrieved on 20 March 2016).
[333] United Nations Security Council Resolution 2187 (2014), http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2178.pdf (Retrieved on 12 December 2015).

respond to the threat of foreign terrorist fighters while UN Resolution 2170[334] condemned the recruitment of foreign fighters by *Daesh* and *al-Nusra*.

In November 2014, the Prime Minister presented the Government's White Paper entitled *Towards Tackling the Threat of the Islamic State* in Parliament. The White Paper explained the threat posed by *Daesh*, the impact that it posed on Malaysia as well as the dangers of the spread of radical religious teaching in Malaysia[335]. The White Paper then went on to propose drafting and enacting new Anti-Terror laws to combat the group.

The new laws had the specific mandate to bolster the existing anti-terrorism and militancy laws in place at that period of time, which was SOSMA, Prevention of Crime Act and the Penal Code. The Prime Minister indicated that the new piece of legislation would adopt a "holistic approach to contain preventive measures or detention, punishment, and evidential rules, special courts and procedures and counselling" and would be presented in the following parliamentary session.

In this regard, the *Dewan Rakyat* (lower house of the Malaysian Parliament) on 7 April 2015 and *Dewan Negara* (upper house of the Malaysian Parliament) on 23 April 2015, passed two new legislations and amended four existing legislations which were:
     (i)   Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) 2015 ;
     (ii)   Special Measures Against Terrorism in Foreign Countries Act (SMATA) 2015 ;
     (iii)   Prison (Amendment) (No. 2) Act ;
     (iv)   Penal Code (Amendment) Act ;
     (v)   Prevention of Crime (Amendment) Act ; and
     (vi)   Security Offences (Special Measures) (Amendment) Act.

The key provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) include: [336]
➢ Detaining suspected terrorists for up to two years with a possibility of a further two years' extension ;
➢ Electronic Monitoring Device (EMD) being attached to the detainee[337] to keep track of their movements ;
➢ The administration of various preventive measures to deradicalise suspects[338]

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[334] *Ibid*.

[335] Anton Chan, *Malaysia*, Volume 7, Issue 1, January/February 2015, Counter Terrorist Trends Analysis, International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore.

[336] Wendy Zeldin, *Malaysia: New Anti-Terrorism Measures Tabled in Parliament*, Global Legal Monitor, Library of Congress, http://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/article/malaysia-new-anti-terrorism-measures-tabled-in-parliament/ (Retrieved on 7 December 2015).

[337] *Rehab Scheme for Suspected Terrorist Planned*, The Star, 3 December 2015.

- ➤ Provision to allow the usage of information obtained from the social media as evidence to charge and prosecute extremists ; and
- ➤ Mechanism to deal with extremists missionaries coming from abroad.

It was also mentioned by the Deputy Home Minister, Datuk Nur Jazlan Mohamed in Parliament on 2 December 2015 that a comprehensive rehabilitation programme was being drawn up for those who were detained under POTA.[339]

Also, on 7 April 2015, the Malaysian Parliament passed the Special Measures against Terrorism in Foreign Countries Bill and the key provisions include:
- ➤ special measures to deal with anyone who engages in activities involving listed terrorist organisations in a foreign country ; and
- ➤ allowing for passports and travel documents to be revoked to prevent a person from travelling to a foreign country to engage in terrorist acts.[340]

There were also proposed amendments to existing laws and the key provisions include:
- ➤ making it an offence to receive training and instruction from terrorist groups and persons committing terrorist acts.
- ➤ criminalising the possessing or having control of items associated with terrorist groups such as flags, banners and publications, in which under this new law, a person can be jailed up to seven years or fined if guilty of this offence.[341]

It was also reported that Prime Minister Najib had instructed the Chief Justice to set up a special court to handle cases related to extremism and *Daesh*. This move was strongly backed by Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein who said that such a streamlined judicial process would expedite the process of curbing the spread of extremism.[342] Subsequently, four High Court judges in Kuala Lumpur and one judge in Sabah had been assigned to hear *Daesh* militant and security cases. They were reported to have been trained in particular areas of the law that involved security.[343]

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[338] Bilveer Singh, *Prevention of Terrorism: Relevance of POTA in Malaysia*, RSIS, http://www.establishmentpost.com/prevention-terrorism-relevance-pota-malaysia/ (Retrieved on 18 November 2015).

[339] *Rehab Scheme for Suspected Terrorist Planned*, The Star, 3 December 2015.

[340] Hemananthani Sivanandam, Yuen Meikeng & Martin Carvalho, *Prevention of Terrorism, Special Measures Against Terrorism Bills Tabled for First Reading*, STAR, 30 March 2015. http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2015/03/30/pota-bill-tabled-first-reading/ (Retrieved on 7 December 2015).

[341] *Ibid*.

[342] *Ministry backs militant court*, New Straits Times, 16 December 2015.

[343] *Five judges assigned to hear cases involving IS militants*, The Star, 17 December 2015.

Issues in Radicalisation

Motivational Factors

There are surprisingly few similarities among the Malaysians who have decided to fight for *Daesh*, with the exception that almost all of them have been Malay and professing Islam. However, their background and experience are quite diverse ranging from young adults[344] in their 20's to older men, those with university education to semi-skilled workers, from the private to the public sector.[345] There was also a greater participation of women, both via indirect[346] and direct means. However, most of the data derived is qualitative in nature as quantitative date is hard to come by.

The triggers and drivers for them being radicalised are equally diverse. Conversations with law enforcement officials[347] indicate that while religion and ideology is the *de facto* clause, many of those who are recruited are getting involved due to the 'thrill' factor and the sense of adventure that fighting in a foreign conflict has the potential to provide.

Even with regards to religion, the motivating factors have different nuances. JI extremists in Malaysia in the 1990's and early 2000, felt that they had lived 'secular lives' in their past, doing things they later deemed as un-Islamic. In an effort to atone for their past sins, they felt called to fight and if necessary, die for their 'religious' cause. While this atonement factor was not very much the case for *Daesh* recruitment, it still cannot be fully discounted. Chris Lau, a freelance Malaysian journalist[348] spoke on how he met a Malaysian in Syria 'who wanted to clean himself up'. There were also those who got involved due to their efforts for 'self-redemption' after leading lives considered unIslamic.[349] It was also reported that there were Malaysian fighters in Syria and Iraq who had no qualms becoming suicide bombers as they perceived it to be the fastest way to achieve martyrdom. According to *The Star*, a Malaysian newspaper, a source familiar with the case was quoted to have said, "the ultimate aim of a militant is to become a martyr. And the best way is to become suicide bombers. They believe that such a sacrifice will absolve them of all their sins."[350]

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[344] Ahmad El-Muhammady, Interview with Author in Kuala Lumpur on 4 December 2015.
[345] Discussions with Senior Special Branch Police Officer on 17 February 2015.
[346] Ahmad El-Muhammady, Interview with Author in Kuala Lumpur on 4 December 2015.
[347] Discussions with Senior Special Branch Police Officer on 17 February 2015.
[348] Chris Lau Chung Wan, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.
[349] Ahmad El-Muhammady, Interview with Author in Kuala Lumpur on 4 December 2015.
[350] Farik Zolkepli, *Malaysian militants are dying to become martyrs*, The Star, 12 January 2016.

Also, in the current situation, some were 'sympathetic to the plight' of Sunnis in Syria and felt that since their 'struggle was legitimate', it was their duty to stand up and fight for their Sunni kin, who they perceived were being oppressed by the Assad regime.[351]

There were also those who felt compelled to be part of a so-called 'Islamic caliphate' that had defined borders and a semi-structured authority with a perceived sense of governance and management. Others felt that the prophesied Armageddon that would take place in the 'end-of the world' (*Hari Kiamat*) would actually take place in Sham, which is current day Syria and this would be their chance to take part in the battle to end all battles and that what was happening in Syria was reflected in the Hadith, whereby the Army of Mahdi which carried the 'black banner' and would liberate Jerusalem was actually a prophecy describing *Daesh*.[352]

Hence, radicalisation towards *Daesh* in the Malaysian context can be said to be due to various multifaceted triggers and drivers. Conceptually, these factors[353] could be grouped under four main themes, ranging from the individual factor, religious discourse, external factors (beyond Malaysia) and internal factors (within Malaysia).

Firstly, the personality and make-up of the individual plays a significant part, wherein the socio-economic status, education and upbringing could at times determine the susceptibility and vulnerability of the individual towards the narrative of the terrorist.
Secondly, religious discourse is a pertinent factor in the radicalisation of many, whereby the ideologue and religious leader/s play a role in shaping the individual's worldview, in this case towards extremism and violence. The ideologue could be a person far removed from the potential recruit, who nevertheless provides the theocratic model, religious justification and intellectual input that is then used by the localised religious leader. The religious leader could be the person on the ground, who plays the role of personalising and packaging the extremist message and presenting it to the potential recruit. The so-called religious leaders, like Yazid Sufaat, tend to be literalists, who quote Quranic verses and interpret it literally. This interpretation is then translated into action, in most cases acts of violence. The idea that one needs to be knowledgeable and have a certain degree of expertise before being able to interpret the Quran is not accepted by them on the premise that such scholars and experts are finite in their understanding and therefore faulty in their interpretations. Ironically, they do not subject themselves to this same particular reasoning when they

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[351] Ahmad El-Muhammady, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.
[352] *Ibid*.
[353] Ahmad El-Muhammady, Interview with Author in Kuala Lumpur on 4 December 2015.

carry out their interpretations and actions. Hence, these religious leaders, as in the case of JI, invoke *takfirism*, or label those who disagree with them as *taghut* or 'enemies of the religion'.[354] They do so on the premise that opposing *Daesh* is equivalent to opposing God, thereby making those who do so the enemy. For example, they believe that only God has the power to make laws but in democracies like Malaysia, the people have instead elected representatives to the legislature bodies such as the Parliament, who then craft laws that govern the land. This, according to *Daesh* is *syirik* (the sin of idolatry) and is not permitted in Islam, giving them the purported religious justification to go against the authorities.

The ability for *Daesh* to dictate the religious narrative is possible due to the lack of understanding of *jihad* and political Islam allowing many to be exploited and manipulated.[355] Given this situation, the RMP highlighted the need to involve the religious authorities both in defining jihad and educating the public on its true meaning and possible misinterpretations.[356] However, it was highlighted that the religious discourse which was imposed by the authorities was also often times very traditionalistic, which inadvertently led to a loss of interest among the young people. There was therefore the need to ensure that the message was packaged and delivered in a manner that appealed to the younger generation.[357] Edwin Raj[358] highlighted the initiative to get religious clerics that would "connect" with the youth. For this to happen, there must be a push for the authorities to start engaging with various religious entities and groups.[359] In this regard, the importance of critical thinking[360]

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[354] Kennimrod Sariburaja, *Al-Jamaah Al-Islamiyah*, a publication of the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, October 2013.

[355] Maszlee Malik, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

[356] Royal Malaysian Police Officer, 2nd Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

[357] Participant, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

[358] Edwin Raj, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

[359] Maszlee Malik, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

[360] Elina Noor, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

and how the lack of it made one susceptible[361] to the rhetoric of *Daesh* was highly significant.

Thirdly, external factors, beyond Malaysia, such as what has been happening in Syria and Iraq and the alleged cruelty perpetrated by the Bashar al-Assad regime was used to justify joining the *Daesh* struggle and legitimising the violence that 'needs' to be carried out.Fourthly, internal factors, within Malaysia, such as the supreme law in the land being based on the Federal Constitution and not *syariah* or Islamic law coupled with the allegation that the government is secular and liberal in various issues, provides *Daesh* with the narrative that change, even via violence, is a religious calling.

There were also those who felt that there were certain trends that were significant with regards to radicalisation in Malaysia. There was at times unwillingness, on the part of the authorities to comment on anything with regards to Islam for fear of treading on sensitivities associated with the religion. This meant that the extremists were able to dictate the conversation and monopolise the space on this matter. There was also the perception that the authorities were pandering to certain groups that often times advocated radical, though non-violent ideas and ambitions. This had the dual effect of firstly, galvanising extremists to speak louder as no action was seen to be taken by the authorities against them. Secondly, it gave the impression to susceptible and vulnerable groups that since there was no opposition to such a narrative, it must therefore be true. This development was dangerous and had the potential to accelerate the process of radicalisation.[362]

Pre-Radicalisation Signs

Based on the arrest and subsequent questioning of *Daesh* suspects in Malaysia, there were certain tell-tale signs that were present for those that were radicalised and on the verge of going to the conflict zone.[363] These include:

➢ Hooked on religiously-inspired material, with particular attention on websites pertaining to the situation to Syria and Iraq.
➢ On Facebook, these individuals added as 'friends' others who had either been to Iraq and Syria or were planning to go there.
➢ These individuals had established links and subsequently 'chat groups' with others, discussing the situation in Iraq and Syria.

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[361] Ahmad El-Muhammady, Interview with Author in Kuala Lumpur on 4 December 2015.
[362] Anonymous participant, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.
[363] Discussions with Special Branch Police Officer on 17 February 2015.

> ➢ These individuals actually notified and in some cases spread the news to their friends and relatives of their impending plans to travel to Iraq and Syria.
> ➢ Some of the individuals actually obtained permission and blessings from their mothers.
> ➢ Some of them had disposed their properties and belongings prior to going to Syria and Iraq.
> ➢ Some of them bought items they needed to use for the Syrian terrain, including boots and jackets.
> ➢ Some of them took quick loans prior to going to Syria and Iraq, with obvious intentions of not repaying it back.

The Recruitment Process

The RMP commented that there were certain similarities among those who had been radicalised in Malaysia. Many were anti-establishment and had strong views about those in power. Some were also very 'religious' and had a deep desire for the nation to be fully governed by Sharia or Islamic law. Some were also desperate to join a structured, law-based entity and had prior to that, attempted to join the police and military and subsequently having been rejected, showed interest in *Daesh*. The RMP[364] also noted that while in the past, terrorists in Malaysia tended to come from religious backgrounds, the current situation was different in that *Daesh* was able to attract Malaysians from diverse backgrounds such as those who were educated, jobless and even drug addicts. It was also disconcerting to note that there were some instances when even the parents were supportive of their children's action to participate in the conflict in Syria and Iraq.

Asrul Daniel Ahmed[365] from the Global Movement of the Moderates Foundation (GMMF) spoke on how the religious ideologues were heavily relying on an 'emotional narrative' that focused on three important elements. Firstly, Muslims were seen as being 'humiliated' by the events that were happening in the world today. Secondly, it was perceived that there was a collusion among certain entities, conspiring to bring the Muslims down. Lastly, redemption was provided through *jihad* as a way not only to redeem themselves, but to right a grave injustice. In this regard, the RMP[366]

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[364] Royal Malaysian Police, 2nd Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.
[365] Asrul Daniel Ahmed, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.
[366] Royal Malaysian Police, 2nd Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

highlighted that many Malaysians were intentionally exposed to the cruelty allegedly perpetrated by the al-Assad regime and felt compelled to help their fellow Sunni brothers.

Non-Violent Radical Groups

The issue of non-violent radical groups was also a growing concern, particularly in Indonesia and Malaysia. Groups such as *Hizbut Tahrir Malaysia* (HTM), which claim to be part of the global Hizbut Tahrir[367] do not openly advocate violence but at the same time subscribe to radical ideas such as an Islamic Caliphate, incorporating Malaysia and other Muslim-majority states. Hence, while advocating extreme ideas, they nevertheless hide behind the cover that they do not condone violence. Therefore, while being rightfully concerned about violent extremism, it might also be worthwhile to ascertain if non-violent extremism could also pose a threat. The Quilliam Foundation posits that certain narratives, even when held without advocating violence,[368] provides the 'mood music'[369] to which acts of terrorism are committed. In this regard, Alex Schmid poses the question on whether non-violent, radical groups are able to act as 'firewalls' against further radicalisation or are actually "conveyor belts", paving the way for violent extremism. He comes to the conclusion that non-violent, radical groups are equally dangerous and that "the distinction between acceptable non-violent extremists and unacceptable violent extremists is a false and illusionary one since religious extremism in inherently violent."[370]

Daesh and the Internet

The power of the Internet as a radicalisation and recruitment tool for *Daesh* in Malaysia is something that demands careful examination. In February 2014, a 26-year old Malaysian female doctor, named 'Shams' but who called herself "bird of Jannah" (paradise) operated a blog called 'Diary of a Muhajirah.' Both her blog and FB posts not only provided logistical information but also gave glimpses of her personal feelings and emotions ("*Stethoscope around my neck and kalash on my shoulder. Martyrdom is*

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[367] Hizbut Tahrir Malaysia (HTM) Facebook page, https://ms-my.facebook.com/HTM1435 (Retrieved on 7 December 2015).

[368] Kuman Ramakrishna, *Lecture on 'Radicalisation over the Internet: Radicalism, Extremism and the Transition to Real-world Violence*' for the '*Workshop On Extremism And Terrorism Online: A Multidisciplinary Examination Of Current Trends And Challenges*', organised by the '*Centre of Excellence for National Security* (CENS), *S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)',* Singapore, October 2014.

[369] The Quilliam Foundation, http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/about/faqs/ (Retrieved on 7 December 2015).

