

**MARAWI,  
THE “EAST ASIA WILAYAH”  
AND INDONESIA**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

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The May 2017 takeover of the southern Philippine city of Marawi by an alliance of pro-ISIS militants will have ramifications for the region long after the Philippines military retakes the city. These could include a higher risk of violent attacks in other Philippine cities and in Indonesia and Malaysia; greater cooperation among Southeast Asian extremists; and new leadership for Indonesian and Malaysian pro-ISIS cells from among returning fighters from Marawi.

The Marawi operations received direct funding from ISIS central and reveal a chain of command that runs from Syria through the Philippines to Indonesia and the rest of Southeast Asia. ISIS central seems to have been represented by Khatibah Nusantara, the fighting unit led by the Indonesian named Bahrumsyah and his associate, Abu Walid. Khatibah Nusantara in turn sent funding through Dr Mahmud Ahmad, a Malaysian who sits in the inner circle of the Marawi command structure. Dr Mahmud controlled recruitment as well as financing and has been the contact person for any foreigner wanting to join the pro-ISIS coalition in the Philippines. Tactical decisions on the ground are being made by the Philippine ISIS commanders themselves, but the Syria-based Southeast Asians could have a say in setting strategy for region when the siege is over.

The Marawi battle has lasted for two months as of this writing and defied all expectations of when it would end. It has lifted the prestige of the Philippine fighters in the eyes of ISIS central, although it has not yet earned them the coveted status of *wilayah* or province of Islamic State. It has inspired young extremists from around the region to want to join. In Indonesia it has helped unite two feuding streams of the pro-ISIS movement, inspired “lone wolf” attacks and caused soul-searching among would-be terrorists about why they cannot manage to do anything as spectacular. All of this suggests an increased incentive for jihad operations, though the capacity of pro-ISIS cells for organizing and implementing attacks outside the Philippines remains low. That could change with a few fighters coming back from either Marawi or the Middle East.

While governments around the region and particularly the “front-line” states of Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines recognise the need for greater regional cooperation, there remain formidable obstacles to working together. These include the deep-seated political distrust between the Philippines and Malaysia that impedes information sharing; concern from Indonesia and Malaysia police about mixed loyalties of local counterparts in Mindanao, especially given clan and family links; and institutional disjunctures that give the lead in counter-terrorism to the police in Indonesia and Malaysia but to the military in the Philippines. The unreliability of official Philippine statements on Marawi, whether on numbers of fighters, identities of those killed, or extent of military control, has not inspired confidence.

Donors need to give urgent attention to Marawi’s evacuees and to the city’s rebuilding to ensure that resentment over its destruction does not make it even more fertile ground for extremist recruitment. Sustained attention to the peace process and better governance remain crucial. But it is also useful to think of a few quick technical fixes that could help with immediate issues that the Marawi battle has thrown up. One is an up-to-date, integrated watch-list of extremists across the region – as of July 2017, for example, neither the Maute brothers, Dr Mahmud nor Bahrumsyah were on Interpol’s “Red Alert” list of wanted terrorists. Another is for a series of short courses for senior police investigators from the region aimed at producing a detailed map of cross-regional extremist links and better knowledge of the groups in each others’ countries. A third is a program to understand and prevent campus-based recruitment and funding.

In this report, IPAC examines how support for ISIS and an “East Asia Wilayah” came about, how the Marawi siege has affected the two main networks of pro-ISIS supporters in Indonesia, and what might happen next. It is based on research in Mindanao in February and April 2017,

interviews with individuals close to several men arrested in Indonesia in 2017 for links to Mindanao, and analysis of Telegram chats.

## II. BACKGROUND TO THE “EAST ASIA WILAYAH”

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Much time and space has been expended on trying to figure out where the Philippines fits into ISIS structure and strategy and whether it has formally been given the status of a “province” or *wilayah*. It has not. In official ISIS media, most recently Issue 11 of the online magazine *Rumiyah*, developments in Marawi continue to fall under the rubric “East Asia” with no reference to a *wilayah*. Even more telling is the daily ISIS news bulletin *al-Bayan* where on one day, 27 Ramadan (22 June 2017), the term “East Asia Wilayah” appeared, only to revert back to “East Asia” in the next issue. The one-day mention was apparently a slip by the editors.

More important than nomenclature, however, are the questions of who makes the strategic decisions; where the funding comes from; and how the local coalition relates to ISIS central. In this, Dr Mahmud and the leaders of Khatibah Nusantara appear to have been crucial.

