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The recent arrest near Johor Bahru, Malaysia of Mas Selamat Kastari, a fugitive Singaporean member of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) group is an important achievement in the effort to stamp out Southeast Asian terrorism. Other actions by the Indonesian police over the past 18 months, including the arrest of JI members in Palembang and Central Java, have dealt a further blow to the organisation.

Kastari's earlier escape from a Singaporean detention facility in February 2008 and his ability to evade the police and security services of both Singapore and Malaysia for over 12 months was less encouraging. It suggests that JI's informal networks and support groups in the region remain active, and that many of them are probably unknown to the authorities.

But, despite several attempts, JI has failed to replicate the mass casualty attacks of the years between 2002 and 2005. And, in the absence of a renewed bombing campaign, questions have been raised concerning the nature of the continuing threat from JI as an organisation. The prevailing view among leading analysts is that the overall threat from JI is receding and that another campaign of expensive, large-scale bombings is unlikely.1

Four years after the second Bali bombings, and 12 months since ASPI last wrote on this subject, an update on JI's current status and capabilities is warranted.2 This short paper, based on several recent interviews conducted with former JI members in Indonesia, highlights some of the shifting patterns of leadership behaviour and patronage among sections of the organisation.

We argue that two recent developments—the current leadership tensions and the release from prison of former JI members—at least raise the possibility that splinter factions might now seek to re-energise the movement through violent attacks. Although that possibility remains low, and further work is needed to understand the thinking and motivations of JI members as they transition out of the prison system, there is evidence that some of these individuals are gravitating towards hardline groups who continue to advocate al-Qaeda-style attacks against Western targets.

Tensions in the leadership

Several senior JI leaders remain at large, including the leader of JI's most violent group, Noordin Top; JI's military commander, Zulkarnaen; an electronics and bomb-making specialist, Dulmatin; and recruitment expert Umar Patek, who has sought sanctuary among the Abu Sayyaf Group in the Philippines.

Pressured by police and security operations since the first Bali bombings, however, JI is no longer a cohesive organisation with a clear, unified leadership structure. In fact, further divisions have arisen among group members, including the emergence last year of JI spiritual leader Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's new group Jama'ah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT). There is also a mainstream faction led by Abu Rusdan—the 'traditionalists'—who constantly oppose further bombings and encourage members not to participate in any attacks.

For the faction led by Rusdan, the use of violence is only justified as a way to defend Muslims in conflict areas. 'The time isn't yet ripe to wage jihad in Indonesia,' he says. In a recent interview, Rusdan argued that acts of indiscriminate violence like the first Bali bombings have damaged the image of the organisation and done a disservice to Islam. Moreover, he contends, the Bali attacks have hurt the group by bringing its activities and operations under the now-constant scrutiny of the police and security authorities.

These leadership divisions have become deeper in recent times. One JI member convicted of involvement in terrorist activities argues that there have been efforts by an influential member of the mainstream group to isolate convicted JI members because some of them are seen as 'tainted'. 'We testified in court and this was seen as revealing secrets of the organisation. Moreover, we are told that we are being monitored by authorities,' he said.

There are, in fact, more than a hundred JI members who have been released from jail because they have finished their prison sentences or have undertaken some form of rehabilitation. Some of them had significant roles in the organisation, including Abu Tholut, a former regional commander and a military trainer in the Hudaibiyah Camp in Mindanao, southern Philippines. He had been arrested for weapons possession.

The exclusion of individuals like Abu Tholut from the central JI command structure is hardly likely to prompt him to give up his jihadist aims. If shunned by Rusdan's faction, he and others now leaving jail would be more likely to join the violent factions of JI, like Noordin Top's group or other splinter groups that continue to evade the Indonesian security services.

These hardline groups continue to believe that the use of violence against the 'enemies of Islam' is justified under any circumstances. Far from satisfied with the Bali bombings and other attacks now several years in the past, they dismissively refer to many senior JI members as 'NATO'—No Action, Talk Only. In line with JI's original manifesto, Pedoman Umum Perjuangan Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyah (PUPJI—or the General guide for the struggle of JI), these individuals remain convinced that an armed struggle (jihad musallah) is the primary means to achieve the ultimate goal of an Islamic caliphate.