[370] Alex P. Schmid, *Violent and Non-Violent Extremism: Two Sides of the Same Coin?* International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (The Hague), May 2014, http://www.icct.nl/download/file/ICCT-Schmid-Violent-Non-Violent-Extremism-May-2014.pdf (Retrieved on 7 December 2015).

my highest dream").[371] Elena Noor[372] from the Institute of Strategic International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia highlighted that Sham's postings were 'well articulated' and carried a 'persuasive message' that had the potential to 'introduce radical ideas' onto the audience. After reading Shams posts, the author can understand how her honest postings over the excitement of getting married, the fear of losing her husband and the coming of her child is both intriguing and compelling and has the dangerous potential of humanising *Daesh* and attracting young people to join. Ahmad El-Muhammady spoke on how in his dealings with a 27-year old girl who was arrested for planning to go to Syria, what struck him was her 'sincerity and curiosity' in wanting to both know and help in the situation there.[373]

Hence, it is hardly surprising that the radicalisation and recruitment process[374] in Malaysia was very much facilitated by the social media and in particular FaceBook (FB), which was used to attract potential members. While JI's recruitment in Malaysia was mainly done via the one-on-one approach, *Daesh* has been able to conduct bigger scale efforts of radicalisation and recruitment via the Internet. When individuals showed deeper interest, they were then asked to move to other platforms which accorded more privacy.[375] The Internet also played the role of the catalyst in piquing the interest and curiosity of the audience and led a segment of the audience to subsequently interact after the initial contact.[376]

The Internet was also able to considerably shorten the time needed to radicalise and recruit an individual in Malaysia. For instance, in the JI model, it took approximately three to six months before a potential recruit was allowed to be admitted into the group, whereas in the case of *Daesh*, which utilised Internet platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter and particularly You Tube, they were able to recruit much faster than JI, often time in a span of mere weeks.[377] *Daesh* was also able to market specific

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[371] Ellie Hall, *An ISIS Love Story: "Till Martyrdom Do Us Part*, BuzzFeedNews, 28 September 2014, http://www.buzzfeed.com/ellievhall/an-isis-love-story-till-martyrdom-do-us-part#.ylJpzEDZ3.(Retrieved on 28 November 2015).

[372] Elena Noor, 1st Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

[373] Ahmad El-Muhammady, Interview with Author in Kuala Lumpur on 4 December 2015.

[374] Maszlee Malik, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

[375] Ahmad El-Muhammady, Interview with Author in Kuala Lumpur on 4 December 2015.

[376] Mior Roslan, 1st Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

[377] Ahmad El-Muhammady, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

digital products such as the game *Flames of War* that specifically targeted the youths.[378] CyberSecurity Malaysia[379] also highlighted that *Daesh* had tremendous expertise in exploiting the social media and determining the media analysis. They were able to expertly determine opinion, translate opinion into belief and subsequently turn opinion into conviction.

Returning FTF

In late 2015 it was reported that seven Malaysians who had fought in Syria and Iraq had returned home.[380] Ahmad El-Muhammady[381] highlighted the need to be prepared for the return of such Malaysians who had participated in the conflict in Syria and Iraq. He was of the opinion that their experience, motivation and ideology would certainly pose a serious challenge when they were back in Malaysia. He therefore spoke on the need for suitable legislation to be put in place that would allow the authorities to deal with this unique challenge. He proposed some form of debriefing, assessment, rehabilitation and monitoring when they returned back to Malaysia stressing on the need for a robust legal framework that would allow such interventions.

Debriefing the returnees was for two main reasons.[382] Firstly, they had with them vital and valuable intelligence. They could provide operational and tactical information with regards to the names and numbers of Malaysians in Syria and Iraq, the organisational and hierarchical structure and the roles played by the various personalities, the travel routes to reach there, the kinds of activities that were being carried out and their funding sources and movement. Strategic information in terms on how they were radicalised, who were their religious leaders and idealogues, the role of social media in the radicalisation process could also be extremely important not only to understand them and the radicalisation process but also in helping prevent future radicalisation and recruitment. Secondly, debriefing them served to assess their actual radicalisation level, their specific involvement in the conflict zone and subsequently and most importantly, the threat level they posed to Malaysia. This operational, tactical and

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[378] Maszlee Malik, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

[379] CyberSecurity Malaysia, 2nd Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

[380] *Rehab Scheme for Suspected Terrorist Planned*, The Star, 3 December 2015.

[381] Ahmad El-Muhammady, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

[382] Ahmad El-Muhammady, Interview with Author in Kuala Lumpur on 4 December 2015.

strategic information would also be vital when subsequently conducting the rehabilitation programme.

Monitoring was necessary for if they were not incarcerated, there was then the need to check on their activities and whereabouts. During the period when the Internal Security Act (ISA)[383] was in place, the 'Powers of Preventive Detention' allowed for the Restriction Order, which gave the authorities power to restrict the movements of an individual and had the provision that made it mandatory for the individual to report to the police on a regular basis. With the repeal of the ISA, this was no longer possible. Nevertheless, POTA has the provision that allows for the suspect to be tracked through an electronic tracking device.

However, Dr. Maszlee Malik[384] cautioned that inadvertently, extremist movements like *Daesh*, would force the hands of the state authorities, often times leading the state to be more heavy-handed and authoritative. This situation, if not carefully balanced and managed, could cause more problems and ironically make counter-terrorism measurers the cause of further radicalisation. Herizal Hazri[385] also spoke on the need to be careful in our counter-terrorism efforts, warning on the dangers of using a 'blanket approach' to deal with the issue. He highlighted that given the differing ideology and motivations of groups such as AQ and *Daesh*, the approach to counter such groups should also take cognizance of these differences.

Malaysia also puts much effort in rehabilitating terrorists. According to Commissioner Datuk Seri Mohamad Fuzi from the Royal Malaysian Police,[386] the deradicalisation programme in Malaysia has a 95% success rate as only a few hardcore militants had relapsed. Based on the 240 terrorists detained from various groups between 2001 and 2011, only 13 militants, or approximately 5% had relapsed and returned to their 'old ways', among them being "Nazri Dollah, Yazid Sufaat, Samad Shukri and Jeknal Adil." Datuk Seri Fuzi also spoke of the *Al-Guraba* cell, which comprised 13 Malaysian students who were detained in Pakistan in 2003 and then later rehabilitated in Malaysia and went on to excel academically, highlighting that they were "now in

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[383] Laws of Malaysia, Act 82, Internal Security Act 1960, http://www.agc.gov.my/Akta/Vol.%202/Act%2082.pdf (Retrieved on 10 December 2015).

[384] Maszlee Malik, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

[385] Herizal Hazri, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

[386] *95% de-radicalised by programme, says SB*, The Star Online, http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2016/01/27/95-deradicalised-by-programme-says-sb/ (Retrieved on 11 March 2016).

distinguished positions both in the private and public sectors." It was also significant to note that to deal with *Daesh*, the Malaysian authorities were carrying out a special rehabilitation programme for 18 suspected militants. Datuk Seri Fuzi was quoted to have said that the programme was "a pilot project involving lectures, discourses, discussions and counselling sessions with religious experts and police personnel with counselling backgrounds" and was "focused on countering the *Salafi Jihadi* (violent jihadism) *Daesh* ideology."[387]

Countering the Terrorist Narratives

Mr. Edwin Raj[388], from 1 Malaysia for Youth (IM4U), lamented that counter-narratives to *Daesh* were virtually non-existent. He spoke on the collective inability to push our narrative against terrorist groups such as *Daesh* and was of the opinion that there was a need to look into the marketing and advertising of the counter-narrative. He also highlighted that traditional mediums such as the television was severely under-utilised in terms of delivering counter-narratives. It was also imperative that any counter-narratives that targeted young people actually involve young people.[389] The possibility of using former rehabilitated terrorists in the counter-narratives was also highlighted.[390] The RMP have had considerable success in using former JI terrorists such as Wan Min Wan Mat to selected audiences in Malaysia. However, getting rehabilitated *Daesh* terrorists would take time.

Given the propensity of *Daesh* to utilise social platforms in the Internet to radicalise and recruit, Malaysia in collaboration with the United States, announced the setting up of a regional digital counter messaging centre[391] which would look into monitoring the terrorist message, developing counter-narratives and disseminating the digital products to best reach and impact the audience. It was hoped that the centre would take the battle in countering *Daesh*'s narrative into the virtual world.

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[387] *Ibid.*

[388] Edwin Raj, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

[389] Ahmad El-Muhammady, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

[390] Mior Roslan, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.

[391] Azura Abas, *Malaysia-US to establish counter-messagsng centre to tackle terrorism*, New Straits Times, 20 November 2015 http://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/11/112756/msia-us-establish-counter-messaging-centre-tackle-terrorism?d=1 (Retrieved on 12 December 2015).

Conclusion

The enactment of new laws and the amendments to existing legislation, coupled with the numerous arrests and detention of suspected terrorists followed by them being subsequently charged in court, to a great extent shows Malaysia's commitment and seriousness in dealing with *Daesh*. The SB within the RMP has shown great determination in both monitoring and curtailing terrorist activities involving foreigners and citizens within Malaysia as well as Malaysians beyond Malaysia.

Nevertheless, the reality on the ground is that *Daesh*-inspired radicalisation continues to trouble the country. A more concerted and robust effort, particularly in countering the terrorist narrative needs to be initiated and implemented. Policy that is based on solid research into the drivers and triggers of radicalisation is still very much work-in-progress. The ability for radicals to abuse and exploit religion continues to be an issue. Critical thinking and the development of non-violent approaches to resolve issues still remains at its infancy.

Hence, while a great deal has been done, the struggle against *Daesh*-inspired radicalisation is far from being over in Malaysia.

5. *DAESH* IN THE PHILIPPINES

Outline

This chapter traces the recent developments, particularly with regards to the links and relationship between homegrown terror groups in the Philippines and *Daesh*. Related issues such as the non-passing of the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) in the Philippine congress in February 2016 and its possible effects on groups or individuals gravitating towards *Daesh*, the vulnerability of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) and efforts to counter-radicalisation are also considered.

Introduction

There were more challenges obtaining information on the subject of *Daesh* radicalisation in the Philippines when compared to both Indonesia and Malaysia. While the policy makers and law enforcement officers the author met were professional, cooperative and helpful, the official position was that *Daesh* had yet to make its presence felt in the Philippines in a significant manner. They were also of the opinion that *Daesh* would find it difficult to recruit its citizens and that there was no credible data to suggest that there were any of its citizens in either Syria or Iraq, to begin with. They were also of the opinion that groups in the Philippines that had pledged allegiance to *Daesh* had done so for opportunistic reasons and their position was not reflective of their actual stand. Literature on the subject of *Daesh* in the Philippines was also harder to come by. There were however some who felt that *Daesh*'s presence in the Philippines was highly significant and that it was just a matter of time before *Daesh* would be a major actor in the radicalisation process in the country.

In view of this, at the end of 2015 it remained unclear on the exact presence of *Daesh* in the Philippines and the quantum of Philippine citizens recruited as FTF who are either in Iraq/Syria or have returned back to the Philippines. Therefore, as mentioned, while there have been cases of groups pledging allegiance to *Daesh*, it remains uncertain if this is solely for propaganda purposes on the part of the group in question or signals a shift in the direction of radicalisation in the Philippines.

Developments on the ground

There were instances of individuals and groups pledging allegiance to al-Baghdadi and *Daesh* and subsequently uploading the videos. On 2 July 2014, there was a video uploaded, which showed members or former members of the ASG in prison, gathering around a black flag and swearing allegiance to *Daesh*. On 5 July 2014, there was a

second video on Facebook, of members claiming to be ASG, speaking in Arabic and reciting the following:

> "*Our brothers in Faith, we are your brothers from Ummah Fi'e Sabilillah, the official media of al Harakatul al-Islamiyah (the official name of Abu Sayyaf). We would like to inform everybody that we sincerely support our mujahideen brothers of ISIS. We are willing to extend to them our right hand when their left hand is lost.*"[392]

They also had a special message for al-Baghdadi, saying:

"*You are to us a replacement of our mother and father.' Our aim is to join you to claim Iraq and As-Sham and to share the Caliphate by the will of Allah*."[393]

Former President, Defense Secretary and Armed Forces Chief Fidel Ramos was reported in an interview[394] to have said that "at least 100 of our young Filipino Muslims have already infiltrated Iraq to undergo training to return and be jihadists or militants." The fighters according to Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, had left in July 2014.[395]

There were reports that *Daesh* elements or sympathisers were recruiting followers in Mindanao universities and schools. It was said that some 200 Filipinos had left the country to join *Daesh*.[396] It was also reported in July 2014 that Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) leader Samer Samsudin had stated that approximately "200 Filipinos left the country in a 'do or die' mission to fight alongside Islamic State rebels. The group was said to have been led by Mohamad Husin Aljabouree.[397]

In September 2014, President Benigno Aquino III, spoke of the possible relationship and connection between *Daesh* and certain groups in the Philippines. He explained that "the Philippines still faces the same problems: terrorist groups like the Abu Sayyaf and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters which are doing basically the same

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[392] Maria A. Ressa, *Senior Abu Sayyaf leader swears oath to ISIS*, Rappler, 4 August 2014, http://www.rappler.com/nation/65199-abu-sayyaf-leader-oath-isis (Retrieved on 27 February 2016).
[393] *Ibid*.
[394] Roy Mabasa, *US envoy airs concern over reports of ISIS recruitment in Mindanao*, Manila Bulletin, 17 September 2014, http://www.mb.com.ph/us-envoy-airs-concern-over-reports-of-isis-recruitment-in-mindanao/ (Retrieved on 12 November 2015).
[395] Ricardo Saludo, *How Grave is the ISIS Threat to the Philippines?*, The Manila Times, *October 8, 2014,* http://www.manilatimes.net/grave-isis-threat-philippines/132938/ (Retrieved on 3 November 2015).
[396] *Ibid*.
[397] Joyce Pangco Panares and Sara Susanne D. Fabunan, *Pinoy Jihadists join IS*, The Standard News, 13 September 2014, http://manilastandardtoday.com/news/headlines/157461/pinoy-jihadists-join-is.html (Retrieved on 12 November 2015).

things, but now attributing it to their joining IS, which doesn't necessarily mean that they are IS."[398] President Aquino's statement was seen as the "government's nuanced threat assessment," which sought to "disentangle the ASG and BIFF" from *Daesh*.[399]

There were also reports in October 2014, of *Daesh* members in Zamboanga City who were involved in recruiting students to fight for the *Daesh* with the promise of monetary incentives of Php 70,000.00 as a joining bonus.[400] However, Maj. Gen. Domingo Tutaan Jr., the spokesperson for the Armed Forces of the Philippines "downplayed ISIS links with Mindanao extremists" and claimed that the information had yet to be verified.[401]

Anton Chan from the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) highlighted in January 2015 that there were reports indicating deaths of Filipino fighters who were fighting in Syria. According to the Embassy of the Philippines in Damascus, the Syrian Government had informed that two Filipinos were killed in a conflict against the Assad regime. It was also reported by the Iranian Fars News Agency (FNA) that Abo Ahmad Shiko from the Philippines had also been killed fighting the Assad regime.[402]

General Gregorio Catapang the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), in April 2015, stated there were no returning *Daesh* militants who were operating in the Philippines. He further elaborated stating that those who sought to conduct terrorism "will be isolated . . . will be become useless, irrelevant and they will lose in this fight". [403] However, General Catapang had also informed Senators that the authorities had "added an additional brigade (approximately 1,500 soldiers) in Mindanao scattered across Zamboanga, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi." Their express mission was "to gather intelligence on reported ISIS recruitment."[404] Secretary Voltaire Gazmin from the Department of National Defense also informed the Senate that it was taking the matter "very seriously."[405]

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[398] Charithie Joaquin, *Daesh and the Philippines: Distant but Virulent Inspiration* in *Asian Conflicts Report The Geopolitics of extremism: ISIS in Asia*, Edited by Carl Ungerer, Katy Oh Hassig and Caroline F. Ziemke-Dickens, Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP), August 2015

[399] *Ibid*.

[400] *Ibid*.

[401] Ricardo Saludo, *How Grave is the ISIS Threat to the Philippines?*, October 8, 2014.

[402] Anton Chan, *Philippines*, Volume 7, Issue 1, January/February 2015, Counter Terrorist Trends Analysis, International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore.

[403] Charithie Joaquin, *Daesh and the Philippines: Distant but Virulent Inspiration* in the *Asian Conflicts Report: The Geopolitics of Extremism: ISIS in Asia*, August 2015.

[404] Ricardo Saludo, *How Grave is the ISIS Threat to the Philippines?* October 8, 2014.