### A. *Tracing ISIS History in the Philippines*

A video purporting to be Filipinos swearing allegiance to al-Baghdadi was released on 26 May 2014, a month before the declaration of the caliphate. It shows nine men with their faces covered giving the pledge in Arabic, and one of them speaks in Tagalog at the end. It is not clear where it was filmed or who the oath-takers are, but the subtitles and production credits suggest it was made by Indonesians – meaning collaboration was already well underway.<sup>1</sup>

After ISIS leader Abu Bakar Al-Baghdadi announced the caliphate in Mosul, Iraq on 29 June 2014, support from the Philippine quickly followed:

- 2 July 2014: a group of prisoners at Manila’s maximum security prison for high-risk offenders videoed themselves swearing allegiance to al-Baghdadi. One of the men detained there at the time was Indonesian Saifullah Ibrahim, who became a critical link between Syria, Indonesia and pro-ISIS groups in Mindanao between the time he was released in December 2014 and his death a year later.<sup>2</sup>
- 24 July 2014: Isnilon Hapilon and his men swore allegiance to al-Baghdadi on Basilan.
- August 2014: Pledges followed from one faction of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, based in Maguindanao; Ansar al-Khilafah Philippines (AKP), based in Sarangani; Ghuraba (a precursor of the Maute group), based in Lanao del Sur; and Junud al-Khilafah.
- 19 September 2014: some 100 locals including children swore an oath of loyalty at the Marawi Islamic Center after Friday prayer in a ceremony reportedly organised by Jamil Yahya, a former MILF cleric (who later rejected ISIS and came under criticism for supporting the presidential bid of Rodrigo Duterte.) It is not clear that most of them knew anything about ISIS. At the time, the military said the organisation behind the

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1 The opening credits show a stamp in Indonesian saying “Joint Committee: Supporters and Defenders of the Islamic State”(Panitia Bersama: Pendukung dan Pembela Daulah) and the subtitles refer to al-Baghdadi as “Syaikh”, an Indonesian spelling. The video also concludes with an exhortation in Indonesian. See “ISIS threat to Philippine security,” [www.rappler.com](http://www.rappler.com), 11 July 2014. The Panitia Bersama was set up in early 2015 and initially based at Masjid Al-Fataa Menteng, Jakarta. In 2015, the clerics there claimed to be communicating regularly with Bahrumisyah.

2 The video was filmed at Security Intensive Care Area (SICA), Taguig City, Manila. For more on Saifullah Ibrahim see IPAC, “Pro-ISIS Groups in Mindanao and their Indonesian and Malaysian Links”, Report No.33, 25 October 2016.

event was Khilafah Islamiyah Mindanao (KIM) under the leadership of Humam Abdul Najid alias Owayda.<sup>3</sup> Owayda appears in the planning video for the Marawi attack in May 2017.

- 8 December 2015: A Telegram posting referred to Abu Anas al-Muhajir, the Malaysian on Basilan, as “amir Imaratu al-Mashriqi Khilafah ash-Sharqiyyah” or commander of the eastern region of the eastern caliphate, and said that his leadership was endorsed by the Shura Council of the Islamic State.
- Sometime in late 2015, four pro-ISIS groups– not including the Mautes – made a video of themselves uniting under Isnilon Hapilon as their amir. Abu Anas appears in the video as the leader of the “Ansar al-Shariah Battalion”, but he was killed shortly thereafter on 16 December 2015 in a clash with the military on Basilan. The video was posted on Youtube on 4 January 2016. At this point the coalition begins referring to itself as “Islamic State – Eastern Region” or “Daulah Islamiyah Wilayahul Mashriq”. None of the official ISIS media, however, use the term *wilayah*.
- April 2016: the Maute group began referring to themselves as IS-Ranao and posted a video of themselves on 20 April 2016 swearing allegiance to al-Baghdadi.

Around the same time, issue No.7 of *Dabiq*, ISIS’s online English-language magazine, set out conditions for affiliation:

[This] is a reference to the process that must be followed by the jamā’at of any distant region in order to officially be recognized as a wilāyah of the Islamic State. This process includes documenting their bay’at, unifying the jamā’at who have given bay’ah, holding consultations to nominate a wālī and members for the regional shūrā assembly, planning a strategy to achieve consolidation in their region for the Khilāfah so as to implement the Sharī’ah, and presenting all this to the Islamic State leadership for approval.<sup>4</sup>

The videoed pledges of loyalty, the unification of the different components and agreement on Isnilon Hapilon as *amir* were all steps toward that recognition. Control of territory and implementation of shari’ah were apparently still not complete. Since the term “East Asia” embraced a region much wider than the Philippines, it may be that the ISIS leadership, possibly acting on the advice of BahrumSyah, wanted to withhold acknowledgment until there was either greater involvement beyond the Philippines; a symbolic merger of Poso in central Sulawesi, Indonesia, and Mindanao under a single *amir*; or more evidence of other Southeast Asian fighters in Mindanao. For whatever reason, the *wilayah* was never proclaimed and the main ISIS media outlets continued to report on the Philippines under the rubric “East Asia”. That said, no one tried to stop the fighters themselves from issuing statements in the name of East Asia Wilayah which they did at every opportunity.

