

OUR EYES

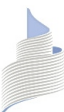
COUNTER TERRORISM INTELLIGENCE NETWORK



2510959 NERAL (RET.) RYAMIZARD RYACUDU
RYA



PERDANA
LEADERSHIP
FOUNDATION
YAYASAN
KEPIMPINAN
PERDANA



OUR EYES

COUNTER TERRORISM INTELLIGENCE NETWORK

Hon. Dr Mahathir Mohamed

With admiration

Rohan Gunaratna

Nov 30 2024

Malaysia

P. 22

GENERAL (RET.) RYAMIZARD RYACUDU



RSiS

S. RAJARATNAM
SCHOOL OF
INTERNATIONAL
STUDIES

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Ponder the Improbable



Rohan Gunaratna

Professor of Security Studies
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies
DID: +65 6316 8925 | HP: +65 9435 7191
Email: isrkgunaratna@ntu.edu.sg

© 2020 Ryamizard Ryacudu

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

First published in 2020

ISBN 978-981-14-8297-7

Printed in Singapore

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Timeline of Major Terrorism and Counter Terrorism Events in Southeast Asia	
Chapter 1 The Threat Spreads to Asia	8
Chapter 2 The Specter of Southeast Asian Terrorism	34
Chapter 3 Marawi – The Game Changer	69
Chapter 4 Global Jihad 3.0 – The Evolving Cyber Capabilities	107
Chapter 5 The Maritime Challenge in Southeast Asia	137
Chapter 6 Our Eyes – Genesis, Evolution and Future	159
Updates and Conclusion	188
Appendixes	211
Joint Declaration of the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Partnering for Change, Engaging the World, October 23, 2017	
Joint Statement of Special ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), Radicalization, and Terrorism, October 23, 2017	
2018 Joint Statement by the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Countering Terrorism in ASEAN, February 7, 2018	
17 th Asia Security Summit, The IIS Shangri-La Dialogue, Third Plenary Session, Shaping Asia’s Evolving Security Order, Ryamizard Ryacudu, June 2, 2018	
Joint Declaration of the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Strengthening Cooperation, Building Resilience, October 19, 2018	
Joint Declaration of the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Sustainable Security, July 11, 2019	
2019 Terms of Reference of ASEAN Our Eyes, July 11, 2019	

Acknowledgements

This book is the culmination of a five-decade military and defence career. I am indebted to many men and women, military and civilian, who shared their invaluable experience and expertise with me. I wish to express my appreciation to my wife Nora Tristiana for her steadfast support.

The book could not have been possible if not for my dedicated team, Indonesian Ministry of Defence Secretary General VADM Agus Setiadji, Vice Admiral Didit Herdiawan, former Inspector General; Major General Rizerius Eko Hs, Director General of Defence Strategy; Brigadier General Iroth Sonny, Head of Administration and Protocol Bureau; Colonel Waskita Adhi, and the Senior Staff of the Ministry of Defence of Indonesia.

Finally, but not the least, I like to thank Mr. Clifford Gere for serving as my research assistant. In addition to his invaluable contribution, I thank him for editing this book.

Introduction

This book was written in order to identify a growing threat and explain a region's response to that threat. The threat of terrorism in Southeast Asia has been on the rise for decades and is often overlooked and understudied within the global context. While the book is titled "Our Eyes: Counter Terrorism Intelligence Network" after the region's response, more time is dedicated to detailing the various aspects of the region's terrorism threat. By using a historical and process tracing perspective, the book describes the origins of modern radical Islamic terrorism and its spread to Southeast Asia as well as the threat's current state and future outlook. Once the region's terrorism threat is fully described and outlined then the region's response can be better explained and understood.

Due to the transnationally networked nature of terrorism, the only logical response for the affected Southeast Asian nations was to create a transnational counter terrorism network of their own. Spearheaded by Indonesia's former Minister of Defence, Ryamizard Ryacudu, and adopted by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the region understands that they have a better chance of neutralizing the threat if they work together. ASEAN's Our Eyes (AOE), as well as its military equivalent known as the Trilateral Cooperative Agreement (TCA), show that when nations work collectively and collaboratively the security landscape of the region can be improved. The following chapters illustrate the region's experience:

In the book's first chapter "The Threat Spreads to Asia", the birth of ASEAN's Our Eyes (AOE) is explained as being a response to the Islamic State's (IS) takeover of the Philippine city of Marawi. An initial overview of the radical Islamic global terrorism landscape is given by first showing its origins and development. The way in which terrorism threat grew in places like Afghanistan and the Middle East and the process in which it spread to Southeast Asia is demonstrated. IS's first attempt to create an "East Asia Wiliayat" in Poso, Indonesia in 2016 is shown as well as how effective inter-agency cooperation was responsible for stopping that threat. After the success in Poso, and facing a new threat in Marawi, the creation of AOE was the next logical stage of inter agency and multinational cooperation. Next, more revelations are given

into IS's and Al Qaeda's (AQ's) current situations, specifically in Afghanistan and the rest of Asia. Finally, the governmental challenges presented to Southeast Asia and their responses are shown. This is especially present with an explanation of Southeast Asia's joint-land, sea and air response forces, known as the TCA.

The second chapter, "The Specter of Southeast Asian Terrorism", gives an in-depth historical overview of modern terrorism in Southeast Asia. Beginning in the early 1990's, with the precursor to the United States' 9/11, the massive Southeast Asian terror plot known as "Oplan Bojinka" is described. From there a "who's who" of terrorism in Southeast Asia is given. To start with an explanation of how in the late 1980's, approximately 600 Muslims from Southeast Asia went to Afghanistan to join the radical Islamic guerilla fighters known as the Mujahideen to fight the Soviet military there. When these fighters returned to their homes in Southeast Asia, they brought with them their skills, reputations, and networks and began creating terrorist organizations throughout the region. This resulted in a wave of terrorism attacks in Southeast Asia, which culminated with the Bali attacks in Indonesia on October 12, 2002. It is then shown that history may be repeating itself in how many Muslims from Southeast Asia have once again gone aboard to fight, this time with IS in the Middle East. As they are beginning to return they too bring with them skills, reputations, and networks and are initiating a new wave of terrorism groups and attacks. A country specific look at radical Islamic threat groups in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Brunei and the Philippines is given, as well as an explanation to the transnational connectiveness of all these groups. Finally, updates pertaining to the region's current largest threat groups such as IS-Philippines (IS-P) and IS's East Asia Wilayah are provided which serve as a prelude to the battle of Marawi.