[405] *Ibid.*

On 4 January 2016, a video circulating showed Isnilon Hapilon and other extremist leaders marching from Sulu to Basilan.[406] The leaders of these four groups subsequently pledged allegiance to al Baghdadi and they include:

➢ The *Ansar Al-Shariah* Battalion that was led by Abu Anas Al-Muhajir (alias Abraham). This battalion was tasked to be in charge of laws and other matters pertaining to jurisprudence;
➢ The *Ma'rakah Al-Ansar* Battalion that was led by Abu Ammar;
➢ The *Ansarul Khilafah Battalion* that was led by Abu Sharifah; and
➢ The *Al Harakatul Islamiyyah Battalion* based in Basilan that was led by Isnilon Hapilon.[407]

The military however were skeptical on this development and had highlighted through its public affairs chief, Colonel Noel Detoyato, that "there is no ISIS here." He then went on to distinguish between '*Daesh*-directed' and '*Daesh*-inspired'.[408]

However, it was reported in March 2016 that a military offensive had killed 24-suspected *Daesh* sympathisers in Poktan village, Butig town in Lanao del Sur province. The leaders of the group were identified as brothers, Omar Maute and Abdullah Maute. The Maute group was reported to have formally been known as the Khilafah Islamiyah Mindanao, which was said to have had ties with JI. More than 30,000 residents of ten villages were displaced due to the fighting. Military officials said militants were initially associated with an Indonesian terror suspect known as Sanusi, who was subsequently reported to have been killed in Marawi city in 2012. The militants were said to have used black flags along with arm and head bands with *Daesh* symbols to both gain attention and possible funding.[409]

Daesh Linked Groups

The *Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters* (BIFF)

The *Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters* (BIFF), founded by Ameril Umbra Kato, the former Commander of the MILF 105th Base Command had pledged their allegiance to *Daesh* via short videos.[410] This separatist group was founded in Southern Mindanao in

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[406] Maria A. Ressa, *Experts warn PH: Don't underestimate ISIS*, Rappler, 13 January 2016, http://www.rappler.com/nation/118850-experts-warn-ph-not-to-underestimate-isis. (Retrieved on 27 February 2016).

[407] Rohan Gunaratna, *Islamic State branches in Southeast Asia*, Pacific Forum, CSIS, Number 7, 19 January 2016. http://csis.org/files/publication/160119_PacNet_1607.pdf (Retrieved on 27 February 2016).

[408] Maria A. Ressa, *Experts warn PH: Don't underestimate ISIS*, 13 January 2016.

[409] *Army captures IS base, 24 fighters killed*, New Straits Times, 2 March 2016.

[410] Charithie Joaquin, *Daesh and the Philippines: Distant but Virulent Inspiration* in *Asian Conflicts Report: The Geopolitics of Extremism: ISIS in Asia*, August 2015.

July 2010 as a splinter faction of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). This split was a result of the failure of peace talks between Manila and MILF in mid-2008, during which the government and MILF had initiated a preliminary peace deal; the 'Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain' (MOA-AD), which would have granted MILF a measure of autonomy in areas of Muslim Moro-dominated Mindanao. However, this was ruled to be unconstitutional by the Philippine Supreme Court before it could be implemented in August 2008. As a result of this, a group of renegade MILF commanders led a series of attacks against Christian-populated towns in Mindanao in August and September 2008 which led to at least 100 civilians dead.

Over the following months, BIFF launched numerous attacks in which the MILF denied any involvement. The split between MILF and BIFF was made worse with the resumption of peace talks between the latter and the Philippine Government in late 2009. The point of no return was when the MILF leadership indicated it would be prepared to accept autonomy for Mindanao, rather than full independence in early 2010.

This led Umbra Kato to formally resign his command in July 2010 and form the BIFF with the explicit purpose of seeking full independence for Mindanao. In early 2011, Kato stated that the BIFF sought to "liberate the Moro people from the...Philippine government", adding: "Whether the government allows it or not - we will implement our Islamic system in our areas." [411]

Umbra Kato was killed on 14 April 2015 and was replaced by Ismael Abubakar, who is reported to support *Daesh*.[412] BIFF spokesperson Abu Misry Mama, in the YouTube post in August 2014, pledged his groups' support stating, "We have an alliance with the Islamic State and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi." It is however significant to note that Abu Misry denied that BIFF had sent fighters to *Daesh* or had recruited such fighters but had instead stated, "If they need our help, why not?"[413]

The *Abu Sayyaf Group* (ASG)

The Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) was founded[414] in 1991 by Ustaz Abdurajak Janjalani, who

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[411] *Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters* (BIFF), IHS Jane's 360, Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism http://www.janes.com/security/terrorism-insurgency (Retrieved on 7 March 2014).

[412] Rommel Banlaoi, *Self-proclaimed ISIS Followers in the Bangsamoro Homeland: Threats to Philippine Security*, Institute for Autonomy and Governance, 22 July 2015, http://www.iag.org.ph/index.php/blog/1165-self-proclaimed-isis-followers-in-the-bangsamoro-homeland-threats-to-philippine-security (Retrieved on 11 November 2015).

[413] Ricardo Saludo, *How Grave is the ISIS Threat to the Philippines?* October 8, 2014.

[414] *Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)*, IHS Jane's 360, Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism http://www.janes.com/security/terrorism-insurgency (Retrieved on 12 March 2014).

was influenced by radical Wahhabi Islamist doctrine after his stint in Afghanistan in the late 1980s. His original purpose in founding the ASG was to combine Salafi Jihadist ideology with a southern Philippines separatist agenda, positioning his group to be an alternative to the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

Janjalani was killed in a clash with police on 18 December 1998 and his younger brother, Khadaffi Janjalani, replaced him as a nominal leader of the group until his own death in September 2006.

The ASG was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO) by the US Department of State on 8 October 1997 and was added to the UK Home Office's list of proscribed international terrorist groups on 28 October 2002.

While the stated aim of the ASG is to be fighting for the establishment of an independent Islamic republic in the Southern Philippine region of Mindanao, their actual activities are largely criminal in nature, driven less by ideology than by the pursuit of money[415] with particular focus on Kidnappings-for-Ransom (KFR). Besides KFR, ASG also extorts money from businesses and individuals, which they call 'Revolutionary taxes'. The group is estimated to receive PHP 5,000 (USD100) to PHP 10,000 (USD 200) per month from businesses in the form of protection money, and as much as PHP 4,000 (USD 80) per month from individuals.

The ASG operates mainly in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in the far south of the Philippines. The ARMM is comprised of the Muslim majority provinces, and includes parts of the west of the island of Mindanao, together with the outlying islands of Basilan and the Sulu archipelago. A perceptive Philippine Army General summed up the root-causes of ASG support on Jolo in three words: "Religion, thrills and joblessness."

The Abu Sayyaf Group's (ASG) fighting strength was estimated in mid-2001 to be between 800 and 850. This was reduced to 425 in 2004. An alleged Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) intelligence report cited in local media on 15 July 2013 stated that the ASG had 381 members in 2011, 398 members in 2012 and 385 members as of 2013.

The ASG has also been known to use child soldiers. A May 2010 UN report claimed the ASG was among the world's most "persistent violators of children in armed conflicts". In a report of the United Nations Secretary-General to the Security Council issued on 5

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[415] *Report of the Secretary General on the Threat of Terrorists Benefiting from Transnational Organised Crime*, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), 21 May 2015.

June 2015[416] it was noted that even though child recruitment was 'underreported' due to 'fear of reprisals' there were still verified cases of recruitment of children by the ASG. An example was the case of *a* 9 year old boy who was used as a weapons porter for approximately 18 months by the ASG and who was subsequently shot after he attempted to escape. The ASG was reported to approach civilians including children, for recruitment purposes, "offering them shelter, food, access to education or offering to support communities".

An interesting development was the ASG kidnapping of two Germans, Stefan Viktor Okonek and Henrike Dielen in April 2014 from a yacht on the high seas and subsequently were held in Jolo.[417] The ASG had demanded a ransom of approximately USD5.6 million. While there was no official confirmation that ransom was paid, the ASG nevertheless claimed that it had been paid and as proof even posted an online photograph of a "militant posing next to stacks of 1,000 note peso bills."[418] There was even a claim that there was an increase on the price of the firearms in the Philippines black market "due to the shortage of supply caused by large purchases made by ASG using the ransom money."[419] What was interesting initially was that the ASG not only demanded a ransom but also threatened that the two Germans would be executed if the German Government did not stop its participation in the US-led coalition against *Daesh*. The hostages were nevertheless freed when the ransom was paid with no prior commitments whatsoever from the German Government. This could indicate that the ASG was more interested in the money and its purported support for *Daesh*, seen through the demands that Germany stop its participation in the US-led coalition, was merely an attempt to ride on the popularity of *Daesh*.[420]

In one of the videos on 23 July 2014[421], Isnilon Hapilon, a senior ASG leader was seen pledging allegiance to *Daesh* and Al-Baghdadi. The video clip, which lasts approximately 6 minutes, shows Hapilon leading his men, in his native dialect, Yakan and in Arabic reciting the following:

> *"We pledge bay'ah to Caliph Sheikh Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi Ibrahim Awwad Al-Qurashi Al-Husseini for loyalty and obedience in adversity and comfort. We*

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[416] *Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, United Nations, 5 June 2015,* https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/countries/philippines/ *(*Retrieved on 8 December 2015).

[417] Mike Collett-White, *Philippine militants free two German hostages*, 17 October 2014, Reuters, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/10/17/us-philippines-militants-idUSKCN0I607S20141017# TVTOgsshwEIeDyKx.97 (Retrieved on 1 December 2015).

[418] Anton Chan, *Philippines*, Counter Terrorist Trends Analysis.

[419] *Ibid*.

[420] *Ibid*.

[421] *Ibid*.

pledge to obey him on anything which our hearts desire or not and to value him more than anyone else. We will not take any emir other than him unless we see in him any obvious act of disbelief that could be questioned by Allah in the hereafter."[422]

Hapilon was said to be operating mainly in Basilan, Mindanao.[423]

Major General Eduardo Año, chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP), however downplayed the video stating that the ASG was merely offering 'moral support' to *Daesh* and explained that it perhaps was just a ploy to seek financial assistance from *Daesh*.[424]

The *Ansar Dawlah Fi Filibbin*

In May 2014, members of the *Ansar Dawlah Fi Filibbin* posted a YouTube video declaring their allegiance to Baghdadi. The video which was entitled "Filipina Support for ISIS and Bay-at to Shaikh Abu Bakar Al Baghdady (Hafidzahullah)," was both in Arabic and Filipino. In the video, the men spoke of their loyalty and full submission to both *Daesh* and Baghdadi.[425]

The *Rajah Solaiman Islamic Movement* (RSIM)

The Rajah Solaiman Movement (RSM) (also known as the Rajah Solaiman Revolutionary Movement, and Rajah Solaiman Islamic Movement) is a radical offshoot of the mainstream *Balik Islam* movement of Islamic converts from Christianity. The group is named after a 16th century Philippine King, who was the last Muslim monarch before the Spanish conquest. The group was founded by Ahmed Santos (born Hilarion del Rosario Santos) in August 1995. It originated from a cell of militant students and teachers at the *Fi Sabilila Dawah and Media Foundation*, a madrassah located in Luzon Island. The group was formally formed in 2001 by Santos and Sheikh Omar Lavilla

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[422] Maria A. Ressa, *Senior Abu Sayyaf leader swears oath to ISIS*, Rappler, 4 August 2014, http://www.rappler.com/nation/65199-abu-sayyaf-leader-oath-isis (Retrieved on 27 February 2016).

[423] Rommel Banlaoi, *Self-proclaimed ISIS Followers in the Bangsamoro Homeland: Threats to Philippine Security*, Institute for Autonomy and Governance, 22 July 2015, http://www.iag.org.ph/index.php/blog/1165-self-proclaimed-isis-followers-in-the-bangsamoro-homeland-threats-to-philippine-security (Retrieved on 11 November 2015).

[424] Carmella Fonbuena, *PH military downplays Abu Sayyaf allegiance to ISIS*, The Rappler, 6 August 2014, http://www.rappler.com/nation/72028-abu-sayyaf-german-hostage-media (Retrieved on 27 February 2016).

[425] Rommel Banlaoi, *Self-proclaimed ISIS Followers in the Bangsamoro Homeland: Threats to Philippine Security*, 22 July 2015.

(born Reuben Lavilla). The RSM was officially designated as a terrorist organisation by the US Department of State in June 2008.

Santos was however arrested in the Philippines on 26 October 2005 and he was then succeeded by Lavilla, until his arrest in Bahrain on 24 July 2008. Lavilla was then extradited back to the Philippines. The mantle of leadership was then passed on to Dino Amor Rosalejos Pareja, also known as Khalil Pareja until his arrest in the Philippines on 21 August 2009. The current leadership of the group is unknown.

The group comprises Christian converts to Islam, who seek the establishment of an Islamic state in the Philippines and the "reversion" of all non-Muslims back to what is deemed their original Islamic faith. This goal allows them to be in alliance with ASG, who aspire for an independent Islamic republic in Southern Philippines.

The RSM focuses its operations in the Metro Manila region, which was the headquarters of the *Fi Sabilila Dawah and Media Foundation* until it was stopped by the Philippine authorities in 2002. The group is also said to have training camps in the provinces of Tarlac and Pangasinan, again until it was halted by the authorities.

The RSM is also linked to ASG both ideologically and through the marriage of its founding members. Sheikh Omar Lavilla (senior commander and onetime RSM leader) was also a classmate of Khadaffi Janjalani at the Darul Imam Shafiie Academy. The impact of these informal ties were later seen at the operational level when the RSM was involved in several major bomb attacks perpetrated by the ASG, including the February 2004 SuperFerry 14 bombing in Manila harbour and the February 2005 Valentine's Day bombings. This led authorities to describe RSM as the ASG's arm in Luzon and Metro Manila, thereby giving the ASG a strategic reach beyond its traditional areas of operations in Sulu and Mindanao.

There were reports in June 2008 from the US Department of the Treasury alleging that the RSM had received "training, funds, and operational assistance" from the ASG while the RSM has provided ASG with field operatives and a pool of potential recruits.

The RSM's first planned terrorist operation was a joint operation with the ASG which attempted to assassinate then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo using a Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (VBIED). The plot was foiled by the authorities in May-June 2002. The threat posed by RSM was clearly demonstrated when together with the ASG, were involved in the February 2004 bombing of SuperFerry 14 in the Manila harbor, which led to the death of 116 people. The RSM was also involved with the ASG in the Valentine's Day bombings on 14 February 2005, in which they bombed a bus in Manila killing four people.

The danger and threat posed by the RSM is slightly different from other terrorist groups in the Philippines. RSM has the ability to conduct its operations in the urban centres of Northern Philippines due to their members being raised there and being ethnically homogenous with the Christian population. Thus, their ability to blend in is far better than other predominantly Southern-based groups.

On 7 July 2014, there was a video showing detainees at the Special Intensive Care Area (SICA) of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology in Camp Bagong Diwa, Taguig City pledging allegiance to Baghdadi. There were unverified reports that Ahmad Santos, the founder of the RSIM had organised the pledge.[426]

It is also interesting to note that Dinno Amor R. Pareja, who was the brother-in-law of Ahmad Santos and a key member of RSM, was suspected to be Abu Jihad Khair Rahman Al-Luzuni. Abu Jihad had on 6 November 2011 posted a video urging Muslims in the Philippines to participate in jihad, stating that there was "no way to restore the Islamic Caliphate and the glory of the religion but through jihad."[427]Interestingly, he used the black flag of *Daesh* as the backdrop in his video. This video highlighted the group Jamaal al-Tawhid Wal Jihad Philippines. It is also significant to note that Jamaal al-Tawhid Wal Jihad was the movement that was founded by Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, who coincidentally was also the founder of the *Al-Qaeda* in Iraq, which was said to be the precursor to *Daesh*. Hence, it ouldn be argued that this *Daesh*-inspired group had a very early footprint in the Philippines.[428]

The *Ansar Khalifah Sarangani*

On 12 September 2014, the *Ansar Khalifah Sarangani* (AKS) or *Jemaah Islamiyah Philippines*[429], led by the late Basit Usman, pledged allegiance to *Daesh* in its self-produced video[430] and 'bragged' about having their own suicide bombers.[431] Usman was subsequently reported to have been killed by the MILF on 3 May 2015.[432]

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[426] *Ibid*.

[427] English translation of Arabic message from Abu Jihad Khalil al-Rahman al-Luzoni quoted in Maria A. Ressa, *The New Battlefield: The Internet and Social Media* https://globalecco.org/ctx-vol.-2-no.-4-article-1 (Retrieved on 1 December 2015).

[428] Rommel Banlaoi, *Self-proclaimed ISIS Followers in the Bangsamoro Homeland: Threats to Philippine Security*, 22 July 2015.

[429] *Terrorist and Security Report*, 17 November 2015, 361 Security, http://www.361security.com/analysis/terrorist-and-security-report-middle-east37 (Retrieved on 1 December 2015).

[430] Rommel Banlaoi, *Self-proclaimed ISIS Followers in the Bangsamoro Homeland: Threats to Philippine Security*, Institute for Autonomy and Governance, 22 July 2015, http://www.iag.org.ph/index.php/blog/1165-self-proclaimed-isis-followers-in-the-bangsamoro-homeland-threats-to-philippine-security (Retrieved on 11 November 2015).

<u>The *Khilafa Islamiyah Mindanao* (KIM)</u>

The Khilafa Islamiyah Mindanao (KIM), also known as the Khilafah Islamiyah Movement[433], was reported to be led by Ustadz Humam Abdul Najid. The group is considered a strong supporter of *Daesh* as seen by its 'admiration' of the group's black flag. It was reported that the KIM opposed "human-made laws, democratic forms of government, including the proposed Bangsamoro government to be set up by the MILF. They had even gone to the extent of declaring Muslims working with the Philippine government as 'enemies of the state.'[434] It was also reported that Najid was responsible for numerous terrorist attacks and bombings in the Philippines including the bombing of the Rural Bus Transit in Zamboanga City on 16 August 2012, the bombing of the Maxandrea Hotel in Cagayan de Oro City on 11 October 2012, and the bombing of a Pension House in Iligan City on 24 December 2012. He is also suspected of exploding two improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in Davao City on 16 September 2013.[435] There were reports of a formation of a new group called the Justice for Islamic Movement (JIM) by BIFF leader Mohamad Ali Tambako. The group was said to be operating in Maguindanao and had pledged allegiance to *Daesh*.[436]

Issues in Radicalisation

<u>Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB)</u>

After 17-years of peace talks, on 27 March 2014, the Government of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) signed the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB). This was after both sides had signed annexes on the complicated issues of transition, wealth, power-sharing and provision on water

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[431] Abdul Basit Usman Reported Dead: Chaos to Follow, Independent Strategy and Intelligence Study Group, 5 May 2015, http://isisstudygroup.com/?p=6369 (Retrieved on 12 November 2015).