### B. Action Shifts to Lanao del Sur

Regardless of recognition, the Mautes, more than Hapilon, continued to shape the coalition by engaging the military and presumably learning lessons from the encounters. Beginning 21 February 2016, just a few months after the coalition came into being, they engaged the Philippine army in a ten-day battle in the town of Butig, near their base camp, about a two-hour drive from Marawi. A video taken at the time and shown on national television showed two of the

3 Owayda was reportedly trained in Afghanistan around 2005 and is a graduate of Al-Ma’arif Educational Center, a Salafi school in Baguio. “Military investigates IS oath-taking in Marawi City,” *Manila Times*, 22 September 2014.

4 “Wilayah Khurasan and the Bay’at from Qawqaz”, *Dabiq* No.7, p.35.

town's policemen watching calmly and smiling as the Maute fighters opened fire on Philippine soldiers.<sup>5</sup> The broadcaster made a point of saying that their surname was Romato, the same as the Maute matriarch, Farhana, implying that clan ties were a source of support – including within the security agencies.

In September, the Mautes organised the bombing of the Davao night market, making a point of ensuring that fighters from all components of the coalition took part. On 26 November 2016, the Mautes reoccupied Butig and flew the ISIS flag over the town hall. The military responded by dropping 150-pound bombs on the town center, which may have drawn more recruits into the Maute camp.<sup>6</sup> After almost a week, the ISIS fighters retreated but some of the tactics they were testing in Butig, including the use of carefully-positioned snipers, were later used in Marawi.

Between November 2016 and January 2017, the nerve centre of ISIS operations, which had been on Basilan, moved to Lanao del Sur. Isnlon Hapilon made the journey, together with other important figures, including Dr Mahmud Ahmad. The Indonesian Ibnu Qoyyim alias Abu Nida, of whom more below, may have been with them. At the time, Philippine Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said that he had received a report that Hapilon's transfer to Lanao had been ordered by the ISIS leadership in Syria because central Mindanao was more conducive to ISIS growth and Basilan was too small.<sup>7</sup>

On 26 January 2017, the Philippines army launched a "surgical airstrike" against the group's positions in Butig, reportedly wounding Hapilon in the shoulder, though it was never clear how serious the injury was.<sup>8</sup> Further clashes took place in and around Butig in March, even as in retrospect, plans for the takeover of Marawi must have been well underway.

On 22 April, the military launched operations in Piagapo, a small town about an hour's drive west of Marawi in which they claimed to have killed some 30 militants, sixteen in airstrikes and fourteen in ground assaults.<sup>9</sup> They then overran a Maute camp, which had 48 bunkers and "running trenches", suggesting a degree of preparation and professionalism that government forces may not have been prepared for. It was in this camp in Piagapo that soldiers found an Indonesian passport belonging to Mohammed Ilham Syahputra, a 22-year old from Medan, who had left for the Philippines in November 2016. It is not known if he is alive or dead.

By early May, calls on Indonesians to go to the Philippines were getting more explicit.

If you find it difficult to go to Sham [greater Syria] because of cost and security concerns, why not try the Philippines? Truly, our brothers in the Philippines are awaiting your arrival, why are you so slow in answering their call?

Does it make sense that we have a neighbour being attacked by a swarm of criminals, but we aim for a further neighbor rather than one closer by? We give more importance to the further neighbour and make the closer one lower priority? Brothers, this is not to demean efforts to emigrate to Sham, but to advise those of you who are still in the land of kafir but have not yet set out on your journey: if you find it hard to get to Syria, strengthen the ranks in the Philippines.<sup>10</sup>

In the early afternoon on 23 May, the military launched what it said was a joint operation with the police to capture Isnlon Hapilon in Marawi. That operation may have led the Mautes to bring forward the takeover by a few days; it was likely planned for the first day of Ramadan,

5 ABS-CBN news, 21 March 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ib5DAkaO8A4>.

6 ABS-CBN news, "Army presses offensive in Maute-held Lanao town", 27 November 2016.

7 ABS-CBN news, "Military offensive vs terror groups starts anew in Lanao del Sur town," 27 January 2017.

8 ABS-CBN news, "Top terrorist leader Isnlon Hapilon injured in military offensive in Lanao", 27 January 2017.

9 "30 Maute group members slain in Lanao clashes," philstar.com, 25 April 2017.