Chapter 3, "Marawi – The Game Changer", is dedicated to describing the battle of Marawi, as well as the events and people surrounding it. The chapter is best described in three parts: First, is the battle itself in its entirety, starting with the individuals and groups directly responsible for planning and preparing for it, to how the battle initially began and the events that occurred during the battle, as well as how the battle concluded. The current status of Marawi as well as IS centric groups currently in Marawi are also discussed. Second, is the prelude to the battle of Marawi, in what is known as the Bohol incident, which occurred

nearly a month before Marawi. It was an earlier attempt by IS to do what was done in Marawi. Had the events in Bohol been more carefully analyzed, Marawi could possibly have been prevented. Finally, an in-depth biography of the person primarily responsible for the battle of Marawi, Isnilon Hapilon. Hapilon was the founder of IS-P and person primarily responsible for the creation of the East Asia Wilayat that has united more than 100 threat groups in Southeast Asia under the IS flag.

In Chapter 4, “Global Jihad 3.0 – The Evolving Cyber Capabilities”, an overview of how AQ and IS operate in the cyber space is given, specifically in terms of computer hacking. First, an introduction into how threat groups such as AQ and IS operate in cyber space is given, this also looks at their online media and propaganda campaigns and their effectiveness at recruitment. After this, a more in-depth look at the threat groups’ hacking activity is provided. Beginning with AQ and their recruitment of engineers and computer experts, various key actors in the group had backgrounds in computer sciences. From AQ to IS however, the use of the digital space changed dramatically. This is seen in IS’s first key hacker, Junaid Hussain and his wife Sally Jones, they were responsible for the creation of the Islamic State Hacking Division (ISHD). ISHD trained a core of IS hackers that went on to form numerous IS hacking groups that would eventually be consolidated into the United Cyber Caliphate (UCC). A list of the numerous high-level cyber-attacks initiated by UCC and AQ affiliated groups is given as well as how governments and intelligence organizations, such as the SITE Intelligence Group, can and are responding to these threats. A look at the “Fourth Revolution” in technology and how it relates to terrorism is given. Finally, the likely short, medium, and long terms future scenarios are given as they relate to cyber terrorism.

In Chapter 5, “The Maritime Challenge in Southeast Asia”, the issues of maritime terrorism and piracy in Southeast Asia are examined. First, a timeline of the AQ centric maritime threat landscape is given. This is seen primarily in the Philippines based, Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and their maritime activities. The first example shown is the taking of 21 hostages in the Malaysian island of Sipadan in April 2000. In addition, an explanation for the largest ever maritime terrorist attack, the SuperFerry 14 bombing of 2004, is shown. After a timeline of nearly a decade of AQ centric maritime attacks is shown, the shift into the IS centric maritime threat landscape in the region is demonstrated Beginning in 2014,

numerous threat groups in Southeast Asia, specifically in the Philippines begin pledging allegiance, otherwise known as “bayat”, to IS’s then leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. During 2015-2016 there are a string of high-profile kidnappings for ransom perpetrated by IS centric groups in the Sulu-Celebes Seas, most notably several high-profile abductions of Indonesian and Malaysian fisherman in late 2016. This prompted a hard response by the Indonesian military and later the TCA to work to eradicate the Sulu-Celebes Seas based threat groups and arguably resulted in a 21-month hiatus in kidnaping for ransom activities in the area. However, beginning in late 2018 it is shown how a resurgence of maritime based kidnaping for ransom activities has returned and how the multi-national, cooperative efforts seen in the TCA continues to be needed to subdue to the threat.

Chapter 6, “Our Eyes – Genesis, Evolution and Future”, is an in-depth look into the AOE itself. First, the five primary components of the AOE is given, they are: building common databases, exchange of personnel, joint training, joint operations, and sharing of resources, expertise and experience. An examination of Our Eyes’ inspiration, the Five Eyes intelligence exchange between the US, UK, Canada, New Zealand and Australia occurs. The similarities and differences between Five Eyes and Our Eyes are also described. A chronology of the various ASEAN Defence Ministers Meetings (ADMMs) and Working Groups (WGs) that lead to the official creation of Our Eyes is produced. This is followed by an account of how the Our Eyes database for sharing intelligence amongst nations was physically created. Finally, a “Conclusion and Updates” sections, which includes an update on the current global threat landscape, as well as other counter terrorism organizations and programs that can be utilized with the AOE and TCA, potential regional partners for the AOE. The book ends with a section on final thoughts.

Timeline of Major Terrorism and Counter Terrorism Events in Southeast Asia

Terrorism

2004

February 27, 2004, the SuperFerry 14 in the Philippines is bombed, killing 116, the worst maritime terrorist attack in the world. United by a common ideology, the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), the Rajah Sulaiman Movement (RSM), and Jamaah Islamiyah (JI), collaborate for the first time to mount an attack outside Mindanao, Southern Philippines.

2005

February 14, 2005, Valentine's Day Bombing in the Philippine was carried out by ASG with the assistance of JI killing 11 and injuring 85.

March 14, 2005, Maximum Security Detention Center in Bicutan Philippines jailbreak resulted in deaths of 22 inmates including ASG leaders Galib Andang alias Commander Robot, Alhamser Limbong alias Commander Kosovo, and Nadjmi Sabbdulia alias Commander Global.

April 3, 2005, simultaneous explosions in venues in Thailand's Hat Yai, including the international airport, the French-owned Carrefour supermarket, and the Green Palace World Hotel.

October 1, 2005, three suicide attacks killed 23 and injured 129 in resort areas of Jimbaran Beach and Kuta in Bali, Indonesia.

2006

June 15, 2006, bombings in 60 locations in Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat, Thailand.

August 31, 2006, bombings targeted 22 commercial banks in Yala town, Thailand.

September 16, 2006, six explosions in stores and shops located on the main street of Hat Yai, Thailand.

November 9, 2006, bombings targeted eight car and motorcycle dealerships in Yala's Muang district, Thailand.

2007

February 18, 2007, 28 bombings against hotels, karaoke bars, power grids, and commercial sites across Yala, Narathiwat, Pattani, and Songkhla, Thailand.

May 27, 2007, simultaneous bombings of various venues in Songkhla, Thailand.

2008

March 15, 2008, a 15-kilogram car bomb damaged C. S. Pattani--the largest hotel in the province - killing two and injuring 13. Another IED exploded prematurely in Yala's Muang district.

June 8, 2008, ASG kidnapped ABS-CBN journalists Ces Drilon, Jimmy Encarnacion and Angelo Valderrama in Maimbung, Sulu, Jolo. They were released after ransom was paid.

2009

January 15, 2009, ASG kidnapped in Sulu ICRC personnel Andreas Netter, a 38-year-old Swiss in charge of its office in Zamboanga; Eugenio Vagati, a 62-year-old Italian water and sanitation engineer and Mary Jean Lacina, a 47-year-old field officer from the Philippines. They were released after ransom was paid.

July 17, 2009, two suicide bombers detonated inside the JW Marriott and Carlton hotels in Jakarta killing seven and injuring 58.

2010

May 19, 2010, a marked map of Singapore's ASG training camp circled was found in the home of a Malaysian car rental driver in Medan.