[432] Rommel Banlaoi, *Self-proclaimed ISIS Followers in the Bangsamoro Homeland: Threats to Philippine Security*, Institute for Autonomy and Governance, 22 July 2015.

[433] *'Noynoying' about ISIS caliphate in Mindanao? The Manila Times, 21 August 2014, http://www.manilatimes.net/noynoying-isis-caliphate-mindanao/120443/* (Retrieved on 12 November 2015).

[434] *Ibid.*

[435] Rommel Banlaoi, *Self-proclaimed ISIS Followers in the Bangsamoro Homeland: Threats to Philippine Security*, Institute for Autonomy and Governance, 22 July 2015.

[436] Lecture by UN Official during the *United Nations International Crime And Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) Regional Technical Workshop on Responding To The Threat Of Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters'* in Manila, The Philippines, 3 – 5 August 2015.

territories. The CAB was intended to serve as the basis for the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL).[437]

The CAB was a five-page, 12-point text document representing the final peace agreement between the Government and the MILF and reiterates both parties' commitment to previous agreements/documents including *The Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro* (FAB). The FAB was signed on 12 October 2012, and outlined the "political settlement" between the Government and the MILF as well as the process of transition from the Autonomous Region on Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) to a new Bangsamoro autonomous political entity.

The Annexes and the Addendum to the FAB, include:

➢ *The Annex on Transitional Modalities and Arrangements*, which was signed on 27 February 2013, established the transitional process for the establishment of the Bangsamoro. It detailed the creation of a transition commission, a Bangsamoro Basic Law, and a Bangsamoro Transition Authority

➢ *The Annex on Revenue Generation and Wealth Sharing*, which was signed on 13 July 2013, enumerated the sources of wealth creation and financial assistance for the new entity.

➢ *The Annex on Power Sharing*, which was signed on 8 December 2013, outlined the intergovernmental relations of the central government, the Bangsamoro government and the local government units under the Bangsamoro.

➢ *The Annex on Normalisation*, which was signed 25 January 2014, paved the way for the laying down of weapons of MILF members and their transition to civilian life.

➢ *The Addendum on the Bangsamoro Waters and Zones of Joint Cooperation*, which was signed on 25 January 2014, detailed the scope of waters under the territorial jurisdiction of the Bangsamoro (12 nautical miles from the coast) and Zones of Joint Cooperation or bodies of water (Sulu Sea and Moro Gulf) within the territory of the Philippines but not within the Bangsamoro.

➢ *The Ceasefire Agreement of 1997* signed by the Government of the Philippines and the MILF

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[437] *Highlights: Signing of the Bangsamoro*, The Rappler, 20 March 2015, http://www.rappler.com/video/specials/53996-signing-of-the-bangsamoro-cab (Retrieved on 29 February 2016).

➤ *The Agreement on Peace* signed in Tripoli in 2001, laying down the agenda for the peace talks

➤ *The Declaration of Continuity of Negotiation*, which was signed in June 2010, picked up the pieces from the failed Memorandum Of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD).[438]

The purpose of the BBL was to "establish the new Bangsamoro political entity and provide for its basic structure of government." Under the draft Basic Law, the Bangsamoro Government would be democratic as its members of Parliament would be elected as representatives of the Bangsamoro People. The relationship between the National and Bangsamoro Governments was envisioned to be 'asymmetric'. This was because the relationship between the two parties was distinct when compared to the relationship between the National Government and other local government units. Specifically, the 1987 Philippine Constitution would confer the Bangsamoro Government legislative powers over such matters as administrative organisation and ancestral domain. This was not the case for other local government units. Nevertheless, the President's power of general supervision would continue to remain.[439]

On 10 September 2014, the draft BBL was submitted to the Philippine Congress, during which President Benigno S. Aquino III asked Congress to "pass this bill in the soonest possible time."[440]

The BBL however did not make it through the Philippine Congress. In early February 2016, the chief peace negotiator Miriam Coronel-Ferrer was quoted to have said, "Let me state the fact: the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law, in whatever shape or form, did not make it out of the 16th Congress." She had attributed this to "sheer indifference and chronic absenteeism" of legislators in the House of Representatives and cautioned that Filipinos, particularly Muslims, who had expected a breakthrough were "grieving, hurting and once again dreading what tomorrow may bring." Her views were echoed by Rep. Pangalian Balindong, Deputy Speaker for Mindanao in the House of Representatives who said that the inaction of legislators, in what he deemed as

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[438] Kristine Angeli Sabillo, *What is the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro?* Inquirer.net, 26 March 2014, http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/589245/what-is-the-comprehensive-agreement-on-the-bangsamoro (Retrieved on 2 March 2016).
[439] *Frequently Asked Questions on the Draft Bangsamoro Basic Law*, Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), 10 September 2014, http://www.opapp.gov.ph/resources/frequently-asked-questions-draft-bangsamoro-basic-law (Retrieved on 2 March 2016).
[440] Official Gazette*, Timeline: The Bangsamoro Peace Process*, http://www.gov.ph/bangsamoro2/timeline/ (Retrieved on 2 March 2016).

the "sheer tyranny of the majority" had killed the peace process with the MILF and thus had the potential to worsen the situation on the ground in Southern Philippines. The MILF also blamed hard-line lawmakers for their failure to pass the BBL, and further acknowledged that the January 2015 Mamasapano incident, in which 44 Special Action Force (SAF) police troops were killed during an encounter between the security forces and MILF and BIFF militants[441] was one of the main stumbling blocks.

However, despite the setback, Ferrer was of the opinion that the road map for peace was still available for the next administration to continue the peace process. In an interview, she was quoted saying that, "We have the road map. It is better that we continue that. Look on how to mobilise Congress again." However, experts have indicated that though President Aquino has mandated that peace initiatives with the MILF continue, the outgoing administration has nevertheless little power to ensure its implementation.

There is also the possibility that the failure of Congress to pass the BBL could lead to the increased risk of terrorist attacks by militant groups involving "low-level Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPGs), grenades, and small arms" in "Mindanao, particularly in North Cotabato, Maguindanao, and Lanao del Sur." In this regard, it is interesting to note that on 9 February 2016, security was increased in Jolo, Sulu province, following a foiled bombing attack by the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). [442]

It is also significant to note that the failure to pass the BBL increases the possibility of disenchanted MILF fighters abandoning the peace process altogether and defecting to other militant groups like BIFF or ASG. Looking back at history, the precedence was set when a setback to the peace process at the end of the Arroyo administration led to the subsequent split within the MILF, giving birth to the renegade BIFF. There is therefore the danger that the BIFF could become even more radicalised and possibly "energised by a fresh infusion of MILF fighters and members" who would be frustrated with the recent developments. Hence, "peace held in abeyance" might just be the necessary catalyst to trigger greater violence.[443]

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[441] Alecia Quah, *Failure to pass Bangsamoro Basic Law raises risk of IED attacks by Islamist militants in Mindanao, Philippines*, IHS Jane's Intelligence Review, 10 February 2016, http://www.janes.com/article/57944/failure-to-pass-bangsamoro-basic-law-raises-risk-of-ied-attacks-by-islamist-militants-in-mindanao-philippines / (Retrieved on 2 March 2016).
[442] *Ibid.*
[443] John Teo, *Ensure Bangsamoro peace process continues*, New Straits Times Online, 19 February 2016, http://www.nst.com.my/news/2016/02/128311/ensure-bangsamoro-peace-process-continues (Retrieved on 2 March 2016).

Therefore, the failure to sign the proposed BBL which would form the basis of an autonomous Bangsamoro province, could result, as Ramakrishna succinctly put it, more disgruntled Moro militants willing to nail their colours to the *Daesh* mast.[444]

Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs)

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, the number of OFWs who worked abroad anytime during the period of April to September 2014 was estimated to be 2.3 million. Those OFWs with existing work contracts amounted to 2.2 million or 96% while 92,000 or 4% worked overseas without a contract.[445]

According to Undersecretary Serapio, the threat and susceptibility of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW), especially in conflict-stricken areas being radicalised and recruited was significant.[446] This point was further reiterated by Assistant Secretary Oscar Valenzuela who highlighted that there were was approximately two million OFW near the conflict zone who were 'exposed' and could be lured by the "Islamic State's wealth."[447] A case study on the possibility of OFW being radicalised was seen when on 30 September 2015, Saudi security forces arrested a Syrian expatriate, Yasir Muhammad Shafiq al-Barazi and a Filipino women, Joy Ibana Balinang for suspected involvement in terrorist activities.[448] Balinang was reported to have run away from her employer 15 months earlier.[449] They were both allegedly making explosive materials and suicide bomb belts. The Saudi police recovered two explosives belts, ten containers of bomb-making materials and two firearms from Yasir's house.[450]

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[444] Kumar Ramakrishna, *Understanding the Dangerous "Indirect" Strategic Threat of ISIS: A Singaporean Perspective* in *Asian Conflicts Report: The Geopolitics of extremism: ISIS in Asia*, Edited by Carl Ungerer, Katy Oh Hassig and Caroline F. Ziemke-Dickens, Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP), August 2015. (Retrieved on 10 November 2015).

[445] *2014 Survey on Overseas Filipinos*, Philippine Statistics Authority, https://psa.gov.ph/tags/overseas-filipinos (Retrieved on 12 March 2016).

[446] Lecture by Undersecretary Felizardo M. Serapio, Jr. Law Enforcement and Security Integration Office, Philippine Center on Transnational Crime during the *United Nations International Crime And Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) Regional Technical Workshop on Responding To The Threat Of Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters'* in Manila, The Philippines, 3 – 5 August 2015.

[447] Simone Orendain, *Philippines on Guard Against Islamic State Group's Influence*, Voice of America, 3 October 2014, http://www.voanews.com/content/philippines-on-guard-against-islamic-state-groups-influence/2471139.html (Retrieved on 14 November 2015).

[448] *Details on the Filipina OFW Detained in Saudi Arabia and Her Role in an Islamic State Attack Plot*, Independent Strategy and Intelligence Study Group, 7 October 2015, http://isisstudygroup.com/?p=8594 (Retrieved on 2 March 2016).

[449] *Look into case of Pinay held in Saudi over suicide vests, Noy gov't urged*, The Daily Tribune, 5 October 2015, http://www.tribune.net.ph/headlines/look-into-case-of-pinay-held-in-saudi-over-suicide-vests-noy-gov-t-urged (Retrieved on 2 March 2016).

[450] *Syrian expat, Filipino woman nabbed in anti-terror raid*, Arab News, 4 October 2015, http://www.arabnews.com/news/814906 (Retrieved on 2 March 2016).

It was reported in January 2016, that the Philippine authorities were concerned that *Daesh* could be recruiting OFW working in the Middle East. President Benigno Aquino had highlighted that the Philippine intelligence authorities would be working with their Middle Eastern counterparts to monitor possible radicalisation within the Filipino community in the region. While reiterating that there was no "credible threat" but only a "general threat," President Aquino was quoted saying that, "*We need to be prudent. We will coordinate with (Middle Eastern) intelligence agencies to monitor these communities to see if they have been influenced by ISIS*." President Aquino also conceded that, "*We are not immune from the extremism problem*," citing the case of a Filipino-Lebanese and a Filipino-Saudi, both of whom were living abroad, who had attempted to join *Daesh*.[451]

Madrassah

Michelle Bonto[452] from the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) highlighted that there were approximately 5,000 madrassahs in the Philippines. However, it was significant to note that only approximately 1,500 of these madrassahs were registered under the Department of Education in the Philippines. Also, the remaining 3,500 non-registered madrassahs were not utilising the Government's curriculum and that students from these madrassahs were not allowed to be enrolled in public schools. Bonto further explained that these unregistered madrassahs obtained funding from abroad which was also not regulated by the authorities. The students there also had the possibility of furthering their studies in the countries that funded their madrassah education. It was also observed that the madrassahs often times took the cultural character of the donor countries and were reported to be teaching extreme viewpoints in Islam.[453]

Motivational Factors

The motivational factors to join extremist and terrorist organisations were varied and multifaceted in the Philippines. Bai Rohaniza Sumndad-Usman[454] from the 'Teach Peace Build Peace Movement' suggested several triggers and drivers that could lead to radicalisation. Firstly, socio-economic reasons and poverty was a driving reason that

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[451] *Manila worried that Filipinos could join IS in ME*, Filipino Panorama, Kuwait Times, 17 January 2016, http://news.kuwaittimes.net/pdf/2016/jan/17/fp.pdf (Retrieved on 12 March 2016).
[452] Michelle Bonto, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in the Philippines organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Manila on 25 September 2014.
[453] Bai Rohaniza Sumndad-Usman, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in the Philippines organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Manila on 25 September 2014.
[454] Bai Rohaniza Sumndad-Usman, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in the Philippines organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Manila on 25 September 2014.

led young people, particularly in the Philippines down the path of radicalisation. Many youths joined extremist organsiations simply because these groups provided food and funds. Young people were said to have been offered PHP10,000 to PHP20,000 and many who joined to help their families were actually clueless on what the group they were joining stood for. This was further echoed by Professor Charithie Joaquin[455] who highlighted that numerous individuals who joined extremist groups did not necessarily subscribe to the ideology of the group but rather joined to meet basic needs. She indicated that, bomb-makers in Mindanao were getting paid between PHP1,000 to PHP15,000 which was then used to feed their families.

Secondly, there were at times perceived differences between what was required by the state and what was dictated by the religion. These apparent contradictions and dichotomies 'forced' the people to choose between the state or the religion. The inability to implement sharia in the Philippines was a case in point. Allegations of discriminations when applying for jobs and loans only fueled the belief that they were penalised for being Muslims.

At times, the historical baggage of perceived injustice inflicted upon the Muslims in the past continues to fuel hatred and bitterness in the present generation. For example, it was highlighted that there were Muslims who continued to harbour ill-feeling against the government and particularly against the military for what had taken place during the Maguindanao Massacre. This hatred was unfortunately passed down from one generation to another.

There was also the problem of an environment that was conducive for violence to grow and be disseminated. It was highlighted that there were Muslim children in Mindanao who were unfortunately exposed to violence and conflicts at a very young age. In this environment, the 'gun-culture' was rampant and children at a very young age were already carrying weapons. There were also issues of children who had suffered trauma due to continuously witnessing shootings, killings and bombings. They were very much 'used' to violence and their sense and concept of power, control and conflict resolution was influenced and shaped by violence, guns and intimidation. It was also highlighted that interventions and programmes to deal with such issues among the young, while severely needed were unfortunately few.

Professor Rommel Banlaoi[456] explained that in the past, terrorist organisations like the NPA used to recruit from universities but this was not the case now, where

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[455] Professor Charithie Joaquin, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in the Philippines organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Manila on 25 September 2014.
[456] Rommel Banlaoi, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in the Philippines organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Manila on 25 September 2014.

recruitment was carried out from among school dropouts. He was of the opinion that this current recruitment pool has led to more violent acts, like extortion and kidnapping as compared to before. Also, he added that it was easier to recruit school dropouts as they were easily lured by money and guns.

Professor Charithie Joaquin[457] was of the opinion that for many groups there was the intrinsic belief and perception that violence was the only way for them to get the attention of the authorities to address their grievances.

Countering Radicalisation

Given the possibility of the majority non-Muslims in the Philippines to have a very skewed perception of Islam, there was therefore an urgent need to educate and raise awareness among them on the belief system of Muslims in the Philippines. It was highlighted that wearing the hijab was seen to be oppressive for Muslims women instead of being something that a female Muslim might wish to do. In order to overcome this stereotype, a non-governmental organisation came up with fashion shows for Muslim women that were held at shopping malls in Manila.

It was also highlighted that Muslim families in the Southern Philippines tended to be highly patriarchal and it was alleged that the participation of a Muslim mother in the family was not very significant. Women were often sidelined and the mothers were not so much involved in the nurturing of their sons. The sons were said to be more attached to their fathers.[458] On this particular point, Professor Charithie Joaquin[459] highlighted that in informal discussions with undergraduate students, when asked on who were the main influences in their lives, the undergraduates predictably mentioned their parents and often times specifically referred to their fathers, grandfathers, as well as the *ulamas*. It was also significant to note that many young people referred to their student leaders in the university as key influencers.

Conclusion

The situation among terrorist and extremists groups in the Philippines, particularly with their relations and links to *Daesh* remains fluid. Fractionalisation continues

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[457] Charithie Jaoquin, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in the Philippines organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Manila on 25 September 2014.
[458] Participant, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in the Philippines organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Manila on 25 September 2014.
[459] Charithie Jaoquin, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in the Philippines organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Manila on 25 September 2014.

among terrorists groups.[460] While there have been reports of groups pledging allegiance to both *Daesh* and its leader Baghdadi, it remains to be seen if the links between such groups in the Philippines and *Daesh* are functional or merely symbolic for propaganda purposes.