10 Telegram appeal, 8 June 2017.



the Muslim fasting month. But they were fully prepared. At 7 pm on 23 May, President Duterte’s national security adviser said the military was in “full control of the situation.”<sup>11</sup> Two months later, it was still struggling to push the militants out.

### C. *The Tablighi Ijtema*

One source of confusion in the early days of the battle was the presence of hundreds of foreigners who had come to Marawi for a four-day gathering or *ijtema* of the Muslim missionary organisation, Tabligh-i-Jamaat, known in Indonesia and Malaysia as Jamaah Tabligh. Its members, known as *tablighis*, are socially conservative but non-violent and apolitical, who aim to make men and women who are already Muslim more observant. Men generally wear long white robes and skull caps; women sometimes wear the full face veil (*niqab*). They have a practice, known as *khuruj*, of going outside their own community and sometimes their own country, usually for 40 days, to preach and to attend prayer gatherings, and over the years there have been periodic instances of extremists posing as *tablighis* as a convenient form of cover for international travel.

Almost as soon as the battle broke out, there were allegations that the Mautes had used an *ijtema* taking place at the Abubakar Mosque in Marawi to smuggle in some two dozen Malaysians as well as Indonesians and other foreign fighters. Sixteen Indonesian *tablighis* were initially wrongly portrayed as foreign fighters; they were in fact trapped by the fighting and later all safely evacuated.

Two brothers from Tasikmalaya, West Java, Ali Al Amin, 49, and Irsyad Ahmad Darajat, 43, are likely *tablighis* but did not return with the others and may have stayed on to preach. Their passports were found by the Philippine military during operations in Marawi in June 2017. Their whereabouts was unknown as of early July.

There was no evidence as of this writing that any Indonesians used the *tablighi* meeting as a cover to join the Mautes. Information on Malaysian *tablighis* was less clear, with persistent but unconfirmed stories that Dr Mahmud arranged to smuggle some fighters into Marawi through the *ijtema*.

It is possible that some *tablighis* may have stayed on to fight, though this would be inconsistent with their teachings and practice. Some may also have been taken hostage. One pro-ISIS participant in a Telegram group, writing from Marawi on 27 May, said:

Their condition is that some of the Abu Sayaf are regrouping, they have some Tabligh with them, some are Tagalog who have a different language, they are many and they are controlling Marawi City.

The *tablighi* factor has made sightings of “foreigners” problematic in the Marawi context and it cannot be assumed without additional evidence that any outsider found is an extremist combatant.

### D. *Meanwhile, elsewhere in the Philippines...*

Several incidents in the lead-up to Marawi diverted attention from the extremist build-up there. On 15 April, a group of Abu Sayyaf would-be kidnappers were foiled in what would have been a highly lucrative attack on diving resorts in and around Bohol, in the central Visayas, an area filled with foreigners for the Easter holidays. The Bohol attack, which the Philippines military and police intercepted, had little to do with ISIS and everything to do with money. But a group sent to rescue one would-be kidnapper who had managed to evade police capture included

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11 ABS-CBN news, “Timeline: Maute attack in Marawi City,” 25 May 2017.

a man who had worked on earlier terrorist operations.<sup>12</sup>

Then, in late April and early May, two explosions rocked a Muslim neighbourhood in Quiapo, Manila. ISIS claimed credit for both. The second explosion, which killed two, was targeted at a Shi'a office, suggesting a deliberate sectarian attack. Just days earlier, the police had paraded a suspect before television cameras, warning that the Mautes could now reach into Metro Manila. But when the Quiapo bombs took place, police chief Dela Rosa rejected any association with ISIS, saying both were linked to personal disputes.<sup>13</sup> The bombings, together with the disputed attack on the World Resorts Casino in Manila on 3 June, may be a harbinger of things to come once the military is able to secure Marawi.<sup>14</sup>

### III. THE TAKEOVER OF MARAWI

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That the takeover of Marawi was extremely well-planned is now obvious, and it seems clear that Abdullah and Omar Maute were in command, since it was they, not Isnilon Hapilon, who knew the city and had prepared and led the operations in Butig and Piagapo in 2016 and 2017. But if the tactical decisions were theirs, they still seemed to crave recognition from ISIS central.

#### A. *The Importance of Social Media*

As with other ISIS-inspired or directed operations, one of the immediate imperatives of the ISIS coalition was to document and post its triumphal takeover of Marawi on ISIS media. There were some initial setbacks, as one fighter posted in the early hours of 24 May:

The lights are cut off, the telecommunication is down and the radio is been [sic] jammed. My brothers are in the front line. As soon as the communication gets back we will contact AMAQ [the ISIS media].<sup>15</sup>

Their followers on Telegram kept urging them to get the news out. [In the following conversation, the names used on Telegram have been altered but the postings are as written.]