Counter-Terrorism

Malacca Straits Sea Patrol (MSSP) launched by Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. The MSSP was introduced to enhance security in the Straits of Malaysia and Singapore. Under the initiative, participating navies conduct coordinated sea patrols while facilitating the sharing of information between navies and their naval operational centres.

Launch of Eyes-in-the-Sky (EiS) Initiative, which is the conduct of combined maritime air patrol over the Malacca Straits to reinforce sea patrols with air surveillance.

MSP Intelligence Exchange Group (MSP-IEG) was formed to support the sea and air patrols, leading to the development of an information-sharing platform called the Malacca Straits Patrol Information System (MSP-IS). The MSSP, EiS and IEG are components of the Malacca Straits Patrol (MSP), which is a set of practical co-operative measures undertaken by Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand to ensure the security of the Straits of Malacca and Singapore.

In 2006, Malaysia and the region to benefit from the successful rehabilitation and release of Wan Min bin Wan Mat, the key al-Qaeda-JI link operator and a JI leader. As an insider, his knowledge of the threat was central in building government understanding and capabilities to dismantle JI.

May, 2007, the Singapore parliament passed an amendment to the SAF Act, giving additional powers to the Singapore Armed Forces. SAF personnel trained to perform security operations in designated areas were empowered to search, detain and use reasonable force against terror suspects.

August 2008, the Philippine government ended one of the world's oldest insurgencies by signing a Memorandum of Agreement with MILF laying out a framework for a settlement and recognition of the ancestral domain of Filipino Muslims. Although other Moro entities continued the fight for separatism and establish an Islamic State, the MILF ended fighting the government forces.

November 21, 2009, the arrest of ASG Leader Basar Sulaiman Latip, alias Rahim Malik Suwaib in Indonesia. He facilitated funds from Saudi Arabia to the Philippines.

March 9 2010 Detachment-88 of Indonesia killed an al-Qaeda trained JI leader Dolmatin, who received training in al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan. The protégé of the region's top bomb maker Dr Azhahari Husin, Dolmatin became an electronics specialist and bomb making expert. He was establishing a bomb unit in Aceh in Indonesia.

2011

September 15, 2011, Malaysia suffered a set back when the then Prime Minister, Najib Tun Razak announced the repeal of the Internal Security Act 1960. An effective mechanism in fighting terrorism including rehabilitating terrorists, the repeal of the Act compelled government to release terrorists and supporters held under the Act.

December 5, 2011, ASG Kidnapped Warren Rodwell in Zamboanga and was held hostage in the Sulu archipelago until March 23, 2013. The original ransom demand was for \$US2 million. However, after the payment of \$AUD94,000 by his siblings, Rodwell was released.

January 25, 2011, II bomb maker Umar Patek was captured by Pakistani security officials in Abbotabad, the same city where Osama bin Laden was hiding. Osama was on his way to Afghanistan to fight. An Indonesian court sentenced Patek to 20 years in prison including for his role in the Bali bombings.

2012

The ASG, RSM and JI seek to create a group called the Islamic State of Lanao (IS-L), commonly referred to as the Maute Group.

November 23, 2012, Indonesian JI leader in the Philippines Ibnu Gholib al-Jilji alias Saiful Sanusi alias Ishak was killed Barrio Salam at the vicinity of the Mindanao State University in Marawi, he was hosted by the Maute brothers.

2013

February 8, 2013, the former head of the al Qaeda anthrax program Yazid Sufaat was arrested for recruiting Malaysians to travel to fight in Iraq and Syria.

February 11, 2013, some 235 members of the Royal Security Forces of the Sultanate of Sulu and North Borneo led by Agbimuddin Kiram arrived by boats in the village of Tandoo, near Tungku in Lahad Datu district, Sabah from neighbouring Simunul island, Tawi-Tawi of southern Philippines. They wished to reclaim their ancestral land. The ensuing battles with security forces result in 68 deaths.

In 2013, D88 disrupt cells and personalities conducting and planning attacks against Myanmar diplomatic and Buddhist targets in Indonesia. In May, Negara Islam Indonesia (Islamic State of Indonesia) planned to attack the Embassy of Myanmar. They plotted the attack in response to the violence against the minority-Rohingya Muslims. In August, an explosive device detonated in the Ekayana Buddhist Temple in Jakarta, also in retaliation for anti-Muslim sentiment in Myanmar.

2014

June 29, 2014, after the declaration of a caliphate by the Islamic State (IS), many Southeast Asian recruits started to travel to Iraq and Syria to join the fight. A significant number of terrorist attacks in the region were planned by Southeast Asians. The directing figures were Indonesians - Bahrin Naim, Bahrumayah and Abu Jandal - and one Malaysian, Muhammad Wannady. These terrorists planned to direct and inspire attacks against various targets, including political and security leaders among them General Tito Karnavian from Indonesia and Dato Ayob Khan Bin Mydin Pitchay from Malaysia, who oversaw counter terrorist operations, targeting Southeast Asian terrorists.

June 11, 2014, Philippines arrested the ASG financier Khair Mundos who transferred al Qaeda funds from Saudi Arabia. Arrested in 2004, he escaped in 2007.

2015

May 4, 2015, an ASG faction that joined IS abduct two Coast Guard personnel and a barangay captain in Aliquay Island, a tourist destination in Zamboanga del Norte near Dapitan City. While the captain was beheaded in Sulu, others escaped when confronted by Marines and Scout Rangers.

September 21, 2015, ASG faction of kidnapped IS Canadians Robert Hall, John Ridsdel, Norwegian Kjartan Sekkingstad and a Filipina, Martress Flor from the Holiday Oceanview Resort, Island Garden City of Samal, Davao del Norte. As the government refused to pay the ransom, the Canadians were beheaded in the backdrop of an IS flag.

February 25, 2015, A US-educated Malaysian engineer, Zulkifli bin Hir alias Marwan was killed by police commandos in Mamasapano, Philippines. In the same operation, 44 commandos were killed. A former leader of Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia, he was a master bomb maker.

May 15, 2015, A former Philippines Police Officer Jun Maiban was arrested in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia for his role in the kidnapping of the Australian Warren Rodwell. He is the cousin of ASG financiers Khair Mundos and Borhan Mundos.

2016

January 14, 2016, Four attackers of the Indonesian IS Branch, Jamaah Ansharut Daulah launched an armed assault and suicide attack in the centre of Jakarta, killing four civilians - three Indonesians and an Algerian-Canadian were killed, and 29 others were injured. From inside prison, IS leader Aman Abdurrahman wanted to stage a November 2015 Paris-style terror attack.

November 5, 2016, Abu Jandal mounted a suicide mission in Mosul. An Indonesian terrorist leader in Iraq and Syria, he planned attacks in Southeast Asia.