Banlaoi highlighted that there were three possible ways that terrorist groups in the Philippines could align themselves with *Daesh*. These include direct links or communications between the group and *Daesh*; *Daesh* providing inspiration with no direct connection to the group and finally groups in the Philippines capitalising on the notoriety of *Daesh*.[461]

The issue of the possible radicalisation of Overseas Foreign Workers (OFW) was also of concern to the Philippines. Thus far, there was a dearth of information and data on the triggers and drivers of *Daesh*-type, radicalisation in the Philippines. Issues of governance, particularly in the Southern Philippines coupled with the outcome of the peace process there could have serious implications on the radicalisation process in the Philippines.

It miust be highlighted that there are some who are of the opinion that in the year 2016, *Daesh* will declare at least one province in Asia,[462] and that *wilayat* (*Daesh* satellite state)[463] would be in Mindanao".[464]

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[460] Lecture by UN Official during the *United Nations International Crime And Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) Regional Technical Workshop on Responding To The Threat Of Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters'* in Manila, The Philippines, 3 – 5 August 2015.

[461] Simone Orendain, *Philippines on Guard Against Islamic State Group's Influence*, Voice of America, 3 October 2014, http://www.voanews.com/content/philippines-on-guard-against-islamic-state-groups-influence/2471139.html (Retrieved on 14 November 2015).

[462] Prashanth Parameswaran, *Islamic State Eyes Asia Base in 2016 in Philippines, Indonesia: Expert*, The Diplomat, 14 January 2016, http://thediplomat.com/2016/01/islamic-state-eyes-asia-base-in-2016-in-philippines-indonesia-expert/ (Retrieved on 27 February 2016).

[463] Rohan Gunaratna, *Islamic State branches in Southeast Asia*, 19 January 2016.

[464] Maria A. Ressa, *Experts warn PH: Don't underestimate ISIS*, 13 January 2016.

6. KEY FINDINGS

Outline

This chapter will examine some of the key findings and outcomes of the project and also seek to identify knowledge-gaps in the area of Daesh-radicalisation in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

Introduction

There are certain specific areas that play a significant role in the process of radicalisation that was identified in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. These key areas, include the role of religion, *Daesh*'s capacity to disseminate their narrative, the phenomenon of the returning FTF, *Daesh*'s direct/Indirect form of radicalisation, the power of shame and the subsequent need to do something, the lack of counter-narratives and effective dissemination channels as well as *Daesh*'s ambition to become a satellite state in Southeast Asia. The author is of the opinion that these particular areas will determine to a great extent how the battle with *Daesh* will be fought.

The study also indicated that in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, there are certain areas in the field of radicalisation that would benefit greatly with more empirical research. During the International Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Research Conference 2015,[465] numerous researchers lamented that the empirical data they found on the ground were frequently very different from the assumptions and premises that went on to guide policies and intervention strategies. While it is difficult to obtain empirical study and conduct quantitative work, much more effort needs to be undertaken in this area due to the stark reality that our conjectures have in many instances, been wrong and subsequently, valuable resources have gone into translating these erroneous assumptions into policy.

Quantitative and qualitative work needs to be done to address the need for theoretical models, the need to understand the role of ideology and the need for cross-cutting research

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[465] International CVE Research Conference 2015 organised by the Hedayah Centre, Edith Cowan University and the NYU Abu Dhabi Institute in Abu Dhabi, UAE (6 – 8 December 2015).

Research Findings

Role of Religion

Daesh's ability to intertwine religion into their ambitions and aspirations with the purpose of legitimising their actions have proven to be very successful in attracting, radicalising and recruiting scores of sympathisers, supporters and active members in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

They have successfully articulated, advertised and marketed numerous religious based reasons, tailor-made to fit various types of personalities and religious leanings of individuals and groups in the three respective countries.

Firstly, there was the attractive notion of an Islamic caliphate. The religious prophecies pushed by *Daesh* in the region involving *al Sham* and the ancient idea of the caliphate, coupled with the current existence of a seemingly tangible state has to a large extent excited citizens, particularly in Indonesia and Malaysia on the real possibility of the return of the glory days of Islam. While *Al-Qaeda* fought for the idea, *Daesh* is living proof that it works. Hence, to many in this region, *Daesh* is seen to be the one group that accomplished what other groups only set out to do but failed to achieve; maintaining and governing territory. Also, the idea of an 'Islamic State'; that makes *syariah* the corner-stone of its governance, also fits in well with those in the region who believe that Indonesia and Malaysia cannot be considered Islamic as the laws of the nations are 'man-made' and hence illegitimate.

Secondly, there was the idea that *Daesh* is actually the caliphate prophesied by Prophet Muhammad. Idealogues in this region articulate that Islam unfolded in five distinctive stages. The first being the Prophet's era, the second being the caliphs, the third being the Umayyad dynasty to the Ottoman Empire, the fourth being the rulers of the postcolonial Muslim states and the final stage being the restoration of the caliphate, which they then claim is seen with the advent of *Daesh*.[466] In their own words, they "are not joining a terrorist group like *Al-Qaeda* but...a caliphate as part of Prophet Muhammad's prophecy....."[467]

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[466] Abu Fatiah Al-Adnani, *Nubuwat Perang Akhir Zaman* (The Armageddon Prophecy) (Solo: Granada, 2014), 17-18 quoted in Navhat Nuraniyah, *How ISIS Charmed the New Generation of Indonesian Militants*, 9 January 2015, http://www.mei.edu/content/map/how-isis-charmed-new-generation-indonesian-militants (Retrieved on 22 March 2016).
[467] Noor Huda Ismail, *To Stop Islamic State Spreading to Indonesia, Target the Young and Reform Prisons*, 15 August 2014.

Thirdly, there was the inter-related idea that the prophesied Armageddon that would take place in the 'end-of the world' (*Hari Kiamat*) would actually take place in Sham, which is current day Syria. Thus, the idea was articulated in this region that this would be the once-in-a-life-time opportunity to participate in the battle to end all battles. They substantiated this by claiming that the events taking place in Syria was reflected in the Hadith, whereby the *Army of Mahdi* which carried the 'black banner' and would liberate Jerusalem was actually a prophecy describing *Daesh*.

Fourthly, both *Daesh*-directed and *Daesh*-inspired individuals and groups had also presented a persuasive case for citizens, particularly in Indonesia and Malaysia, to consider helping their fellow Sunni-Muslims in Syria and Iraq who they perceived were being victimised by the Bashar Assad regime. There were those in the region who felt 'sympathetic to the plight' of Sunnis in Syria and felt that since their 'struggle was legitimate', it was their duty to stand up and fight for their Sunni kin.[468]

Finally, there was the idea that going to Syria and Iraq could atone for previous misdeeds. Hence, one could 'cover' and 'redeem' themselves for sins done in the past, such as living 'secular lives' and being engaged in activities deemed unislamic by 'making things right.' *Daesh*'s rallying call that 'people with the worst pasts, end up creating the best futures' has had the ability not only to resonate with the individual but also with some mothers of individuals. These mothers, seeing their children being involved in unhealthy habits, have actively encouraged their sons to give up their 'bad ways' and to instead, become a martyr in Syria and Iraq, on the rationale that dying for such a cause would be far better that ending up as a dead drug-addict.[469]There was also the added factor that dying as a martyr in Syria and Iraq would open the possibility of bringing a certain amount of family members to paradise.

Hence, the pseudo-theology marketed by *Daesh* has had the ability to persuade and convince numerous citizens to either travel to Syria and Iraq or to remain and expand *Daesh*'s vision in their respective home countries. This narrative carried by *Daesh* and disseminated through its various channels has been effective in both radicalising, influencing and recruiting individuals and groups in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

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[468] Ahmad El-Muhammady, Roundtable Discussion on Radicalisation in Malaysia organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Kuala Lumpur on 23 September 2014.
[469] Discussions with Special Branch, Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) on 17 November 2015.

The group's ability to disseminate its aspirations and vision, particularly through local conduits such as home-grown terror organisations or individual idealogues is both comprehensive and multi-faceted.

For example, *Daesh* in Indonesia focused on three key areas to persuade and convince their potential audience, namely, i) the narrative of the Islamic State as a caliphate; ii) *Daesh*'s battleground achievements; and iii) the ideological affinities. These narratives are disseminated in institutions of higher learning, prisons as well as through the Internet.

The dissemination of extremist ideology among students and undergraduates in schools, universities and *pasentrens* is of concern, particularly in Indonesia. The ability of extremist groups to look into the welfare of undergraduates, provide basic needs like food and boarding as well as provide companionship is often times used to lure undergraduates into their groups. Their ability to take control of student bodies, thereby providing the conduits for them to gain access to a wider undergraduate population is also of grave concern.

Prisons, particularly in Indonesia, are also a major source for the dissemination of radical ideology. Though incarcerated, idealogues in jail have nevertheless been able to spread and propagate their extremist ideas not only among themselves but also to the outside world. Abu Bakar Bashir's gradual shift towards *Daesh* was orchestrated in prison. Aman Abdurrahman, while being incarcerated in prison was still said to be able to command 200 followers with just a few couriers and cell phones. Even from his cell, he nevertheless managed to encourage hundreds of Indonesians to join the fight in Syria and Iraq.

The Internet has also been powerfully exploited by *Daesh* idealogues. Bahrun Naim, said to be an expert in the Information Communication Technology (ICT) has relied on social media to disseminate his ideas and thoughts. Actively into blogging, he praised an attempted attack in Solo and called for the so-called "lone wolves" to "rise up against the Indonesian archipelago". In Malaysia, social media has also been actively used by *Daesh* extremists to attract, influence and radicalise scores of people. The RMP highlighted that those who were arrested in Malaysia had similar characteristics, among them being, i) hooked on websites pertaining to the situation to Syria and Iraq; ii) Facebook 'friends' with those who had either been to Iraq and Syria or were planning to go there and; iii) in Internet 'chat groups,' discussing the situation in Iraq and Syria. It was also significant to note that while JI's recruitment in Malaysia was conducted largely on a personal basis, *Daesh* utilised the Internet to conduct large

scale radicalisation and recruitment. The Internet had also shortened the time needed to radicalise and recruit individuals. While it took JI approximately three to six months before a potential recruit was allowed to be admitted into the group, it was much faster in the case of *Daesh*, due to the Internet.

Returning FTF

Returning FTF is a grave concern, particularly for Indonesia and Malaysia. They have the potential to carry on and further *Daesh*'s agenda in their respective home countries. Their 'street-cred' and prestige from fighting in Syria and Iraq could enhance their potency to influence and radicalise, while their experience in the battlefield, coupled with a higher threshold for violence gained from participating in the conflict in Syria and Iraq could possibly lead them to consider planning further attacks in the region, in ways not seen before. Operationally, they could regroup and resume conflict by either reviving dormant groups or even specifically targeting foreigners and foreign-interests such as embassies, hotels and shopping centres in the region. In this regard, the formation of *Katibah Nusantara* and its growing significance both in the Southeast Asian region as well as in Syria and Iraq is a cause of concern. While their current attention is on Syria and Iraq, the impact, should a strategic decision be made on the part of *Daesh* to relook and focus on this region instead, would be both significant and deadly.

Direct Daesh Radicalisation Versus Indirect Daesh radicalisation

It is significant to note that there are slight variations in *Daesh*'s radicalisation in Europe when compared to Southeast Asia and in particular Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. In the West, *Daesh* has the ability to appeal directly to the audience, which is the general Western population. In Southeast Asia and in particular Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, it is the local extremist and terrorist groups that seem to have a greater say in influencing the local population to accept *Daesh*. These local groups act like conduits and middle-men who 'repackage' the *Daesh* ideology and make it suitable and relevant to the target population by adding in the local grievances, nuances and issues that not only resonates but adds to the push and pull factors that lead to radicalisation and subsequent recruitment.

Given this, the role and characteristics of the middle-men or terror groups in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines that 'repackage' the *Daesh* ideology to suite both the local people on the ground as well as their own vested interests need to be carefully considered.

At the operational level, is the radicalisation taking place in the region "*Daesh-*

inspired", "*Daesh*-directed" or "*Daesh*-inspired leading to *Daesh*-directed radicalisation"?

Daesh-inspired Radicalisation

This would mean that terror groups in the region are taking advantage of the situation by associating themselves with *Daesh* to perhaps get better recognition, support in terms of finance and equipment or even to increase their prestige level. These opportunistic groups will hold on to *Daesh*'s vision so long as it proves advantageous to them. Possible example of such a group would be the ASG and the BIFF.

Daesh-Directed Radicalisation

This would mean that groups or individuals in the region subscribe to *Daesh*'s vision of a global caliphate based in Syria and intend to spread that particular ideology in their respective home-countries through whatever means possible. Either based on a calculated, rational choice or an emotional-based religious decision, individuals or groups, have submitted to *Daesh*'s leadership and subsequent vision. Possible examples of such groups include would be the *Katibah Nusantara* and the MIT.

Daesh-Inspired leading to Daesh-Directed Radicalisation

This would refer particularly to individuals who were initially inspired by *Daesh* and subsequently radicalised. They then left, on their own accord to directly join *Daesh* in Syria or Iraq as FTF. The numerous Indonesians and Malaysians who have surreptitiously gone without any visible support or backing from groups within their respective countries could be examples of this form of radicalisation.

The power of shame and the need to do something

Part of the 'emotional narrative' put forth by *Daesh* and its associates in this region was that Muslims were being 'humiliated' by the events that was happening in the world today and that they needed to do something about it. Seeking to join the conflict in Syria or Iraq or even taking the battle to the homefront was considered 'doing something.'

In light of this, US Army Colonel John M. Venhaus's study on why youths joined *Al-Qaeda*[470], which was based on interviews and personal histories of 2,032 'foreign

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[470] Colonel John Matt Venhaus, *Why Youth Join Al-Qaeda*, USIP Special Report 236, (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, May 2010), www.usip.org/files/resources/SR236Venhaus.pdf (Retrieved on 6 March 2016).

fighters' is insightful. The study was premised on the assumption that "potential recruits had an unfulfilled need to define themselves". He identified 'four seekers' with particular and unique needs. Firstly, there were the *revenge seekers* who needed an outlet for their frustration. Secondly, there were the *status seekers*, who needed some form of recognition. Thirdly, there were the *identity seekers* who needed to join a group to have a sense of belonging and fourthly, there were the *thrill seekers* who needed a sense of adventure.

In the case of *Daesh*-type radicalisation, the revenge seekers were motivated by the desire to protect and avenge the atrocities committed by the Bashir regime on their fellow Sunni Muslims. They were moved by the graphic images and stories about how their fellow Sunnis were being cruelly mistreated. Schmid explains this phenomenon by suggesting that at times, terrorists groups often "*adopt somebody else's grievances and become self-appointed champions of a cause other than their own*". This phenomenon known as 'vicarious grievances' is premised on "altruistic feelings", whereby one feels the pain of another (secondary trauma) and subsequently "identifies with the fate of an adopted constituency and acts on its behalf". Khosrokhavar highlights how vicarious humiliation acts in the same manner as direct humiliation, noting that young Muslims in the West often "*cannot understand how it is possible to both watch the repression of the Muslim world on television, and live peacefully in a world of arrogant wealth and immoral complicity with the oppressors without raising their voice in protest or without taking action.*"[471]

Lack of counter-narratives and dissemination channels

While *Daesh*'s narrative was relatively well packaged and very well disseminated, it was not quite the same when it came to counter-narratives in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. Among the three countries, Indonesia had better counter-narrative products available for its citizens.

The *Damailah Indonesiaku* (Be peaceful my Indonesia) campaign, was an effort by counter-terrorism officials and was centered on a pro-peace website that focused on creating awareness and engaging with the people to counter the terrorist rhetoric. At the civil society level, Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesia's largest Muslim organisation had produced a documentary, in December 2015, entitled *Rahmat Islam Nusantara* (The Divine Grace of Islam Nusantara), which showcased how Islam blended harmoniously with other religions and beliefs. On the individual front, Ali Amron, who was involved with the Bali Bombing ran a blog, countering violent extremism. However, there were relatively very few such endeavours in counter narratives and most were on an ad hoc

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[471] Farhad Khosrokhavar, *Suicide Bombers: Allah's New Martyrs*, Macey, D. trans., London: Pluto Press, 2005.

level with very little concerted coordination between authorities, civil society, marketing and advertising officials from the private sector and research bodies.

The situation in Malaysia, was even more acute. Very little coordinated effort was mounted to create a comprehensive counter-narrative message to that of the terrorist that involved the authorities, counter-terrorism officials and the community. In light of this, the Government of Malaysia was in the process of setting up a Digital Strategic Communications Division (DSCD) under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to both understand terrorist messaging as well as develop counter-narrative digital end-products which would then be disseminated to the public.

While at different levels in coming up with counter-narratives, there were nevertheless certain similarities for all three countries in this area. Firstly, there was very little coordination between the authorities, civil society and the private sector, which had the technical resources to create effective counter-narratives. Secondly, there was very little research being conducted on who should be the target audience, which would be the most suitable medium and how the counter-narratives should be developed. Thirdly, the dissemination channels for the end products were not well established and coverage was limited. Hence, a good counter-narrative product was led down by a poor distribution and dissemination network. For an effective development and dissemination of counter-narratives, what was needed was a 'whole-of-nation' approach which encompassed both a 'whole-of-government' approach as well as a 'whole-of-society' approach. Anything less would be far from adequate and would not be able to stand the onslaught of *Daesh*'s narrative.