12 In the still not fully explained incident, the car contained Superintendent Maria Christina Nobleza, deputy regional chief of the Davao Crime Laboratory and her alleged lover, a known terrorist named Renierlo Dongon who had been arrested in connection with the 2013 terrorist bombings in Cagayan but released on a technicality. Also in the car was Dongon's mother, whose three daughters are the wives or widows of terrorist leaders. One daughter was married first to Abu Sayyaf leader Khadaffi Janjalani and after his death to the Malaysian fugitive Zulkifli bin Hir alias Marwan; she then became the wife of Isnilon Hapilon. A second daughter is the wife of the founder of the Rajah Sulaiman Movement (RSM), Ahmad Santos; their son, Dongon's nephew, was also in the car. A third is the widow of Jainal Antel Sali alias Abu Solaiman, an Abu Sayyaf leader involved in the 2004 Superferry bombing, the Philippines' worst terrorism attack. He was killed in 2007. RSM was an organisation of largely Christian "reverts" to Islam. See ABS-CBN, "Cop in alleged Sayyaf rescue try 'in love' with terrorist, says 'Bato'", <http://news.abs-cbn.com>, 24 April 2017.

13 "Quiapo blast suspect arrested, PNP says case cleared," [philstar.com](http://philstar.com), 9 May 2017; "Police, AFP adamant: no terror connection in May 6 blasts," [cnnphilippines.com](http://cnnphilippines.com), 8 May 2017.

14 Philippine police maintain that the attacker was a disgruntled employee with no connection to ISIS. ISIS, which claimed credit for the attack in which 38 people died, maintained he was a "soldier of Allah" who converted to Islam shortly before the attack. A Telegram posting on 8 June read:

"Manila Resort Attacker Identity and Origins": His Jessie Carlos Javier, 42 of age years old a converted to Islam 4 months ago that is why our ikwha given his muslim name as Khair for (carlos) . Our connections in Manila 1 week before the attack we already know his plan to destroy the casino because it is HARAM and making his life difficult because of the practices of gambling by the kufar.that is why 10minutes after his go signal to us we already posted a "LONEWOLF attack was conducted by the soldier of the caliphate." First of all , we don't have any electricity in MARAWI we just use solar panels to charge our mobile phones and data to update our post in TG , it is impossible for us to know the attack in anyways if we dont have direct communication to Javier Carlos "Khair" (May Allah accept him) because we already knew he will conduct the operation agaisnt the kufar. Those lies you heard on media and soldiers of the cross , it manipulates your mind fooling you away from the truth, don't believe on it. And my message to the philippine government denying the fact our soldiers conducted the attack, Just wait. By Allah's permission another strike will come and believe me you will never see it coming.

15 Posting to pro-ISIS Telegram channel, 24 May 2017.



Non-Filipino: Have they taken the city Marawi?

Maute fighter: Assalamualaikum [*then in Tagalog:*] My brothers/sisters in the Caliphate here in Lanao del Sur, let's unite to raise the flag of tawheed in the Philippines

Non-Filipino: Translation?

Maute fighter: We did taken the city

Non-Filipino: Is that confirmed via Amaaq?

Maute fighter: No not yet. But inshaallah our brother and sister will declare it. [...]

Non-Filipino: How big is the city? Like big as the city of Kirkuk?

Maute fighter: Not so big. We burned the school created by the americans.

Non-Filipino: Isnt those old photos from yesterday?

Maute fighter: Update #ISRANAO #PHILIPPINES Assalamualaikum our brothers in the front line are busy fighting the taghut and murtadeen in Marawi City. As of 6am Manila time, 11 taghut soldiers are wounded. 3 of them died.

Pakistani participant: #BREAKING: #Islamic State overruns #Marawi city in #Philippines and raises the #Islamic state flag in the central of the city..

Maute fighter: DAWLATUL ISLAM !!!!!

Speaker 3: Khilafah troops patrolling on streets of marawi city..philippines!

Maute fighter: We are now in the heart of the islamic city of Marawi.

Non-Filipino: What happen to the army? They run?

Maute fighter: They run like pigs with their filthy blood mix with the dead bodies of their comrades.

Speaker 3: Alhamdulillah

Non-Filipino: I'm waiting if Amaaq gonna report this

Speaker 3: He will report soon inshallah.

Maute fighter: We occupied the western part of the city. We burned the american established school named Dansalan College midnight around 9pm.

Speaker 4: Alhamdulillah...go on, brothers mujahidin. Allah with you all. Any other asean countries join Philippines Crusaders to fight against IS?