August 5, 2016, IS cell in Indonesia led by Gigih Rahmat Dewa was arrested for plotting to fire a rocket at Marina Bay Sands Singapore from Batam island, Indonesia. The operation preempted by D88 was directed by Muhammad Bahrin Naim Anggih Tamtomo alias Abu Rayyan, IS Southeast Asia leader in Syria and Iraq.

2017

May 23 - October 17, 2017: The Siege of Marawi

The Marawi siege demonstrated how regional governments had underestimated the extent of IS in the region. Regional authorities were hesitant to share intelligence and failed to devise joint intelligence mechanisms until the fall of Marawi to IS. Importantly the siege underscored how ASEAN was unprepared for the emerging wave of terrorism and demonstrated the need for a new security architecture.

Marawi crisis also saw closer counter-terrorism collaboration among ASEAN militaries. Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand provided assistance to the Philippines humanitarian relief and military assets.

April 29, 2017, Muhammad Wanndy Mohammad Jedi alias Abu Hamzah al Fateh, a Malaysian, was killed in Raqqa, Syria. He was the terrorist-mastermind behind the Movidia bombing in Malaysia.

Launch of Trilateral Maritime Patrol: June 19

June 19, 2017, the TMP was the first component of the Trilateral Cooperative Arrangement (TCA) between the three countries. Maritime Command Centres were established in Tarakan, Tawau in Sabah and Bongao in the Philippines, while Singapore and Brunei were invited as observers.

Launch of Trilateral Air Patrol: October 12

October 12, 2017, the second component of TCA, the Trilateral Air Patrol (TAP), was launched at Subang Air Base in Malaysia. Singapore and Brunei were invited as observers. The TAP complements the TMP in combating maritime security threats and terrorism.

2018

May 13, 2018, an IS family unit mounted attacks against three churches in Surabaya, the second largest city in Indonesia. The explosions took place at Immaculate Saint Mary Catholic Church (Gereja Katolik Santa Maria Tak Bercola, SMTB) on Ngagel Madya Street, Indonesia Christian Church (Gereja Kristen Indonesia, GKI) on Diponegoro Street, and Surabaya Central Pentecost Church (Gereja Pantekosta Pusat Surabaya, GPPS) on Arjuno Street.

April 19, 2018, BahrumSyah Mennor Usman from Indonesia was killed at an IS meeting in a US air strike in Hajin, Syria. He was the leader of Katibah Nusantara, the archipelagic battalion of Southeast Asians fighting in Iraq and Syria.

The 12th ASEAN Defense Minister's Meeting: October 19

October 19, 2018, the remaining four ASEAN members joined the OEI, as announced at the 12th ADMM.

June 8, 2018, Bahrin Naim of Indonesia was killed in a US airstrike as he was riding a motorcycle in Ash Shafa, Syria. Bahrin Naim had been the mastermind of several terrorist attacks in Malaysia and Indonesia. He was using the cyber domain to radicalise and recruit Southeast Asians to join the group. After tracking Bahrin Naim for close to two years, a US counter-terrorism operation killed the Indonesian high-value target.

2019

January 27, 2019, a Roman Catholic cathedral on the island of Jolo in southern Philippines was bombed as worshippers gathered for mass. Islamic State claimed responsibility for it.

October 10, 2019, Indonesia's security minister Wiranto was attacked while on visit to Pandeglang, Banten, a province located at the western edge of Java. He was stabbed with a kunai, a Japanese knife, in his stomach by 51-year-old Syahril Alamsyah alias Abu Rara of IS. Abu Rara's wife, 21-year-old Fitri Andriana, stabbed the local police officer who was next to Wiranto.

The Second Our Eyes Working Group: January 24

January 24, 2019, ASEAN Our Eyes Working Group meeting was held in Semarang, Central Java. The meeting saw delegations present their perspectives on the initiative and discussions about how to operationalize it. An agreement was also met to rename the Our Eyes Initiative (OEI) to ASEAN's Our Eyes (AOE).

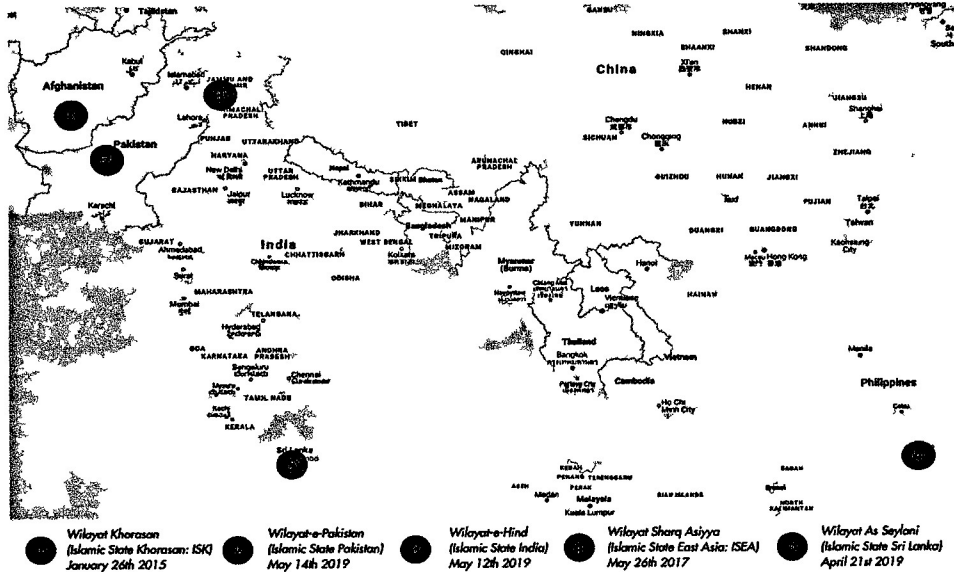
The Indomalphi Tri-border Land Exercises: July 29 - August 7

July 29-August 7, 2019, the Third Component of the TCA is completed. It included Joint-Land Forces exercises between Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.



Chapter 1

The Threat Spreads to Asia



Declared IS Wilayats in Greater Asia

“Churchmen, lay preachers, priests, monks, Muslim theologians, all those who claim divine sanction or holy insights, take off your clerical robes before you take on anything economic or political.”

– Lee Kuan Yew

The Threat Spreads to Asia

The creation of “Our Eyes”, ASEAN’s counter terrorism intelligence network, was in response to the Islamic State’s (IS) takeover of the Philippine city of Marawi in 2017. The sharp escalation of terrorism in Asia generated sufficient support within the ASEAN community to come together and act.¹ ASEAN’s defense ministers understood how the leaders of the Middle East had failed to act decisively during IS’s early growth stages there. Vowing not to repeat the mistakes made in the Middle East, the ASEAN defense ministers made the clarion call. During the siege of Marawi, the defense leaders met and decided to contain, isolate, and eliminate IS both in Marawi and throughout the region.²

Despite support from the world’s best militaries, it took approximately five months for the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to neutralize the IS occupation of Marawi.³ In an effort to keep troop casualties low, the AFP heavily bombarded the mostly evacuated, lakeside Marawi with airstrikes and mortar shells. Due to the bombardments, Marawi has been left largely in ruins, nearly 100,000 locals have been internally displaced without homes to return to.⁴ This massive amount of internally displaced people may well lead to a reinvigoration in the radicalization cycle for IS recruits in the future.