Daesh as a satellite state in Southeast Asia

The possibility of *Daesh* proclaiming a *wilayat* (*Daesh* satellite state) in Southeast Asia is something that warrants serious attention. At this juncture, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that such a development will take place in the near future. Insufficient evidence however, does not necessarily mean that such a development will not take place. Vulnerable areas include Southern Philippines, which has seen numerous groups and individuals pledging allegiance to *Daesh* and also Indonesia, which has seen both the establishment of *Katibah Nusantara* as well as the returning of FTF.

Knowledge Gaps

The need for theoretical models

There was an urgent need to build good theoretical models of radicalisation, suited particularly for countries in Southeast Asia dealing with *Daesh*. These models could be based on observing the profile of *Daesh* extremists, including the manner and dynamics in which they work and behave in a certain environment with the aim of finding general or specific patterns or trends, which could then be extrapolated to become a model. These models have the potential to offer valuable insights into the triggers and drivers of radicalisation. Also, it could benefit policy makers in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines to understand the dynamics of terrorist recruitment, terrorist mindset and the possible evolutionary pathways that both terrorist individuals and organisations could take.

Some of the helpful radicalisation models and theories available (this is not an exhaustive list) include the Relative Deprivation Theory[472], the Social Network Theory[473], the Group Dynamic Theory[474] [475], the Social Learning Theory, the Social Identity Theory, Moghaddam's Staircase to Terrorism Model[476], the New York Police Department's Model[477], Kumar Ramakrishna's 'Radical Pathways Framework'[478] and McCauley and Moskalenko 12 mechanisms of political radicalisation[479].

At present however, the numerous models and theories that are presented and debated might not fully explain the situation of *Daesh* radicalisation in this region. While many of the models are excellent and might have solid empirical studies behind them, it nevertheless is based on mainly the American or Western-centric context or radicalisation of groups in the past, which while useful, might not necessarily reflect the present situation.

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[472] Gurr, T. (1970). Why Men Rebel. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

[473] Crossett, C., and J. Spitaletta. "Radicalisation: Relevant psychological and sociological concepts." (2010).

[474] Crossett, C., and J. Spitaletta. "Radicalisation: Relevant psychological and sociological concepts." (2010).

[475] Forsyth, D. R. (2006). *Group dynamics* (*4th* ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

[476] Fathali M. Moghaddam, *The Staircase to Terrorism: A Psychological Exploration*, American Psychologist, Vol. 60. No. 2, p. 161-169, February – March 2005.

[477] Mitchell D. Silber and Arvin Bhatt, Radicalisation in the West: The Homegrown Threat, http://www.nypdshield.org/public/SiteFiles/documents/NYPD_Report-Radicalisation_in_the_West.pdf (Retrieved on 7 December 2015).

[478] Kumar Ramakrishna, *Radical Pathways: Understanding Muslim Radicalisation in Indonesia,*' Praeger Security International, 2009.

[479] *Preventing Religious Radicalisation and Violent Extremism: A Systematic review of the Research Evidence*, Youth Justice Board for England and Wales 2012.

It used to be that terrorists were said to be radicalised and then recruited. However, we are beginning to see the possibility of those who joined *Daesh* in this region, doing so without being radicalised and in some cases being radicalised only after being recruited. McCauley and Moskalenko highlighted that "*there are many paths to radicalisation that do not involve ideology. Some join a radical group for thrills and status, some for love, some for connection and comradeship. Personal and group grievances can move individuals toward violence, with ideology serving only to rationalise the violence.*"[480]

Conversely, the power of ideology in radicalisation cannot be underestimated. The European Commission's Expert Group on Violent Radicalisation highlighted that,

> "*Ideology appears as an important and constant factor in the radicalisation process towards terrorism. Ideological indoctrination plays a crucial role in turning a small but significant minority dissatisfied with existing social and political arrangements into militants. Ideology contributes to the acceptance of violence as a method to bring about political change and also leads to the creation of a subculture of violence. Ideology is used to reduce potential moral inhibitors and to justify the resort to extreme methods from a broader repertoire of methods of waging political conflict. Cognitive frameworks derived from certain exclusive ideologies have been used to build collective identities based on narratives of violent struggle*".[481]

In the case of *Daesh* in the region, qualitative results indicate that ideology does at times play a role in the process of radicalisation. This kind of conclusions however does little to shed sufficient light to craft informed policies. Hence, in this case, quantitative studies that are geographically sensitive, would be necessary to give a more accurate assessment.

The need for cross-cutting research

It is important to note that the study on radicalisation in this region cannot exist in a vacuum. Multi-disciplinary analysis covering various fields such as human thinking and

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[480] Clark McCauley and Sophia Moskalenko, '*Individual and Group Mechanisms of Radicalisation*', in Sarah Canna (Ed.) *Protecting the Homeland from International and Domestic Terrorism Threats: Current Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives on Root Causes, the Role of Ideology, and Programs for Counter-radicalisation and Disengagement* (College Park: START, January 2011).

[481] Reprinted in R. Coolsaet (Ed.), *Jihadi Terrorism and the Radicalisation Challenge. European and American Experiences,* 2nd ed., (Farnham: Ashate, 2011).

behavior, adolescent nature, social media, communications strategies, secondary trauma, religion and culture are often times missing in the field of radicalisation and deradicalisation. Hence, cross-cutting research, for example studying push and pull factors of gang recruitment, the use of secondary trauma as recruiting tools, the family ties (or lack of) and its relationship with the youth joining conflict zones, good governance, the youth bulge theory,[482] the sense of identity (or lack of) among second and third generation migrants, the curriculum of the *madrasahs*, the extent that youths are treated as stakeholders in the country, the effects of poverty in conflict, the relationship between unemployment and violence, the role of NGOs and civil society in conflict resolution, the representation of women as community leaders, the role of mothers in families and communities, the lack of religious knowledge among the youth, the growing acceptance of hate speech/extremist views among political leaders, the contents of the preaching on Friday sermons in the mosques and the acceptance of official religious leaders among the youth are among the related but indirect fields that need further study should we want to develop a better understanding of radicalisation in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

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[482] The youth bulge theory proposes that a large male population without regular employment has a higher risk of violence.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE WAY FORWARD

Outline

This chapter starts by conducting a needs-analysis for the three countries based on the research findings. Subsequently, it proposes a 4-Step Counter-Narrative Developmental Model that seeks to develop i) research networks; ii) resource centres; iii) training and dissemination hubs; and iv) monitoring groups. This model seeks to stream-line the efforts and activities necessary to develop, deliver and monitor a counter-narrative programme that would be sufficiently robust and adaptable to take on the rhetoric and arguments promulgated by *Daesh* in this region. This chapter shall also consider certain 'value-needs' such as passion, creativity and coordination which would be deemed as essential in the fight against *Daesh*.

Introduction

At present, whether it is *Daesh*-inspired or *Daesh*-directed, the group has shown its tremendous capability and capacity to identify, target, introduce, entice, indoctrinate and recruit both individuals and other terrorist groups to fight on its behalf, either in Syria and Iraq or in their respective countries. *Daesh*'s ability to do so starts with, firstly, its compelling and creative narrative and secondly, its tremendous capacity to disseminate this narrative to all levels of society. Simply put, their target audience is *all*. In Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, their sympathisers, supporters and recruits come from all walks of life; religious or otherwise, educated or uneducated, gainfully employed or without a job, both young and old, male and female.

Thus far, in dealing with this phenomenon, most countries have sought to incarcerate the perpetrators, and rightfully so, for if allowed loose, their potential to cause harm is tremendous. However, the stark reality is that the numbers being arrested are only a small fraction of those being radicalised. Perhaps, it is time to address this imbalance by not only focusing on the radicals but more importantly the process of radicalisation that gives birth to them. As noted in the UN Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism,

> *"Over the past two decades, the international community has sought to address violent extremism primarily within the context of security-based counter-terrorism measures adopted in response to the threat posed by Al-Qaida and its affiliated groups. However, with the emergence of a new generation of groups, there is a growing international consensus that such*

counter-terrorism measures have not been sufficient to prevent the spread of violent extremism."[483]

It is in this context, that the author would like to propose that the *Daesh* narrative is significant in the radicalisation process in this region and that there is an urgent need to address this phenomenon.

Hence, the premise that forms the recommendations of this study is three-fold.
Firstly, the narrative (be it ideological, religious, emotional or opportunistic) put forth by *Daesh* in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines is one of the primary factors that have been able to draw both individuals and groups within the three respective countries to sympathise, support and join *Daesh*.

Secondly, the current counter and/or alternative narratives to tackle *Daesh*'s story is generally structurally weak, disjointed and lacks sufficient creativity and passion and is hindered by the lack of a strong delivery mechanism as well as trained personnel to make a credible and long-lasting impact (there are however exceptions in all three countries).

Thirdly, given this, there is therefore a need to build a comprehensive, coterie of counter and alternative narratives that are tailor-made to suite environments, conditions and circumstances found in these three countries and subsequently to deliver them in a manner that reaches the widest audience and brings about the greatest impact.

Needs Analysis for Counter-Narratives in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines

Before embarking on building a counter-narrative model in the region, it perhaps might be necessary to see what we need and where we are at. Firstly, we need to have a better understanding on how and why *Daesh*-type radicalisation is taking place and who are the primary targets within these three countries (while *Daesh*'s range of targeted audience is broad, the authorities on the other hand might not have that luxury and might be required to initially prioritise their target audience). We need to ascertain how the various components of ideology, identity, nationalism, religion and romanticism are 'mixed and matched' to radicalise and recruit both individuals and groups.

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[483] Report of the Secretary-General, Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, United Nations General Assembly, A/70/674, 24 December 2015, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/674 (Retrieved on 19 March 2016).

Secondly, we need to both collate our regional data set and augment our existing knowledge by analysing the evolution of *Daesh* in other parts of the world. That would enable us to ascertain how the authorities there are dealing with this issue, for there could be similar challenges or possible trends that could be adapted and subsequently used in this region, thereby eliminating the need to 'reinvent the wheel.'

Thirdly, using the available data, in terms of terrorist messaging, targeted audience and the radicalisation process, we then need to construct our own counter-narratives and the platforms (eg. social media, traditional media, etc.) relevant to this region which can then be used to carry those counter-narratives.

Fourthly, we need to identify the conduits to bridge the divide and carry the message across to the targeted audience. Possible conduits could include institutions such as religious bodies, universities, schools, civil societies or individuals such as community leaders, Internet bloggers, newspaper editors, religious clerics, former rehabilitated terrorists, scholars, entertainment celebrities, mothers, victims of terrorism or sports celebrities

Fifthly, having identified the institutions, individuals and groups, we need to adequately train them to be able to carry the counter-narratives. We need to ascertain their specific skill-set and creatively yet sensitively 'exploit' their talents by 'marketing and branding' them in such a way that would create the greatest impact with our targeted audience.

Finally, we need to continuously assess the impact of our intervention programmes through both formal and informal feedback and fine-tune and improve whenever necessary to ensure that initially, we are on par with *Daesh*, and subsequently in future, we are ahead of them in terms of 'telling the story' and 'winning the hearts and minds' of the people.

It is in line with this, that the author would like to propose the 4-Step Counter-Narrative Developmental Model that seeks to develop i) research networks; ii) resource centres; iii) dissemination and training hubs; and iv) monitoring groups. This model seeks to stream-line the efforts and activities necessary to develop, deliver and monitor a counter-narrative programme that would be sufficiently robust and adaptable to take on the rhetoric and arguments promulgated by *Daesh* in this region.

Four-Step Counter-Narrative Developmental Model

Step One: Developing Research Networks in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines

As mentioned, given the lack of good data coverage and analysis with regards to *Daesh* radicalisation in this region, there is perhaps the need to develop a web of cross-disciplinary research networks. This loose collaboration within *existing* think-tanks, universities, individuals and any other interested parties could form a network that could be tasked to identify and understand the process of *Daesh*-inspired radicalisation that is taking place both in the virtual world and on the ground in the three respected countries. Among the areas that this network would look into include:

➢ Understanding the message/s of *Daesh* and *Daesh*-linked terror groups (i.e. ideological, religious, nationalistic, etc.);
➢ Identifying the messenger/s who are bringing the message to the people in the region (i.e. idealogues in Syria/Iraq, terrorists in the region who subsequently fought in Syria/Iraq who are still operating there/have returned, completely home-grown idealogues, etc.);
➢ Identifying the audience of the terrorist narrative (i.e. youth, women, those religiously inclined, etc);
➢ Analysing how the message is being conveyed (one-to-one instruction, Internet radicalisation, etc.);
➢ Studying the evolution of *Daesh* and the challenges faced by the authorities in other parts of the world; and
➢ Analysing and collating this data.

I.   What is the Terrorist Message?

Schmid and de Graaf highlight the need for terrorism to be understood in the context of 'communication and propaganda'. They are of the view that terrorism is a 'combination of both violence and propaganda' to 'advertise' and convince others on the groups potential to cause 'harm and to destroy.' [484] This propaganda that is then communicated forms the basis of the terrorist narrative.

What then is a narrative?

George Dimitriu notes that a narrative can be defined as a "resource for political actors to construct a shared meaning to shape perceptions, beliefs and behaviour of

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[484] A.P. Schmid, J. de Graaf, *Violence as Communication: Insurgent Terrorism and the Western News Media* (London: Sage, 1982), p. 14; Alex P. Schmid, "Terrorism as Psychological Warfare", *Democracy and Security* 1, No. 2 (2005), pp. 127-136.

the public". This is the framework through which "[a] shared sense is achieved, representing a past, present and future, an obstacle and a desired end-point".[485]

Steven R. Corman points out that "narratives are powerful resources for influencing target audiences; they offer an alternative form of rationality deeply rooted in culture, which can be used to interpret and frame local events and to strategically encourage particular kinds of personal action".[486]

Given this, analysis needs to be conducted on understanding the message and narrative of *Daesh* in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, with the view that such understanding would then better equip us to design both a counter narrative and an alternative narrative. Only once we have understood the message and appeal of their narrative, could we begin to decipher the reasons, logic and rationale behind the decision to either support or sympathize with the terrorist.

II.   *Who is the Messenger?*

There is also the need for the research networks to identify the characteristics of the *Daesh*-messenger who is bringing forth their message into the respective three countries. Under whose guidance is the *Daesh* propaganda being crafted and disseminated in this region?

Is it the idealogues from Syria and Iraq, who are directly working under Baghdadi, who are developing the *Daesh* message and call in the region?

Is it home grown terrorists, like Bahrun Naim, who is now suspected to be in Syria, who is the voice radicalising and recruiting potential recruits in the region?

Could it be returning FTF, who were citizens in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, who then went and fought in the conflict in Syria and Iraq but have now returned and are at present representing *Daesh* in this region?

Or could it be home-grown idealogues, like Aman Abdurrahman and Abu Bakar Bashir, who have never even been to Syria and Iraq but have nevertheless taken the role of representing *Daesh* in this region?

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[485] G. Dimitriu, *Strategic Narratives, Counternarratives and Public Support for War: The Dutch government's explanation of the Uruzgan mission and its influence on the Dutch Public* (Leiden University: Master Thesis, Campus The Hague, 2 February 2013), p. 13.

[486] Steven R. Corman, *Understanding the Role of Narrative in Extremist Strategic Communication*, in Laurie Fenstermacher and Todd Leventhal (Eds.), *Countering Violent Extremism: Scientific Methods and Strategies* (Washington, DC: NSI Inc., September 2011).

The characteristics of the types of *Daesh* messengers described above differ and hence, their skill-set, talent, influence and target audience could similarly, be different. Greater understanding on such messengers could prove useful in either countering their message or blunting their appeal.

III. *Who is the Audience?*

With regards to understanding the target audience, access for researchers, particularly to those who are in the process of being radicalised or are possible targets for radicalisation by the terrorists could be difficult.

A possible way forward could be to utilise and tap into 'gate-keepers.' Gate-keepers could be defined as individuals or organisations that have access to those who are potential targets of terrorist radicalisation. For example, youths have been identified as being vulnerable to *Daesh*-type radicalisation in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. In this particular case, their teachers and lecturers could be possible gate-keepers. Other potential gatekeepers for other target audiences include celebrities, religious leaders, prison wardens, mothers and community leaders. Due to their close proximity and access to the targeted audience, these gate-keepers have the potential to understand both the thinking and behavioural patterns of the audience and could provide valuable information and insight into subtle shifts in the thought process and actions of the people in question. Thus, research networks need to initiate and institutionalise collaboration and cooperation with such gate-keepers.

IV. *How is the Message Conveyed?*

We then need to understand how the message is being conveyed.

is *Daesh*-type radicalisation in the region being conveyed through the various platforms available on Social Media such as FaceBook as in the case of Malaysia?

Or perhaps, recorded sermons over the handphones as seen in Indonesia?

Could it be one-on-one radicalisation that takes place in universities or in prisons, as seen in the Philippines and Indonesia?

Or through constant exposure and expert persuasion as seen through Malaysian, Yazid Sufaat's method of conveying *Daesh*'s call.

Does the messaging appearing 'on-line' represent what is happening 'off-line?'

Does *Daesh* actively seek out to convey messages to lone-wolves or does it prefer to concentrate on groups instead and is there a particular methodology in either case?