Maute fighter: Yes!china,malaysia,indonesia,japan..

Speaker 4: Brunei?

Non-Filipino: I watch tv, Brunei send as peacekeeper under kuffur PBB [Indonesian abbreviation for the United Nations] banner

Maute fighter: Yes Brunei.

Non-Filipino: Yes I saw last year in the local newspaper Brunei, Sweden, asean countries on mission under PBB in Mindanao...

Speaker 3: Here we go, Hijrah to Philippines

Speaker 4: Door is opening...

Speaker 3: We are coming

Speaker 4: Good idea; all the enemy's look at Iraq and Suria

When Amaq finally got a statement out, it only said:

#urgent fighters of the Islamic state are waging a Massive Attack on the positions of the forces of the Philippines in the town of #Marawi

The Maute supporters were indignant because it only said they "attacked", not that they had conquered it:

Non-Filipino: That just saying they attacking it, not taken over. Thats diff.

Speaker 3: They said wide attack

Speaker 5: They didn't get the result yet

Speaker 3: Akhi, wait Amaq will report again.

Eventually, Amaq revised the message and from then on, a steady stream of reports were posted from and about Marawi. These were generally in the name of East Asia Wilayah. As noted, while ISIS Central refused to use the term, it let the fighters do so as long as any indications of ethnic, regional or national differences were eradicated. One gently chiding message in July to members of a Telegram group read:

We advice our beloved brothers who sacrifice their time and support their State. Don't use "maute" "abu sayyaf" or any group name that pledge allegiance to Amerul Mu'mineen Abi bakr al-baghdadi(hafidhahullah). Instead call them, soldiers of the State (Junudul Khilafah), IS fighter, IS of east asia. [...]

This is the time for wilayat for east asia (indo, malay, phil, aus, viet, sing etc). We will eradicate the names of the tawaghit country names and national, and unite for the sake of Allah(ta 'ala).

Through the Telegram groups, Filipino jihadis were creating an international constituency, with their reports from the field translated instantly into English, Tagalog, Arabic, Turkish, German and Indonesian. The outpouring of information and support showed how much the Marawi jihad had infused individual extremists in the region with a new sense of purpose and how much jihadis around the world were reinforcing them with praise and encouragement.

As the siege wore on, concern about spies (*jasus*) and angry denunciations seem to mark the Telegram exchanges, and there were continual warnings from administrators about revealing sensitive information when it was impossible to know for sure who some of the participants were.

### B. Funding

Funds for the Marawi operation came both directly from ISIS central as well as local sources. According to the Philippines armed forces commander, ISIS channeled \$600,000 through Dr Mahmud, but he provided no details.<sup>16</sup> Some of the Indonesians arrested in the months before Marawi began, however, explained how the Malaysian arranged for funds to be sent from Syria through Indonesia and then on to the Philippines through Western Union.

In January 2017, for example, Dr Mahmud contacted Achmad Supriyanto alias Damar, a JAD member living in Banten who had done a short training course in Basilan in late May 2016 (see below, Section V). He said he needed Damar's help getting funds from Syria to the Philippines and gave him a Telegram account to contact. That person told him to go to a town in East Java to pick up cash and gave him another Telegram name to contact to arrange the pick-up. Damar

<sup>16</sup> Associated Press, "AFP chief: IS funded Marawi siege through Malaysian," [www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com), 25 June 2017.

followed instructions, went to the town in question, met a man he had never seen before and received from him an envelope containing US\$10,000. Damar reported back to Dr. Mahmud, who then asked him to send the money via Western Union to several different trusted recipients in the Philippines.

In February, Dr Mahmud contacted Damar again, this time asking him to go to Bogor, West Java to meet another funding contact. Damar picked up US\$25,000 in cash and followed Dr Mahmud’s instructions for sending it to Filipino recipients via Western Union.

In March, Dr Mahmud informed Damar that another tranche of \$20,000 had arrived in Indonesia and asked him to contact a JAD operative in Syria named Munawar. Munawar via Telegram then instructed Damar to go to Bekasi and pick up the money from a man whose Telegram name he was given. Damar made the pick-up and sent the funds on to contacts in the Philippines.

After Damar was arrested in March 2017, another JAD man, Rohmat Septriyanto from Tegal, took his place as pick-up until Rohmat himself was arrested in late May. The transfers through Indonesia were likely used for the Marawi operations, but raise the question of what other transfers took place through Indonesia or other countries that have not yet been discovered.