Like Marawi, the Iraqi city of Mosul and the Syrian city of Raqqa were also taken over by IS. Today, several years after major hostilities have ceased, all three cities remain in ruins.⁵ The lesson from Marawi, Mosul, and Raqqa is that it is too late for governments to intervene after a terrorist attack has been initiated. When the threat begins to grow,

¹ Jonathan T. Chow, “ASEAN counterterrorism cooperation since 9/11.” *Asian Survey* 45, no. 2 (2005): 302-321. <https://as.ucpress.edu/content/45/2/302>

² Rohan Gunaratna, “The Siege of Marawi: A Game Changer in Terrorism Asia” *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses* 9, no. 7 (2017). <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/CTTA-July-2017.pdf>

³ Neil J. Morales and Simon Lewis, “U.S. joins battle as Philippines takes losses in besieged city”. *Reuters*, June 10, 2017. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-philippines-militants/u-s-joins-battle-as-philippines-takes-losses-in-besieged-city-idUSKBN19107I>

⁴ “Marawi Conflict: Two Years on, 100,000 People Still Have No Homes to Return to,” *International Committee of the Red Cross*, May 22, 2019. <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/marawi-conflict-two-years-over-100000-still-have-no-homes-return>

⁵ Eloisa Lopez, “The Philippine ghost town that still hasn’t recovered from Islamic State’s deadly siege”, *The Independent*, June 14, 2019. <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/photography/isis-attack-philippines-marawi-terror-siege-damage-a8949261.html>

governments must act swiftly to neutralize the threat. As the guardians of national security: military forces, law enforcement authorities and intelligence services must develop effective systems to be able to identify threats in their formative phases. In order to respond to these threats before they manifest into attacks, especially complex attacks, governments must design and develop the capabilities necessary to scan the threat horizon, make sense of it, and if needed take action.

In the early 21st century, terrorism has emerged as the principal global and regional security challenge. However, there is a mismatch in leadership, capabilities and resources to contain, isolate and eliminate the threat of terrorism.⁶ Traditional military forces have been equipped and trained to fight other standing armies, not terrorist groups, networks, cells and individuals.⁷ Today, the preeminent threat to most nations emanates from state and non-state actors employing terrorism. However, most governments have neglected this development and are now suffering from the perils of terrorism.⁸ Only a few governments are rapidly adapting to the new threat landscape. Governments should come to the realization that their militaries must be transformed to confront terrorism predominantly conducted by non-state actors.

Globalization is enabling threat groups to transform into threat movements. By harnessing connectivity, technology, ease of travel, and migration, they possess transnational capabilities. The ethnic, religious and various other affinities link them within and across territorial borders. Terrorism presents an enduring threat to the political progress, social harmony and economic prosperity of our nations. We need to develop the laws, capabilities, and will to prevent and confront the scourge of terrorism and its precursor – extremism.

⁶ "The 9/11 commission report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States". *Government Printing Office*, 2011. <https://www.9-11commission.gov/report/>

⁷ Roger Trinquier, "Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency", DIANE Publishing: France, 1961; David Galula, "Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice" Greenwood Publishing Group: United States, 1964; Frank Kitson, "Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peace-Keeping", vol. 165, Faber & Faber: London, 1971; David Kilcullen, "Counterinsurgency" Oxford University Press; London, 2010.

⁸ Ibid

Origins of the Threat

During the 1980's, approximately 600 Southeast Asians, mostly Indonesians, went to Pakistan and Afghanistan to fight against the Soviet military. On their return they mounted over a hundred attacks in the Southeast Asian region including the Bali bombings of October 12, 2002. Similarly, in the past five years, approximately 1,000 Southeast Asians have travelled to Syria and Iraq to join IS's fight against a coalition of nations.⁹ The Southeast Asian men and children that went to join IS, formed the *Katibah Nusantara (KN)* – IS's Southeast Asian battalion, comprising primarily of Indonesians and Malaysians. Although most KN members were killed in battle, their lives inspired a generation.¹⁰

Those politicized, radicalized, and militarized individuals of IS returned to their home countries and joined terrorist groups, networks, and cells. They mounted attacks in their home countries or in their neighborhoods. The returnees and deportees mounted several small attacks, however many of them are “laying low” and avoiding police detection – the worst attacks are yet to come. To anticipate the evolving threat and build structures to counter the extent of the emerging threat, the heads of the Southeast Asian nations' security forces had to act. The Ministry of Defence of Indonesia worked with its counterparts in neighboring nations to put an intelligence sharing mechanism into place. The first step of that mechanism was to share and exchange counter terrorism information and intelligence, seen in what was first called “Our Eyes” and would later become known as “ASEAN's Our Eyes” (AOE).

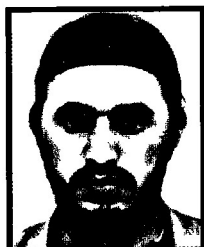
At the global level, the genesis of the modern radical Islamic terrorism threat can be traced back to Iraq and Syria and before that to Pakistan and Afghanistan. Historically, the rise of modern radical Islamic groups in Asia has been traced to the anti-Soviet multinational Afghan mujahidin campaign. After the defeat of the Soviets, the foreign fighters remained in tribal Pakistan and Afghanistan. They formed Al Qaeda (AQ) in 1988 and the Afghan Taliban in 1995 and were the main threat groups in

⁹ Richard Barrett, “Beyond the Caliphate: Foreign Fighters and the Threat of Returnees” (The Soufan Center, 31 October 2017). <http://thesoufancenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Beyond-the-Caliphate-Foreign-Fighters-and-the-Threat-of-Returnees-TSC-Report-October-2017-v3.pdf>.

¹⁰ Jasminder Singh, “*Katibah Nusantara: Islamic State's Malay Archipelago Combat Unit*”, *RSIS Commentary*, no. 126, 2015. <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/CO15126.pdf>

Afghanistan.¹¹ After the attacks of 9/11, the US-led coalition intervened in Afghanistan. During this time an Afghanistan trained veteran of AQ from Jordan, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, moved from Afghanistan to Iraq and created the forerunner of IS in 2003.¹²

For just over a decade from 2003 to 2014, Abu Musab's Tawhid Wal Jihad evolved into al Qaeda in Iraq (AQ-I), and the Mujahidin Shura Council.¹³



Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Photo: Public Domain

Abu Musab was killed in June 2006. Afterwards, his successors transformed the group into the Islamic State of Iraq, which changed into the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), and eventually to the Islamic State or IS. The declaration of a caliphate on June 29, 2014, galvanized tens of thousands of foreign fighters to strengthen the ranks of IS.¹⁴ Although the world came together to fight IS, the group morphed into a global movement with followers worldwide.