V. *Studying the evolution of Daesh and the challenges faced by the authorities in other parts of the world*

Doing so could serve as a template for many of the research questions posed earlier. Research institutions in this region, could study, both the qualitative as well as quantitative research work that have already been carried out on the subject of *Daesh* messaging, messengers, target audience and medium of persuasion. Peter Neumann's work at King's College on European Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq, while having differences to that which is happening in this region, could certainly be a template in terms of research methodology for a similar research here in Southeast Asia. The work carried out by the Institute of Strategic Dialogue, particularly in crafting out counter-narratives could likewise prove to be useful for similar work in this region.

VI. *Analyse and collate this data*

While there is qualitative data in terms of what is the message, who is the messenger, who are the audience and how the message is being conveyed, there is a dearth of quantitative data in these fields, except in certain rare exceptions, from these three countries. This is unfortunate as Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines do have very good, existing research institutions and should they work collectively in identifying gaps in data, share best practices (which could then be adapted to suite the individual countries' needs) and subsequently collate this analysed data, more ground could be covered, at a much faster pace in understanding how *Daesh* operates.

Step Two: Developing Resource Centres in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines

Based on the raw data and analysis from the research networks, the authorities in the region would then be in a better position to craft specific intervention programmes that could be tailor-made to reach the specific target groups. This would be the function of the resource centre which would act as the 'factory' to then take these insights and ideas and translate them to specific end-products which would then be used as tools in our counter-radicalisation efforts.

In this regard, there is a need, firstly, to identify, classify and prioritise the target audience for our counter-radicalisation efforts in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. While we acknowledge that profiling those who are susceptible to terrorist influence is challenging and that *Daesh*'s target audience is indeed broad and uncertain, there might nevertheless still be a need to classify and prioritise who are

most in need of interventions as resources to target every single individual in the region might not be available as of yet. The target audience can either be those that we think are susceptible and vulnerable to the terrorist rhetoric and narrative or the audience that the terrorists are targeting and focusing their message upon.. The two groups need not necessarily be the same.

Generally, the resource centre would develop tools that would act as 'mental firewalls' to prevent or if necessary deal with terrorist rhetoric and ideology. Among the specific tools that could be developed include animation, songs, modules, games, music videos, digital comic books and guides, for focus group discussions, both on-line and off-line, that would focus on both the counter and alternative narratives.

In this regard, effort must be placed not only in countering the narrative but also in crafting an alternative narrative.

Countering the narrative would mean the point-by-point debunking of issues raised by the terrorist in the narrative that they push out. This is a more reactive approach that seeks to debunk, argue and negate the points, reasons and motivations brought forth by the terrorists. For example, *Daesh*'s skewed and misguided interpretations of the religious texts, particularly on the use of violence and *jihad* should be countered with verses that show the compassionate side of Islam, the strict guidelines given for conduct during war and the rich celebration of diversity and tolerance advocated by Islam. Their call for violence could be met with arguments pointing out its ineffectiveness to achieve goals and the destruction it brings. *Daesh*'s so-called sense of justice in representing and defending the rights of the Sunni Muslims should be contrasted with the plight and voices of the victims who suffer and continue to suffer in provinces under their control in both Syria and Iraq.

While countering *Daesh*'s narrative is essential, it could mean that the authorities in this region are constantly reacting to the agenda set by the group and are most of the times, one step behind, which is often times the case in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. There is therefore a need to present the alternative narrative to the audience, one that tells or 'retells' the story in a way that is both positive and proactive. In this scenario, the Resource Centre would seek to develop an alternative model to that advocated by the terrorists, with the hope of winning the audience in the region with a credible and feasible approach that has the potential to now put the authorities on the offensive and the terrorist at the defensive.

For example, the retelling of Islam, emphasising that the religion goes far beyond just *jihad*, but encompasses a way of living that is both harmonious with diversity and compatible with change shall, to a great extent, showcase to people (and for many it

will be the first time) that there is marked difference between the Islam advocated by *Daesh* and Islam as it was in the beginning in this region. In this case, Indonesia's efforts to harmonise the *Pancasila* with Islam is certainly a step in the right direction. Also, the idea that sciences, philosophy, art and culture flourished during the early days of Islam could point out to the audience in this region that the Islam preached by *Daesh* as compared to what is seen now in Syria and Iraq is but a shadow of the real thing.

Another example, is presenting non-violence as a credible and viable model to address grievances. Understanding that *Daesh* advocates indiscriminate violence as a crude way to address all their grievances; the resource centre after debunking the idea that violence is effective in bringing about positive change, can then propose models of non-violence as a possible alternative model in addressing issues and challenges. To do so, we need to therefore develop a more nuanced and robust concept of non-violence, which can subsequently be marketed as a contender to terrorism as way to resolve grievances and resolve conflict.

There is a need to show the audience and in particular the youth who are susceptible to *Daesh* radicalisation in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, that our model of non-violence is a far more effective approach to address grievances and has the capacity and the capability to bring about lasting change.[487] The campaign against the slave trade by William Wilberforce, the movement for female suffrage by Susan B. Anthony, Carrie Chapman Catt and numerous others, the Gandhian philosophy of '*satyagraha*' (devotion to truth), Nelson Mandela's struggle to overcome apartheid in South Africa and Martin Luther King Jr.'s part in the American Civil Rights movement[488] are excellent case studies of non-violent strategies that have been carried out and have achieved considerable success despite tremendous opposition. While these examples are noteworthy, efforts must also be undertaken to showcase more local examples in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, where non-violent ways have been used to resolve conflict. Simply put, we are in competition against *Daesh* and need to push forth the idea that we have a model that works and then 'sell' the model to the people.

The resource centre must both develop and craft modules, activities and interventions that would enable differing groups of people, be it mothers, undergraduates or religious lay-people in Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines to speak and engage with their fellow peers and create doubt on the assertions made by *Daesh* and its

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[487] Thomas Koruth Samuel, *Reaching the Youth: Countering the Terrorist Narrative*, Southeast Asian Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, 2012.
[488] Anne Williams and Vivian Head, *Freedom Fighters,* Futura Publications, 2007.

advocates as well as provide viable alternatives to that suggested by them to address grievances and conflicts.

Creating this products and tools will once again be a cross-cutting multi-disciplinary endeavor involving psychologists, communications specialists, marketers, advertisers, content developers, editors, youth workers and other relevant experts that could be used to heighten the impact of the tools. Specifically, the role of advertisers and marketers must be thoroughly explored in developing intervention programmes to counter terrorism. These people are gifted with the ability to modify thinking, influence choices and alter behavior. Their expertise, knowledge and experience both in the human psyche as well as in campaigns to change human thinking, behaviour and action, particularly in this region would be a valuable resource to tap into.

Step Three: Developing Training and Dissemination Hubs in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines

Training the Messenger

It is pertinent to understand that the counter narratives produced by the resource centre are only tools and much of its success (or failure) would depend on, firstly, the messengers who would be carrying these tools and secondly, their ability to both reach and disseminate these resources to the target audience in the three respective countries.

Hence, it would be of utmost importance to ensure that the messenger carrying the message be equipped with the necessary knowledge, skill and creativity to be able to make a positive impact in the region. Identifying the right messenger to ensure that he or she connects with the audience and subsequently training them to be able to do so in the best possible manner would be of paramount importance. Potential messengers in this region include victims of terrorism, former terrorists who have been rehabilitated, television, influential bloggers, entertainment and sports celebrities.

Former terrorists who have been rehabilitated and victims of terrorism offer a powerful story that could be harnessed in countering the terrorist narrative. In the case of former terrorists, they are said to have the credibility or the 'street credentials' and 'carry a certain weight in terms of the respect that potential recruits might have towards them.'[489] For example, Nasir Abas's compelling story and his understanding on the nuances in Indonesia has the potential of countering _Daesh_'s appeal. Noor

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[489] Sara Zaiger, _CVE Research Brief_, Hedayah Centre, December 2014, http://www.hedayah.ae/pdf/cve-research-brief-3.pdf (Retrieved on 21 March 2016).

Umug's experience with the ASG allows him to showcase the true character of the group and by extension *Daesh*.[490]

Victims, by virtue over what has happened to them, provide a 'powerful emotional narrative' that has the potential to 'reinforce dissatisfaction' over the method and the approach taken by the terrorist.[491] Their story also has the potential to counter the often times evocative premise that the terrorists are representing and fighting for a victimised group of people. As highlighted by Schmid, "victim and survivor voices need not only be heard, but ought to be amplified."[492]

In this regard, let us perhaps consider Nadia.

Nadia Murad Basee Taha is a 21-year old Yezidi, who was invited by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to speak[493] about the rape and torture, she and other Yezidi women like her, suffered under *Daesh*.[494] On 15 August 2014, *Daesh* fighters in her village in Northern Iraq separated the men and the women. Subsequently, they executed 312 men in one hour, including six of Nadia's brothers and stepbrothers. 80 elderly women were also killed, presumably because they were too old and undesirable to be sold into slavery. The women and children who remained were 'distributed' and 'exchanged' among fighters as gifts to be enslaved. Many women killed themselves in an attempt to avoid what they perceived to be their coming 'fate'. Nadia was taken to Mosul where she was taken by a *Daesh* fighter. There, 'he forced me to get dressed and put my makeup on and then that terrible night, he did it. He forced me to serve as part of his military faction, he humiliated me every day." Nadia tried to escape but was caught by a guard. "That night he beat me. He asked me to take my clothes off. He put me in a room with the guards and then they proceeded to commit their crime until I fainted." Nadia said that none of her captors showed any signs of regret for what they had did to her. When one *Daesh* fighter was asked if she was his wife, he shouted, "This is not my wife, she is my *sabia*, she is my slave".[495] The fighter then fired shots in the sky, as a sign of happiness. Perhaps, Nadia's account of

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[490] Thomas Koruth Samuel, *Reaching the Youth: Countering the Terrorist Narrative*, Southeast Asian Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, 2012.

[491] Ibid

[492] Alex P. Schmid, "*Al-Qaeda's Single Narrative and attempts to develop Counter-Narratives: The State of Knowledge*," ICT Research Paper, January 2014, http://www.icct.nl/download/file/Schmid-Al-Qaeda's-Single-Narrative-and-Attempts-to-Develop-Counter-Narratives-January-2014.pdf (Retrieved on 21 March 2016).

[493] UN Web TV, http://webtv.un.org/watch/nadia-murad-basee-taha-isil-victim-on-trafficking-of-persons-in-situations-of-conflict-security-council-7585th-meeting/4665835954001 (Retrieved on 22 March 2016).

[494] *Enslaved Yazidi women pleads for UN to destroy IS*, New Straits Times, 18 December 2015.

[495] Charlotte Alter, *A Yezidi women who escaped IS slavery tells her story*, Time, 20 December 2015, http://time.com/4152127/isis-yezidi-woman-slavery-united-nations/ (Retrieved on 4 March 2016).

Daesh could have the graphic ability to open the minds of those who consider them as heroic fighters struggling in a just cause.

In the case of television, movie and sports celebrities, most people, particularly the young tend to gravitate towards them. Unfortunately, their natural capacity to reach out and impact the masses in terms of counter radicalisation has seldom been explored let alone developed. While they might not necessarily be seen as the conventional people to speak on counter-radicalisation related issues, the potential they hold to both sway thinking and behavior among people, particularly with regards to terrorism cannot be underestimated.

There is also the possibility of tapping 'thought shapers', 'opinion makers' and 'influencers' in the Internet in this region, who often times amass a huge following on social platforms. While, they also might not be directly involved in countering terrorism, their ability to both capture and influence specific audiences in this region could be tapped.

Hence, after ascertaining that these messengers would like to cooperate and collaborate with the authorities, there must then be specific training modules that would equip these individuals with both the knowledge and the ability to impart and deliver their message to the people. Efforts must be undertaken to develop their specific advantages and address their issues and challenges if any. Possible issues of concern in this region that could be raised include the fear of reprisal, the fear of dealing with the authority and the stigma of the community (on the part of the victim), should they know what happened. These issues must be addressed in a sensitive and mature manner ensuring that the cooperation and collaboration continues in a mutually productive manner.

It is also significant to note that those who may not play a direct role have nevertheless a lot to contribute. Teachers, youth workers, psychologists and parents, among others, could play a vital role in countering redicalisation if they are trained to identify pre-radicalisation signs, equipped to engage those under their sphere of influence on the myths of the terrorist rhetoric or taught on ways to instill 'mental firewalls' in the hearts and minds of those around them. They could also serve as the 'eyes and the ears' of the authorities both to detect subtle shifts of radicalisation on the ground or even to alert the authorities should they discover cases of suspected radicalisation.

Dissemination

Once we have identified, the content of both the counter and alternative narrative that is best suited in this region and subsequently trained the messengers to carry this message, we need to then ascertain ways to disseminate them to the people who need it the most in a way that stands the best chance for it to be received and accepted. One possible way would be to identify the ways that *Daesh* have used to disseminate their message and to then follow suite. Among the possible ways that we could use to spread the message include public awareness talks, group discussions, lectures and focus group discussions both on and off-line. Both traditional means such as the old media, conventional public awareness programmes, group discussions as well as modern means via the social media and Internet platforms can and should be used to reach and cause the widest impact.

Not only should various tools of dissemination be explored, but the possibility of developing new links to spread both the counter and the alternative narratives could be initiated. No longer, can we depend solely on the authorities to play the role of grassroot mobilisers but perhaps we can take a leaf from the page of the terrorists and start looking at other conduits to reach out to the masses.

Universities, high schools, religious institutions, faith based organisation and civil organisations play a prominent role in this region and have the capacity and capability to reach and impact people in their sphere of influence in a practical and sustainable manner in ways that the authorities by themselves will never be able to replicate or duplicate. Given their existing presence on the ground, coupled with the possible relationship already established with the people, perhaps the time has come for the counter-terrorism authorities to reach out to these conduits and train them instead of the status quo, which is to reach out to the people directly. For this to happen, the authorities need to grasp with the premise that the top-down hierarchical approach generally used in the past, might no longer be as effective and should instead consider using a partnership model, based on empowering certain segments of the community to reach out to the end user.

The premise of both these training and dissemination components is the stark realisation that almost anybody has the potential to be radicalised and the subsequent grim reality that no single authority has the capacity nor the capability to counter this threat, given the sheer amount of people and their diverse background in the three respective countries. Simply put, we need help.

Hence, while recognising that countering radicalisation is both challenging and sensitive, the author hopes that initiating the collaboration between existing training

and dissemination centres in the region could to a certain extent, equip specific groups and individuals and broaden their reach and heighten their impact to blunt the narrative of *Daesh*.

Step Four: Developing Monitoring Groups in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines

The number of counter-terrorism programmes that are available globally is quite impressive. The staggering amount of resources and expertise that have been poured into this endeavour is also tremendous. However, not only does the problem of terrorismpersist, at times, it seems to be growing bigger. Part of the reason could perhaps be due to the fact that while a lot of resources have been put into implementing the various programmes, the monitoring and evaluation component of these activities have often times been either weak or non-existent.

While numerous programmes have been launched, there seems to be a lack of both planning and foresight when it comes to monitoring counter radicalisation programmes and activities in the region. Of course, there are notable exceptions and some countries have done a good job in this particular area. However, by and large, this is one area that needs to be improved upon.

Hence, it is imperative that any counter radicalisation programme or activity in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines must initiate, develop and institutionalise tools, indicators and mechanisms to monitor the running of the programmes/activities. Even at the planning stages of counter-radicalisation programs and activities, efforts must be put in place to ensure that proper monitoring mechanism are in place.

The author would like to suggest that both in-build, self-monitoring as well as third party monitoring mechanisms be part of counter radicalisation. In-build mechanisms can be instituted to not only measure output but also to ensure that such output leads to the desired outcome. The monitoring here will be done by in-house personnel, who are preferably already embedded with the project, allowing them both easy and continued access to the programmes and activities.

Nevertheless, there could naturally be an in-build bias in an in-build monitoring mechanism. Given this possibility, it would also be important to ensure that the internal or self-monitoring mechanism be complimented with third-party monitoring mechanisms. There are numerous consultants and entities that provide this service. Also, third party monitoring can be done by independent individuals or parties that are involved or have a stake in the community being targeted by the programmes.