The continued leadership split in the JI organisation and the release from prison of unreformed members of the group such as Sunarto bin Kartodiharjo (alias Adung) raises the possibility that splinter factions might now seek to re-energise the movement through violent attacks. The hardline group is fully supported by a group of young, dedicated individuals who share a deep commitment to the cause, advocating al-Qaeda-

style attacks that directly target Westerners and Western interests if the time is 'ripe' for them.

Members of this faction are a fringe minority even within a radical movement like JI. But while some of them believe that the sustenance of JI as a whole requires an array of logistical operators, ideologues, trainers, recruiters and the like, simply carrying out an isolated attack can be done by a handful of individuals. Three suicide bombers from this faction were able to cause significant carnage in the second Bali bombings in 2005.

There is an ongoing discussion inside the group that the splintering has divided JI members into three categories: black (those who are cooperative with the police), grey (their position is unclear) and white (those who resist the police). But cooperation with the police should not be confused with a broader rejection of JI's violent goals. Some younger JI recruits are happy to declare that they have dual membership in both the open organisation of Rusdan's traditionalists and the clandestine pro-bombing factions.

Shifts in radicalisation

Identifying and countering these fringe groups poses significant challenges for intelligence and law enforcement agencies. The profile of the would-be radical as young, male, religiously-devout, alienated, angry, disenfranchised, and living on the edges of society is outdated and not reflective of the broader JI membership.

JI and its affiliate groups continue to engage pragmatically with what would otherwise be referred to as 'homegrown' terrorists from different socio-economic backgrounds and professions, and with vastly different technical and operational capabilities. Rather than conforming to a specific terrorist profile, complex radicalisation processes shape these individuals into terrorist operatives.3

The complexity and increasingly decentralised structure of the militant movement is also evident in the wide-ranging efforts to find moral justifications for violent acts. Rather than simply seeking permission for the act through a fatwa, or religious opinion issued by a senior cleric in Indonesia, the activist, pro-al-Qaeda faction of JI have turned to the internet to find religious justifications for their actions. Some admit to 'shopping' on-line for religious edicts that would support violent jihad.

For recruitment purposes, these fringe groups still employ traditional methods such as schools, kinship networks, friendships and small Islamic discussion groups. These latter groups, consisting of six to ten people, meet regularly for social and religious activities, which inhibits authorities from preventing possible violent outcomes. And the fringe groups continue to embrace new technologies such as DVDs, coded SMS messages, secure e-mail, and password-protected websites and web forums.

The counter-terrorism response

To stay ahead of splinter factions and the more activist, al-Qaeda-inspired element within JI, the authorities will have to pay close attention to events and developments that could prompt these groups into action. The execution of the three main perpetrators of the first Bali bombing could be one such event. The death by firing squad of Imam Samudra, Mukhlas and Amrozi will clearly not stop the spread of their ideology. The group will perceive the execution as a sacred date to be leveraged in order to attract new support and recruits.

Aside from identifying and neutralising violent groups, building on the successes of the current counterterrorism effort will require that the Indonesian Government also finds a way to address the problems of unemployment, poverty and corruption that continue to contribute to the spread of, and support for, the ideology of violence.

As a recent counter-radicalisation conference in Singapore noted, working with moderate Muslims from mainstream organisations such as Muhammadiyah or Nadhlatul Ulama to counter radical ideology is considered an important element in the fight against extremism. But ultimately it may not have much impact for two straightforward reasons. First, the majority of the members of the fringe groups do not listen to them, and second, mainstream organisations do not fully understand the nature and dynamics of the emerging fringe groups.

Perhaps the best way to counter radical ideology is by empowering militant leaders whom the fringe group continues to trust, such as Afghanistan or Philippines veterans, and who are now lying low. This is a challenging strategy both because identifying the individuals ready to take such a step will be difficult and because the political backlash from enlisting former radicals into the government's counterterrorism effort could be strong. Nonetheless, it may represent the most effective means of actually reaching out to those individuals who may very well be planning the next major terrorist attack.

Conclusion

The JI organisation has continued to evolve since the first Bali bombings catapulted the group to international prominence in 2002. As several studies have shown, the main JI faction has in recent years limited its direct support for violent activities and has also suffered from a loss of supporters following years of arrests and internal discord.