At the regional level, Southeast Asia has had issues with militant Islam for decades. In Indonesia, dating back to 1949 and continuing into the 1960s,¹⁵ what is known as the Darul Islam movement actively called for jihad and fought to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia. The Philippines has had a violent Islamic secessionist movement dating back to 1972, with the creation of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), under Nur Misuari. Malaysia's northern and Thailand's southern provinces have also been beset by militant Islamic secessionism since approximately 1948.¹⁶ When these local strands of Muslim secessionism met both AQ's and IS's more lethal and aggressive ideology and methods, the results have been

¹¹ "The 9/11 commission report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States". *Government Printing Office*, 2011.

<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/GPO-911REPORT/context>

¹² Rohan Gunaratna, "Abu Musab Al Zarqawi: a new generation terrorist leader." IDSS Comentararies, July 05, 2004. <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/CO04025.pdf>

¹³ Anthony N. Celso, "Zarqawi's Legacy: Al Qaeda's ISIS "Renegade"." *Mediterranean Quarterly* 26, no. 2, 2015: 21-41. <https://read.dukeupress.edu/mediterranean-quarterly/article-abstract/26/2/21/1917/Zarqawi-s-Legacy-Al-Qaeda-s-ISIS-Renegade?redirectedFrom=PDF>

¹⁴ Richard Barrett. "Beyond the Caliphate: Foreign Fighters and the Threat of Returnees," The Soufan Center, October 2017. <https://thesoufancenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Beyond-the-Caliphate-Foreign-Fighters-and-the-Threat-of-Returnees-TSC-Report-October-2017-v3.pdf>

¹⁵ Solahudin, "The Roots of Terrorism in Indonesia," Cornell University Press: London, 2013.

¹⁶ Zachary Abuza, "Forging Peace in Southeast Asia," Rowman & Littlefield: London, 2016.

seen in waves of deadly terrorist attacks in Southeast Asia since the 1990's continuing into the present.

The Development of the Threat

After IS lost its last stronghold in Baghouz, Syria on March 23, 2019, it mounted a devastating attack in Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday 2019.¹⁷ The scale, intensity, and magnitude of the attack demonstrated the new face of the new threat. In Central, South, Southeast and Northeast Asia, both IS central and IS decentralized structures are directing, enabling and inspiring attacks.¹⁸ For directing IS external operations in Asia, the leader Abu Bakr al Baghdadi was also relying more on Afghanistan as a forward base of operations. The drawdown of US forces from Afghanistan will create a security vacuum for IS growth, not only in Afghanistan but also in the immediate neighboring areas of Central, South, Southeast and Northeast Asia. Although China's Xinjiang province borders Pakistan and Afghanistan, it is China's western frontline in the fight against terrorism. Beijing is not currently ready to deepen its overseas presence.¹⁹

Russian-led coalition forces working with Syrian forces and Iranian sponsored militia, in addition to the US-led coalition forces in Syria and Iraq have made a difference in eroding IS power.²⁰ The US worked with Iraqi forces to eliminate IS's last strong hold in Baghouz, while Kurdish forces also worked to weaken IS presence in Syria.²¹ However, to claim IS has been defeated in Iraq and Syria is not accurate. With several

¹⁷ Amarnath Amarasingham, "Terrorism on the Teardrop Island: Understanding the Easter 2019 attacks in Sri Lanka." *CTC Sentinel* 12, no. 5 (2019). <https://ctc.usma.edu/terrorism-teardrop-island-understanding-easter-2019-attacks-sri-lanka/>

¹⁸ Thomas Hegghammer and Nesser Petter, "Assessing the Islamic State's commitment to attacking the West." *Perspectives on Terrorism* 9, no. 4 (2015). <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/440/html>

¹⁹ Laurel Miller, "The U.S. Shouldn't Stumble Out of Afghanistan", *Foreign Policy*, August 16, 2019. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/08/16/the-u-s-shouldnt-stumble-out-of-afghanistan-taliban-doha-talks-trump-withdrawal/>

²⁰ Timur Z. Mansurov, "Civil War in Syria and Counter-Terrorist Operation of The Russian Federation." *Theoretical & Applied Science* 11 (2015): 175-179.

²¹ Bill Chappell, "ISIS Camp in Baghouz Is Captured as U.S. Allies Declare Progress in Syria" *National Public Radio*, 19 March 2019. <https://www.npr.org/2019/03/19/704730563/isis-camp-in-baghouz-is-captured-as-u-s-allies-celebrate-progress-in-syria>

thousand fighters in hiding, IS maintains a significant presence in the Euphrates Valley and beyond.²²

Aimed at US disengagement from Syria and Iraq, US President Donald Trump's statement immediately after the IS loss of Baghouz is premature. "You kept hearing it was 90%, 92%, the caliphate in Syria. Now it's 100%,"²³ Trump said February 28th 2019, at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Alaska, according to Voice of America, "We have the whole thing."²⁴ Such a hasty withdrawal without eliminating the IS leadership will have an impact on the 74 countries forming the coalition and others. IS lost physical territory in Syria and Iraq, but the IS centric threat groups are driving the global threat of terrorism.²⁵ In terms of lethality, the IS attacks in Iraq and Syria are still the highest according to Amaq and other sources reporting on IS attacks.²⁶

Contrary to President Trump's pronouncement, IS remains a highly capable threat group with an increasingly global reach. Most of IS's attacks were in theatres of conflict but IS also developed capabilities to operate off the battlefield. With its mastery in cyberspace, IS engaged the vulnerable sympathizers and supporters online and also co-opted like-minded threat groups.²⁷ IS killed, maimed and injured more civilians and security forces personnel than other threat groups. The threat is not only from IS but from the IS's forerunner, AQ and their affiliates. AQ centric threat groups notably Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) in Syria, al Shabab in Africa, the

²² Sarah Hunaidi, "ISIS Has Not Been Defeated. It's Alive and Well in Southern Syria", *Foreign Policy*, April 3, 2019. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/04/03/isis-has-not-been-defeated-its-alive-and-well-in-southern-syria/>

²³ James Dobbins, Jason H. Campbell, Sean Mann, Laurel E. Miller, "Consequences of a Precipitous U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan", (*RAND Corporation*, 2019). https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE300/PE326/RAND_PE326.pdf

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ James Dobbins, Jason H. Campbell, Sean Mann, Laurel E. Miller, "Consequences of a Precipitous U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan", (*RAND Corporation*, 2019). https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE300/PE326/RAND_PE326.pdf