Community leaders, religious lay-leaders and civil society in theis region could play an essential part in this form of monitoring.
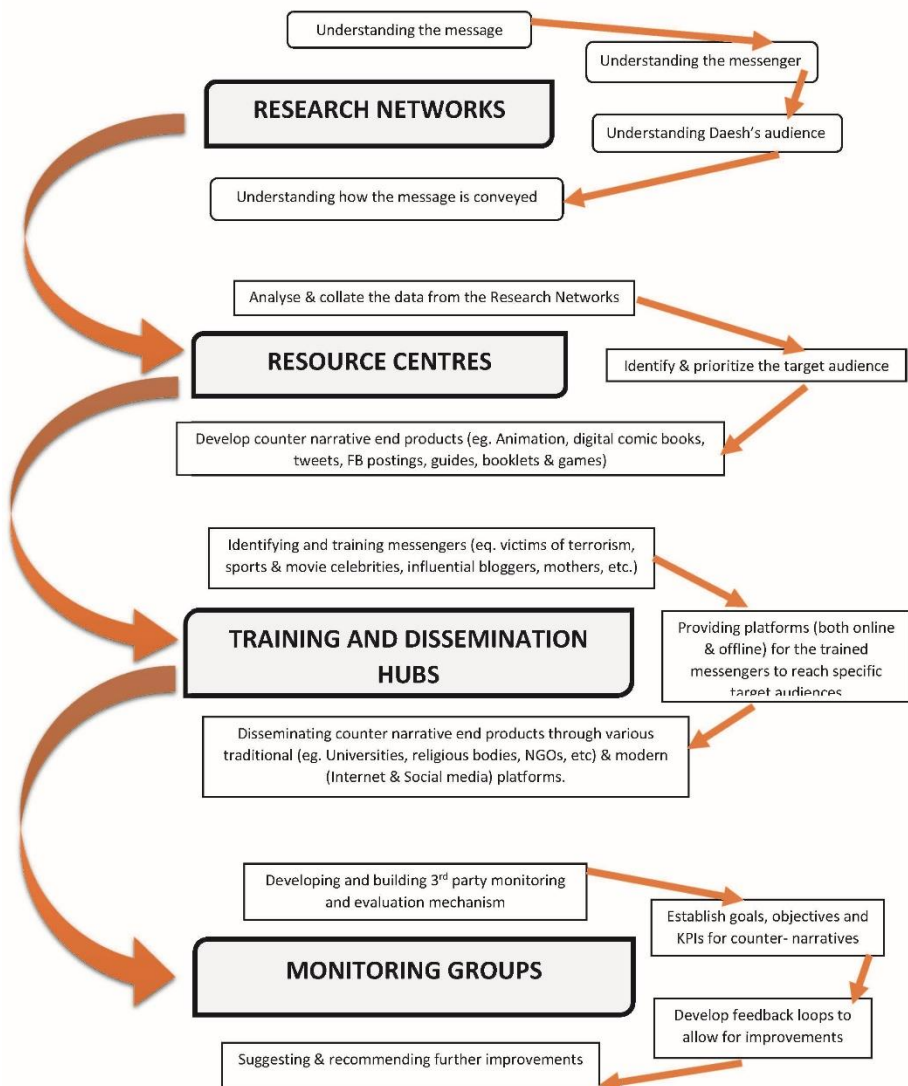
It is also significant to note that monitoring need not necessarily be done only via formal channels. Informal monitoring by the community and other stake-holders could be systematically organised and have the benefit of being both cost-effective as well as self-sustaining. It would be a significant development if such monitoring is institutionalised.

Effective monitoring essentially means that the process of obtaining feedback on the efficacy of the intervention programme is well embedded in ecery activity conducted. This would allow for the subsequent ability to both assess and evaluate the impact of the intervention programmes. Again both informal and formal channels of evaluation must be put in place to ensure that we are able to determine if we are indeed achieving the desired results. Formal evaluation mechanisms such as quantitative analysis in the form of 'pre' and 'post' surveys as well as qualitative analysis via interviews or even a mixed approach (involving both quantitative as well as qualitative methods, such as N-Vivo Analysis) could be used to measure in a more systematic manner our efforts. These collective efforts, if set in place, could ascertain if progress is being made and more importantly seek to improve or if necessary, even revamp our efforts. In this regard, the biggest fear will not be that our intervention programmes are poor but rather we allow poor intervention programmes to continue, simply because we had no clue that this was the case. Hence, what is emphasised here is that we need to craft into our monitoring and evaluation systems, the ability to obtain credible and accurate feedback and the subsequent mechanism to fix or 'tweak that which is broken in the shortest duration possible and then to put it back into the 'open.' Hence, it is not only important that we put out quality intervention programmes, but we possess the ability to identify weaknesses and gaps and have the shortest 'turnaround' time before we are able to 'fix' and put forth our improved and fine-tuned version. The software industry is a good example to emulate. Upon launching an initial software programme or alpha version, should they discover shortcomings or 'chinks' within the system, they are able to recall the product, fix the problem and subsequently put the product back into the market in the shortest possible time. The idea is to make mistakes 'faster,' with the emphasis of fixing the mistake rather than allowing a 'bad product' to remain on the shelf. The principle is to monitor, evaluate and improve.

It is also significant to note that the monitoring groups could also suggest what could be the criteria for a successful intervention programme in the region. While such criteria should be conceptualised at the very onset of an intervention programme, it could nevertheless be highly beneficial, with the advantage of hindsight, to see what

works or otherwise, and to pass such analysis to authorities designing future CVE programmes.

The 4-Step Counter-Narrative Developmental Model'

Understanding the message

Understanding the messenger

RESEARCH NETWORKS

Understanding Daesh's audience

Understanding how the message is conveyed

Analyse & collate the data from the Research Networks

RESOURCE CENTRES

Identify & prioritize the target audience

Develop counter narrative end products (eg. Animation, digital comic books, tweets, FB postings, guides, booklets & games)

Identifying and training messengers (eq. victims of terrorism, sports & movie celebrities, influential bloggers, mothers, etc.)

TRAINING AND DISSEMINATION HUBS

Providing platforms (both online & offline) for the trained messengers to reach specific target audiences

Disseminating counter narrative end products through various traditional (eg. Universities, religious bodies, NGOs, etc) & modern (Internet & Social media) platforms.

Developing and building 3rd party monitoring and evaluation mechanism

Establish goals, objectives and KPIs for counter- narratives

MONITORING GROUPS

Develop feedback loops to allow for improvements

Suggesting & recommending further improvements

Final Observations on Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines

The Need for Passion

While terrorism has often times been labeled as asymmetric warfare, the war against terror often times displays an asymmetry of passion. While those in the frontlines have displayed tremendous courage and sacrificed much, can the same be said of policy makers, academics and officials (the author included) in the field of counter-radicalisation?

How do we move from here?

We need to hire passionate people in counter-terrorism who will literally shake us from our slumber. We need to get victims of terrorism and former rehabilitated terrorists and institutionalise them in our counter-terrorism intervention programmes; from the planning to the implementation stage. We need to find officials, academics and policy makers who have fire in their bellies and like the terrorists, want to be in no other place, but in the thick of the battle. In short, we need to have a shake-up in the system and redesign it in such a way that will allow the entry of such passionate people in the field of counter terrorism. The author was privileged to meet such people during his interviews and visits to Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

However, we need more.

The Need for Creativity

Albert Einstein once remarked that 'insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.' In the field of counter-terrorism, there is an urgent need to relook what we have thus far been doing. Navarro and Villaverde speak on the need, among others for, 'loads of imagination' and 'creative foresight'[496]

The dearth of creativity and lack of imagination, particularly in reaching out to the audience and winning the hearts and minds of the people has meant that we doggedly use the tried and tested method; the only difference being that while it has been 'tried' numerous times, it has often times failed the 'test'. We use the same message, messenger and medium hoping to reach a different set of audience, with a completely different mindset and worldview.

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[496] Jose Maria Blanco Navarro and Jessica Cohen Villaverde, *The Future of Counter-Terrorism in Europe. The Need to be Lost in the Correct Direction*, 5 December 2014, http://link.springer.com/article/ 10.1007%2Fs40309-014-0050-9#/page-1 (Retrieved on 21 March 2016).

We are therefore in need of an urgent overhaul. In the 9/11 Commission Report, it was stressed that the lack of imagination was one of the major reasons the attack was not prevented.[497] Dominic Contreras in his article 'Terrorist Threat Demands Creative Intelligence' quoted Rolf Mowatt-Larsses, a former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officer who observed that there was 'a deficit in creative thinking regarding counter-terrorism…'[498]

It is imperative that we redesign the system that will allow unorthodox and unconventional ways to counter terrorism. While we do not abandon ideas and strategies that have and are working, we need new creative and innovative counter-terrorism strategies that will, God-willing, turn the tide. There is therefore an urgent need to get people with such creative and imaginative ideas on board at the operational, tactical and strategic levels. Such people, might not necessarily be at the moment, part of the Government. Navarro and Villaverde observe that 'imagination is not common in bureaucracies.'[499] This needs to change. The 9/11 Commission Report goes as far as to observe that 'it is therefore crucial to find ways of routinizing, even bureaucratizing, the exercise of imagination.'[500]

Practically, an immediate step would be to tap into the creative expertise of marketers and advertisers in designing and implementing counter-radicalisation programmes. Many of our daily decisions and choices is one way or another, shaped by what we are made to hear and see, courtesy of advertisers and marketers. Hence, their expertise and experience in altering our thinking and influencing our choices through media campaigns could be explored and prove vital in turning the tide against extremism and terrorism.

If creativity and imagination are essential both to understand terrorists as well as to counter them and as pointed out, there seems to be a dearth of such creativity in counter-terrorism institutions, we then need to look outside. As Richard Clarke, the National Counter-Terrorism Coordinator for the National Security Council attributed candidly that his 'awareness about the possible use of airplanes as weapons (came

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[497] *The 9/11 Commission Report*. http://www.9-11commission.gov/report/911Report.pdf (Retrieved on 30 September 2015).

[498] Contreras, Dominic, '*Terrorist Threat Demands Creative Intelligence*', Belfer Center Newsletter, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School, Winter 2011 – 2012.

[499] Jose Maria Blanco Navarro and Jessica Cohen Villaverde, *The Future of Counter-Terrorism in Europe. The Need to be Lost in the Correct Direction*, 5 December 2014.

[500] The 9/11 Commission Report.

more) from Tom Clancy novels than from warnings from the intelligence community.'[501]

While on the ground data and intelligence analysis is of utmost importance, creativity and imagination allows us to 'connect the dots.' Specifically, creativity and imagination is 'needed to identify attackers, to discover vulnerabilities, to think about new modus operandi in terrorists attacks, to connect the dots, to preview scenarios, to establish hypothesis, to suggest different alternatives, to have different points of view and to develop new ways and new processes of analysis.'[502] Ramakrishna in analysis on the Boston Bombings highlights that the 'enemy' (or the new enemy, as he calls it) is 'now a highly contagious and rapidly self-propagating viral meme, jumping from one vulnerable mind to another' and that to counter this, 'more than ever, strategic creativity in counter-terrorism is needed.'[503] Again, the author was privileged to meet such people during his interviews and visits to Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, particularly in the NGO circles and in the private sector. However, there is an urgent need to bring more of such creative people into the security circles to tap into their unique skill-set.

The Need for Coordination

The lack and at times absence of coordination, cooperation and collaboration has often times led us in circles. Precious resources, time and expertise has been used to duplicate and replicate work, research and training in the field of counter terrorism and counter radicalisation.

There is therefore an urgent need to enhance our coordination to ensure minimal replication and more importantly to ensure that all the major components of counter terrorism and counter deradicalisation are addressed. Richardson speaks about the need to 'coordinate the actions of the various arms of government so that they are enhancing rather than undermining one another….'[504]

This is an area that much more can be done, both within the respective countries and between the three countries. While the respective security agencies have shown

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[501] Jose Maria Blanco Navarro and Jessica Cohen Villaverde, *The Future of Counter-Terrorism in Europe. The Need to be Lost in the Correct Direction*, 5 December 2014.
[502] *Ibid.*
[503] Kumar Ramakrishna, *Lessons from Boston Bombings: Need for Strategic Creativity in Counter-Terrorism*, RSIS Commentaries No 079/2013, 29 April 2013.
[504] Louise Richardson, '*Restoration, Education and Coordination: Three Principles to Guide U.S. Counterterrorism Efforts Over the Next Five Years*', The Journal of the ACS Issue Group, 2008, p 43 – 49 http://www.acslaw.org/files/Restoration-Education-Coordination.pdf (Retrieved on 30 September 2015).

progress in this particular area; civil society, religious authorities and NGO's can and should further improve in this particular area.

CONCLUSION

Could there be anything worse than 'not knowing'?

Yes. 'Not knowing, that we do not know'.

This study has allowed us to take a peek into *Daesh*; its significance, effect and impact on the Southeast Asian region in general and Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines in particular. By gleaning the events that have taken place in these three countries, by reviewing literature, speaking to people involved and going to the ground, this research project has endeavoured to do three things; to study what has taken place, what might take place and what we can do about it.

In this regard, it is quite certain that *Daesh*-type radicalisation has changed and will continue to influence the security landscape of Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. Also, ascertaining if the radicalisation is *Daesh*-inspired and/or *Daesh*-directed would have a significant bearing on the process and pathways of radicalisation, whether on an individual or a group, and subsequently the measures undertaken to counter this growing phenomenon. At present, quantitative as well as qualitative data is lacking in both understanding and describing the process of radicalisation and the role and extent it plays in recruitment, the characteristics of individuals and communities that could be vulnerable and susceptible to such a calling and the reasons that lead to either radicalisation or recruitment. Without such base-line data, policies crafted, at best will lack efficacy and potency and at worse, could be counter-productive. Much more needs to be done to rectify this laguna of knowledge.

At the strategic, tactical and operational levels, the possibility of *Daesh* establishing a 'distant caliphate' in Southeast Asia is both a clear and present danger. Glocalisation; in this case, *Daesh*-central being able to operate, nurture and develop its aspirations and vision of a global caliphate from our very 'backyard' is no longer something remote or incomprehensible. Plans and efforts, are being put in place both by *Daesh* and local actors (groups and individuals in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines) to introduce both the dreams as well as struggle of *Daesh* into these three respective countries. In this regard, knowing where the possible planned epicenter or 'provincial caliphate' could be in this region would be of paramount importance for this would allow the authorities to focus their actions and even redouble their efforts in both hard and soft approaches to ensure such a development does not take place.

Dealing with returning FTF in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines is also a growing priority. Firstly, their affinity towards the aspirations and visions of *Daesh*, forged in the heat of battle in Syria and Iraq, would certainly act as a catalyst in their efforts to

promote the groups agenda in the religious and governing spheres of their own respective countries. The subsequent 'ISIS-ification' of Islamic tenets and practices in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, highlighted by Jasminder Singh, could lead to cognitive and ideological shifts that has the potential to promote both inter and intra-religious conflicts. Secondly, their new-found identity as 'Daesh-mujahedeen' and the subsequent narratives, detailing both their epic struggles and victories against the 'godless-heathens' will be a 'drawing-magnet' and will most certainly be fully exploited and unleashed on the local community, who are often times already desperately searching for heroes to give significance and meaning to their very own lives. In this regard, the perfect storm could be created in terms of an 'opportunistic salesman' peddling a 'compelling message' to an 'eagerly, expectant audience.' Hence, expect further radicalisation. Put together, both these factors could then possibly culminate to the dangerous and significant hypothesis of increased terrorist attacks in the region.[505]

What then can we do when confronted with such a threat that is basically based on a story deceptively crafted and disseminated by *Daesh*?

Perhaps, in such situations, we need to raise the ante when it comes to telling the story. In this regard, one can never fully appreciate the power and pull of *Daesh*'s narrative until and unless one reads the stories they push out. This was starkly conveyed to the author, when a non-Muslim lady friend, with no extremist leanings what-so-ever, read the blog of a 26-year old Malaysian female doctor, who called herself "bird of Jannah" (paradise). By conveying her emotions and feelings in her blog, ("*Stethoscope around my neck and kalash on my shoulder. Martyrdom is my highest dream*")[506] the doctor had managed to do what few people ever thought possible; she had humanised a group, primarily known for their graphic beheadings. What was also noteworthy was the author's friends' reaction of sympathy and understanding towards the plight faced by this Malaysian doctor and the nobility of her cause. Make no mistake, *Daesh*'s message is far deadly then their bullets.

Hence, the study then opted to think out of the box and endeavoured to look at the mechanism necessary to develop a structured and comprehensive narrative that would be sophisticated, creative and robust, organically developed, disseminated by trained personnel and continuously monitored to both adapt and suite the needs of the people on the ground. For this to happen, the study proposed that the three countries in the region, work together with *existing* bodies such as the relevant government agencies, think-tanks, NGOs and universities to develop research networks, counter terrorist narratives, resource centres, dissemination networks,

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[505] Jasminder Singh, *IS returnees pose a danger*, New Straits Times, 22 January 2016.
[506] Ellie Hall, *An ISIS Love Story: Till Martyrdom Do Us Part*, 28 September 2014.

training centres and monitoring groups. It must be stressed that this proposal does not create any new entities but merely streamlines the process of understanding the terrorist messaging, identifying the susceptible target audience, developing the counter-narratives via Tweets, FB postings, digital comic books, animations and satire, training personnel to carry out such activities, disseminating the end-products through all available platforms (utilising both traditional media and the social media) and monitoring the messaging to fine-tune and further improve the content impact and reach. Again, this is all done using existing bodies, which are already in existence but perhaps are at present 'doing their own thing.' It is important to note that resources in terms of funding, expertise and equipment are finite. There is therefore the need to create 'synergies in our resource allocation.'[507] Also, 'task saturation' would mean that we need to specialise and concentrate our efforts into specific areas, instead of overcoming the herculean (and nearly impossible task) of a single entity focusing on all aspects. This would the allow us to maximize our resources and leveraging on our strengths.

Lastly, we need to move on from mere words to action. We have said much on addressing the root causes, understanding terrorist messaging, crafting counter-narratives, collaboration and cooperation.

What is the outcome of all those talk?

Perhaps, I will end with a retort a young boy gave the author while conducting a counter-terrorism engagement programme. "We are all in danger of becoming part of NATO", he said. "No Action, Talk Only."

Let that not be said of us in our battle to confront *al Dawla al Islamiya fi al Iraq wa al Sham*.

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[507] Report of the Secretary-General, *The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy - Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism*, 24 December 2015.

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