There was also local funding. In the early days of operations, soldiers found almost P80 million (US\$1.5 million) in cash and checks in a Marawi house, but it was never clear that this belonged to IS-Ranao; the owner of the house was a well-known money lender who lent funds to local officials whenever there were delays in transfers of allocations from Manila.<sup>17</sup> President Duterte accused the Mautes of raising funds through illegal drug-dealing but without offering evidence.<sup>18</sup>

Tracing the local funds may provide clues to one aspect of the fighting that has been all but ignored by Philippine authorities – the degree of local support beyond traditional clan ties. Muslim youth in Mindanao were attracted no less than their counterparts elsewhere in the world by the appeal of a state that, in the words of one social media posting:

1. Implements Shariah
2. Implements Jizya
3. Implements Hudud
4. Abolishes Borders
5. Not Participant in UN
6. Not Participant in World Financial System
7. Fights Israel and World Superpowers
8. Frees the prisoners
9. Bans Musical Instruments
10. Bans Adultery
11. Bans drugs and alcohol
12. Enforces good business practices
13. Has a gold standard currency
14. Bans Public Shirk [idolatry]
15. Destroys Idols

<sup>17</sup> IPAC communication with Maranao resident, Manila, June 2017.

<sup>18</sup> “Authorities recover P79 million in cash and checks in Marawi home,” [www.cnnphilippines.com](http://www.cnnphilippines.com), 6 June 2017 and “Duterte: Maute Group founded by ex-cops dealing in illegal drugs,” [www.inquirer.net](http://www.inquirer.net), 26 May 2017.

16. Levels Graves
17. Removes Usury Banks
18. Destroys Nationalism and Racism
19. ban smoke confiscated [sic].<sup>19</sup>

Throughout 2016, recruitment in the name of ISIS reportedly took place across university campuses in Mindanao, including through Muslim student associations and their alumni at Catholic institutions as well as at state universities and polytechnic institutes.<sup>20</sup> Anger at the alleged brutality and corruption of Philippine security services was reportedly a common theme. New recruits would take the oath of loyalty and then be asked to open a bank account, the ATM card for which would be given to treasurer of the local cell, who often had several at once in his or her possession. Many of those recruited were reportedly devout youth from well-off families with the ability to contribute substantially to the cause. Pro-ISIS groups also reportedly raised funds through supporters working at Muslim charities and dakwah centres, though not necessarily with knowledge or approval of the organisations involved.

### *B. Relations to ISIS Central*

Throughout the siege one question has been how Isnilon Hapilon and the Mautes positioned themselves in relation to the Southeast Asian ISIS leaders in Syria. One tantalising but inconclusive clue comes from a series of threats issued from Marawi against various perceived enemies in the name of (in ascending order) Majelis Shura East Asia Wilayah, Majelis Shura Katibah Nusantara and Majelis Shura Daulah Islamiyah (Islamic State).

The threats were issued in English by someone with the Telegram name “Al-Nusantara Mujahidin” (Fighters from Southeast Asia) and invoked the names of BahrumSyah, the Indonesian commander of Katibah Nusantara in Syria/Iraq, and “Abu Handzalah”, another name for Dr Mahmud, who was in Marawi when the siege began, though his whereabouts as of mid-July were not clear. “Al-Nusantara Mujahidin” is likely a Filipino. The postings suggest a good but non-native English speaker who cannot speak Indonesian or Malay because s/he requested immediate translation from someone who could.<sup>21</sup>

On 3 July, a Telegram posting that later appeared on various Twitter accounts read:

Abu Handzalah and Ustaz BahrumSyah send their greetings to the Muslims of Wilayah East Asia. They do not want us Muslims to bow to the kafir and thaguts in EAST ASIA. The following territories of Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Korea, Japan, Philippines, China, Burma and Thailand are ruled by KAFIRS. It is our duty today to stand up against them and to bring Sharia in place of the laws that these territories currently have. Their leaders are all anti-Muslim symbols. Where are the Muslim leaders in these territories today? Abu Handzalah and Ustaz BahrumSyah give us their blessings to conduct jihad amaliyah because it is permissible today. Allahu Akbar!!!

In this case the original posting seems to have been in Indonesian and later translated into English.

Developments in Indonesia suggest that Dr Mahmud was acting as the liaison for both

<sup>19</sup> Telegram posting 9 July 2017.

<sup>20</sup> IPAC interview with senior military officer in Cotabato, 19 October 2016.