²⁶ Jin Wu, Derek Watkins and Rukmini Callimachi, "ISIS Lost Its Last Territory in Syria. But the Attacks Continue." *New York Times*, March 23, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/03/23/world/middleeast/isis-syria-defeated.html>

²⁷ James A. Piazza and Ahmet Guler, "The Online Caliphate: Internet Usage and ISIS Support in the Arab World." *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2019. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09546553.2019.1606801>

Taliban in Afghanistan and others continue to pose threats, although IS is the dominant global player.²⁸

The Asian Landscape

As in the rest of the world, the terrorist threat in Asia emanates from two large entities. AQ led by Aymen al-Zawahiri and its breakaway faction IS, led by Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi, present enduring threats to societies and states.²⁹ Asia is not an exception to the global rise of terrorism in the early 21st century. A new level of violence ensued after AQ attacked America's most iconic landmarks on 9/11.³⁰ AQ trained and funded the Southeast Asian terrorist organization Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), who executed the Bali bombings of October 12, 2002. The Bali bombings in Indonesia killed 202 people, including 88 Australians, 38 Indonesians, 23 Britons, seven Americans, as well as victims from 19 other countries, in addition to injuring hundreds more.³¹ Despite staging such a devastating attack, the state response was inadequate. At the time, the Bali bombings were the worst terrorist attacks since 9/11. Only the perpetrators were arrested and directing figures executed, leaving many of JI's operators free, this essentially leaving the group intact at the organizational level.

The world, Southeast Asia included, was and still is presented with a two phased threat, first from AQ and then by IS. This is seen with AQ and IS infiltrating Southeast Asia and other regions around the world, both operationally and ideologically. In the first phase for Southeast Asia, which began in the 1990's the governments of Southeast Asia, both regional and extra-regional, worked together to pre-empt AQ from establishing a foothold in the region. AQ was determined to develop

²⁸ Rohan Gunaratna, "Global threat forecast 2019." *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses* 11, no. 1 (2019): 1-5. https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/CTTA_Annual_2019-1.pdf

²⁹ Nimrod Raphaeli, "Ayman Muhammad Rabi'Al-Zawahiri: The Making of an Arch-Terrorist." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 14, no. 4 (2002): 1-22. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/714005636>

³⁰ Arabinda Acharya, "The Bali Bombings: Impact on Indonesia and Southeast Asia." *Center for Eurasian Policy Occasional Research Paper, Series II (Islamism in Southeast Asia)* 2 (2006). 1-5. <https://www.hudson.org/content/researchattachments/attachment/517/acharyathe%20bali%20bombings.pdf>

³¹ John McBeth, "Terror Leader Hambali Finally to Face Justice," *Asia Times*, July 15, 2019. <https://www.asiatimes.com/2019/07/article/terror-leader-hambali-finally-to-face-justice/>

Southeast Asia into its second front,³² with Afghanistan and Pakistan being its first. In Poso and Ambon, Indonesia, there had been communal violence between Christians and Muslims in 1999 and 2000. AQ's affiliate JI, exploited the fighting there by recruiting, training and funding Muslims to fight in these troubled areas,³³ however the fighting soon diminished. Unmoved, the terrorists mounted attacks throughout Southeast Asia, first by conducting bombings in Jakarta, Manilla and Thailand in 2000,³⁴ then culminating with the Bali bombings of 2002.

The second phase of the threat is posed by IS, in 2017, three years after the declaration of a so-called "Caliphate" in the Middle East, IS built its furthest presence in Southeast Asia. IS sieged the Islamic city of Marawi in the Philippines in May 2017. By seeding a foreign nucleus of fighters, instructors, funds and ideologies, IS deepened its presence in Southeast Asia. IS co-opted local groups, inspiring and instigating them to stage a Mosul or Raqqa type event in the Philippines. Following years of stealthily planning and preparing, the lightening siege shocked the region.

The siege of Marawi galvanized the region and beyond. Even after regional and international partners came together, the threat was formidable. To defeat IS in Marawi, even with the best armies equipping and advising, it took the AFP five months to secure the area. If the threat could not be contained in the Philippines, isolated in Mindanao, and eliminated in Marawi, IS would have spread to neighboring Sabah in Malaysia and Indonesia's Kalimantan region. Eventually the threat would have affected the entire region of Southeast Asia.

³² Sidney Jones, "The changing nature of Jemaah Islamiyah." *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 59, no. 2 (2005): 169-178.

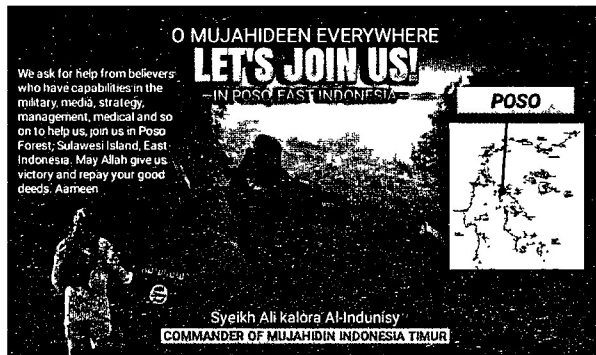
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10357710500134475>

³³ Sidney Jones, "Indonesia Backgrounder: Jihad in Central Sulawesi," International Crisis Group Report, February 3, 2004.

³⁴ "Terrorism in Southeast Asia," Congressional Research Service, October 16, 2009.
<https://fas.org/spp/crs/terror/RL34194.pdf>

Poso: The First IS Attempt to Establish the East Asia Wilayah

The first choice for IS declaring a province of the caliphate in Southeast Asia, to be called the “East Asia Wilayah” was in Indonesia. During 2016, in Poso, Eastern Indonesia, the IS affiliated militant group known as the Mujahidin Indonesia Timur (MIT), was attempting to establish IS’s first “Wilayah” in the Southeast Asian region. However, the timely deployment of

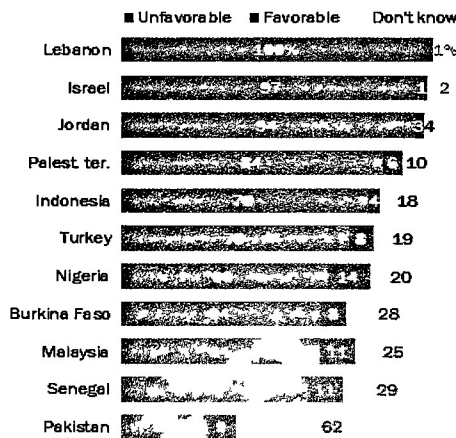


IS-MIT Propaganda Calling for Followers to Come to Poso, Indonesia. Source: IS Propaganda

Indonesia’s counter-terrorism unit known as Detachment-88, as well as the Indonesian Army’s elite Kostrad unit was able to thwart IS’s initial attempts to establish a province in the region. As will be discussed later, this was a good example of interagency cooperation, military and police agencies worked together to counter the terrorism threat in the region. However, more was needed in the multinational cooperation arena.