However, the emergence of hardened, experienced militants from the conflict in the southern Philippines and the recent release of JI cadres from prisons in Indonesia, who have become ostracised by the mainstream JI group, are breeding a new generation of radicalised fringe groups. Together with regional countries such as Australia, the Indonesian Government, religious and community leaders will need to take effective action in order to stem the emergence of these radical movements.

Table: Jemaah Islamiyah's factional leadership

Name of the leader of the faction	Type of activity	Remarks
Abu Rusdan	He continues his dakwah (preaching) activities in small group discussions, mosques, and Islamic book launchings. There is no evidence to suggest that his faction conducts any military training. Members of this faction such as Qital and Fahim, want to reform JI by following the PUPJI guidelines.	He lives a very simple life in Kudus, Central Java. Most of the Afghan veterans respect and consider him as the suitable leader for JI. He continues to preach extreme hatred toward the US and its allies in each of his sermons. With the

Abu Bakar Ba'asyir	Ba'asyir established a new organisation called Jama'ah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT) in 2008. Its members at present count to 3,000 people spread over Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi and West Nusa Tenggara. In Solo there are more than 400 members. Every Sunday morning, the Anshoru Tauhid congregation hold an honouring and prayer meeting in the mosque of Salamah in the Tipes area of Solo. Those attending the meeting include ustadz Muzayyin, ustadz Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, ustadz Abdul Madjid. Some members of this group adopt JAT as their public face but privately, they have their own agendas.	help of his son, Iim Ba'asyir, his speeches are now available on YouTube. Recently, Iim established a radio service called RDS, Radio Dakwah Syariah. The radio service is funded by a businessman, Haji Suparno. Suparno was a supporter of Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir during their exile in Malaysia in the 1980s. He is a former military officer who was involved in the 'Komando Jihad' movement.
Aman Abdurrahman	Ustadz Aman Abdurrahman is a young ustadz, admired by some circles of youngsters in Bandung, Bogor, Jakarta and some areas in West Java, and founded a specific congregation named the Jamaah Tauhid wal Jihad. This study group make use of material translated by ustadz Aman Abdurrahman from the text of Abu Muhammad Al Maqdisi, Abu Basher, Syaikh Abdul Kadir bin Abdul Aziz and some tauhid thinkers and other contemporary jihadis from Saudi Arabia. As an idolised figure, the role of Aman Abdurrahman is very important, i.e. activator of the dakwah ideology of tauhid and jihad which were flourishing recently. At the Jamaah Tauhid wa Jihad, Aman Abdurrahman once played a role as chairman of the Syuro Board, by giving advice and fatwas to this congregation in carrying out organisation activities. Because of that respected position, there is also a site specifically dedicated to accommodate his translations in: www.anshortauhidwassunnah.blogspot.com, the site of progressive dakwah jihad in Indonesia. Aman Abdurrahman had also been crowned as Imam at the JamaahTauhid wa Sunnah, which is centred in Bandung. As a leader, Aman Abdurrahman has the task to carry on the regular study program with analysis of the tauhid books and spreading the dakwah jihad to other areas.	He is not a JI member but many members of JI, especially the younger recruits, admire him and invite him to give talks and sermons at their gatherings.
Noordin Top	Noordin's group, sometimes referred to as al-Qaeda for the Malay archipelago, is the most dangerous of the JI factions. He continues to inspire a minority of young JI recruits to join his group.	

Endnotes

1 For comprehensive assessments of JI see: Greg Barton, Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and radical Islamism, Sydney: UNSW Press, 2004; Aldo Borgu and Greg Fealy, Local Jihad: Radical Islam and terrorism in Indonesia, ASPI Strategy Paper, September 2005; International Crisis Group, Indonesia: Jemaah Islamiyah's Current Status, Asia Briefing No. 63, 2 May 2007.

2 This paper seeks to update judgements that were made in ASPI's June 2008 Strategy Paper, Neighbourhood watch: The evolving terrorist threat in Southeast Asia, by Peter Chalk and Carl Ungerer.

3 For an analysis of radicalisation processes among JI members, see Kumar Ramakrishna, Radical Pathways: Understanding Muslim radicalisation in Indonesia, Westport: Praeger Security International, 2009.

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