Views of ISIS Overwhelmingly Negative

Do you have a ___ opinion of the Islamic militant group in Iraq and Syria known as ISIS?



Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not total 100.
Source: Spring 2015 Global Attitudes survey, Q12h

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Graph Showing Views of ISIS in Various Countries (2015). Source: Pew Research Center

The Threat in Southeast Asia

The primary concern was that if only one percent of Indonesia, Malaysia, or other neighboring countries embrace the ideology of IS, the effects on the region could be devastating. According to a

reputable source,³⁵ in 2015, four percent of Indonesians had a favorable opinion of IS, then referred to as ISIS. With a population of approximately 270 million, Indonesia is the fourth most populous country in the world. Indonesia hosts the world's largest Muslim population. Indonesia is also the world's largest island country, with 17,508 islands. As Indonesian territory spans 1,904,569 square kilometers (735,358 square miles), securing the archipelago requires a large force.

Views of ISIS by Religion, Ethnicity and Region

Do you have a ___ opinion of the Islamic militant group in Iraq and Syria known as ISIS?

Country	Group	Unfavorable	Favorable	Don't know
Lebanon	Christian	100%	0%	0%
	Shia	100	0	0
	Sunni	98	1	2
Israel	Jewish	98	0	2
	Arab	91	4	5
Palest. ter.	Gaza	92	5	3
	West Bank	79	8	13
Burkina Faso	Christian	86	5	29
	Muslim	64	9	28
Nigeria	Christian	71	7	22
	Muslim	61	20	19
Malaysia	Muslim	67	12	21
	Buddhist	65	6	29

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not total 100%.

Source: Spring 2015 Global Attitudes survey. Q12n.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Graph Showing Views of ISIS in Various Countries (2015). Source: Pew Research Center

In terms of the region, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Brunei and several others all have fairly large Muslim populations, a small percentage of which have adopted an IS styled extremist ideology. For example, in Malaysia there are 19.5 million Muslims,³⁶ a small percentage of whom have identified with and supported IS's ideology since 2015.³⁷ In terms of the Philippines, the siege of Marawi has clearly shown, that there is a fairly large and dedicated source of locals dedicated to the cause of IS. The threat of extremist ideology and Islamic terrorism concerns all of Southeast Asia.

However, the threat of IS in Indonesia may well be the most severe in the region. If the threat is not controlled from within and monitored from abroad, Indonesia could have an Islamist extremism problem similar to Afghanistan, Iraq or Syria. IS wished to attack the world's fastest growing region and turn it to a cauldron of violence. IS moved to the Southern Philippines and eventually sieged Marawi because it could not build a solid

³⁵ Jacob Poushter, "In Nations with Significant Muslim Populations, Much Disdain for ISIS," *Pew Research Center*, November 17, 2015. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/11/17/nations-with-significant-muslim-populations-much-disdain-for-isis/>

³⁶ "Malaysia" *CIA-World Factbook*, October 22, 2019.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/my.html>

³⁷ Jacob Poushter, "In Nations With Significant Muslim Populations, Much Disdain for ISIS," *Pew Research Center*, November 17, 2015. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/11/17/nations-with-significant-muslim-populations-much-disdain-for-isis/>

base in Poso, Indonesia.³⁸ Like sieging Marawi in the Philippines, IS planned to implement its concept of *tamkin*, or gaining territorial control, in Indonesia.³⁹ By working together with the Indonesian military, Indonesian police denied IS from gaining territorial control in Poso. A sniper from Raiders 515, an elite team that was raised within Kostrad, killed the Indonesian terrorist leader, Santoso, in Tambarana on July 21, 2016.⁴⁰ The success in Poso shows how effective interagency cooperation amongst forces can be highly successful against terrorism. The AOE is the next evolution of cooperation amongst both interagency forces and intergovernmental forces to effectively eliminate terrorism in the region.

The Tabligh Jamaat Incident: A Lack of Intergovernmental Cooperation

In January of 2017, shortly after the successful operation to neutralize Santoso, there was another incident that highlighted the need for more intergovernmental cooperation to combat terrorism in the region. While few governments conduct their affairs in anticipation, governments worldwide react to threats. The Marawi siege by IS was the culmination of the failure of regional governments to work together to thwart threats. Similar events demonstrated the grave need for a regional mechanism to share real time information and intelligence. When a delegation of members of Tabligh Jamaat from Indonesia moved from Malaysia to Singapore, one of the members had on his cellphone a photo of a “shoe bomb”. When they were deported from Singapore to Malaysia, and then from Malaysia to Indonesia, it led to a misunderstanding between the Malaysian and Indonesian authorities. Despite the incriminating photos

³⁸ Albert A. Ginting and Kukuh Wibowo, “ISIS Fail to Establish Power in Poso, Minister Wiranto Says”, *Tempo.Co*, 8 June 2017.

<https://en.tempo.co:443/read/news/2017/06/08/055882809/ISIS-Fail-to-Establish-Power-in-Poso-Minister-Wiranto-Says> ; Singapore Ministry of Home Affairs, “Singapore Terrorism Threat Assessment Report 2017” (Singapore: Ministry of Home Affairs, June 1, 2017) <https://www.mha.gov.sg/newsroom/press-release/news/singapore-terrorism-threat-assessment-report-2017>

³⁹ Herdi Sahrasad and Al Chaidar. “‘Tamkin’ terrorism a new security threat”. *The Jakarta Post*, October 26, 2018. <https://www.thejakartapost.com/academia/2018/10/26/tamkin-terrorism-a-new-security-threat.html>

⁴⁰ Robi Sugara, “Santoso: The Terrorist Leader from Nowhere”. *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses* 6, no. 10 (2014). <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/CTTA-November14.pdf>

Today, terrorism presents a tier-one national security threat to governments and societies across the world. The threat of Al Qaeda, the Islamic State, and their affiliates is growing stronger in Southeast Asia. To contain, isolate, and eliminate the terrorism threat, ASEAN's governments had to come together and act. We invested in joint aerial, land, and maritime forces, as well as an intelligence sharing and exchange network

The Islamic State's rise to that of the world's most dangerous terrorist movement took Southeast Asia by surprise. The terrorist takeover of the city of Marawi in the Philippines galvanized the Southeast Asians to act. With the threat of the Islamic State expanding, the visionary, collective and decisive leadership of ASEAN was put to the test. Working with its regional counterparts and international partners, the Indonesian Ministry of Defence created the regional intelligence network – ASEAN's Our Eyes.



General (Ret.) Ryamizard Ryacudu was the Minister of Defence of Indonesia (2014-2019), Chief of Staff, Indonesian Army (2002-2005), and Commander, Army Strategic Command 2000–2002).

ISBN 978-981-14-8297-7