<sup>21</sup> Telegram postings on the evening of 27 June 2017.

major pro-ISIS networks from Indonesia in a way that may have helped temporarily unite them despite bitter personal rivalries. In the past, the major fault line was between Katibah Nusantara, a Southeast Asian combat unit in Syria led by Bahrumisyah and Katibah Masyaariq, now known as Katibah Indonesia, a rival unit set up by the late Abu Jandal in 2015 (likely killed in late 2016). The two did not work together, either in Syria or in Indonesia.<sup>22</sup> Katibah Nusantara absorbed many of the Indonesians who went to fight in Syria and also was an important backer of the now moribund insurgency in Poso, Central Sulawesi, but otherwise had no affiliated structure that could conduct violent attacks in Indonesia until 2016 when a new group al-Hawariyun, emerged. Katibah Masyaariq was linked to Indonesia’s largest pro-ISIS coalition, Jamaah Ansharud Daulah (JAD), and its ideological leader, Aman Abdurrahman. Dr Mahmud’s “one door” policy of having a single channel for sending fighters to Mindanao may have forced these rivals into cooperation that could presage joint action in the future.

#### IV. BAHRUMSYAH AND KATIBAH NUSANTARA

Of all pro-ISIS groups in Indonesia, the Bahrumisyah network may have the deepest and most longstanding connections to Mindanao, even though its supporters are relatively weak. Bahrumisyah is believed to be the highest-ranking Indonesian – and perhaps Southeast Asian – in ISIS. A young activist from the Jakarta area, he became a follower of radical cleric Aman Abdurrahman in 2009 and was captivated by the Syrian conflict when it erupted two years later, believing it was the fulfilment of Islamic prophecies and the beginning of Islam’s final victory over its enemies. On 16 March 2014, he helped organise the first pro-ISIS rally in Indonesia and a little over two months later, left to join ISIS as a fighter. He became the head of Katibah Nusantara later that year.<sup>23</sup>

Bahrumisyah himself was reported to have died in Syria in March 2017 because the name he uses in Syria, Abu Muhammad, was also used by an Uzbek fighter who undertook a suicide attack. When ISIS media published the news of his “martyrdom”, however, they said the dead hero was “Abu Muhammad al-Indonisy” and inserted a photograph of an Indonesian named Abu Bilal – who like Bahrumisyah was also alive and well. By the time another Indonesian fighter who knew both men issued a “clarification” over Telegram, the international media had moved on to other news and few journalists inside or outside Indonesia picked up on the correction.<sup>24</sup>

Bahrumisyah works closely with Abu Walid, a former member of the Indonesian organisation KOMPAK, whose strong ties to Mindanao were outlined in an earlier IPAC report.<sup>25</sup> On 21 June 2016, Abu Walid appeared in the first Indonesian-language video appeal from ISIS central for would-be fighters to go to the Philippines if they could not get to Syria. He and Bahrumisyah

22 For an analysis of the rivalries between them, see IPAC, “Disunity Among Indonesian ISIS Supporters and the Risk of More Violence,” Report No. 25, 1 February 2015.

23 For more background on Bahrumisyah, see IPAC, “Evolution of ISIS in Indonesia,” Report No.13, 24 September 2014.

24 The clarification in Indonesian reads as follows: “Re the martyrdom of Abu Muhammad Al Indonisy: the news is not true, the individual is still fit as a fiddle. The photo is an old one from some two months ago of Abu Bilal, not Abu Muhammad. It is true that Abu Bilal was reported to have registered for a suicide operation but that he fell sick and did not leave. I have been with him several times because we live near each other. So I know the news is not correct. There are two Abu Muhammads from Indonesia and one is serving as a guard. There was a suicide attack by an Indonesian named Abu Yusuf but that was about two months ago, last December. Abu Bilal, the man in the photo is still alive, in fact after the news was circulated, Abu Bilal took a selfie with Abu Qonita from Indonesia, and Abu Qonita showed it to me when we were praying together.”

25 IPAC, “Pro-ISIS Groups in Mindanao”, op.cit, KOMPAK is an acronym for Komite Aksi Penanggulangan Akibat Krisis (Crisis Action Committee), a Muslim charity set up in August 1998 to assist victims of natural disasters which quickly turned into a logistic support agency for the Muslims fighting in the communal conflicts in Ambon and Poso, Indonesia. It developed its own fighting force in those conflicts and its members were involved in occasional terrorist acts after peace pacts were signed in both areas. KOMPAK’s commander, Abdullah Sunata, is serving a ten-year sentence for his role in the establishment of a terrorist training camp in Aceh in 2010.



almost certainly were already in contact with men on Basilan, including Dr Mahmud and an Indonesian named Ibnu Qoyyim, an old friend of Abu Walid's from KOMPAK days who may have accompanied Isnilon Hapilon to Marawi.<sup>26</sup>

In Indonesia, four networks, several of them interlinked, have been in direct contact with Bahrumsyah, Abu Walid and Katibah Nusantara. Several men from these groups have been arrested trying to get to Marawi and some have reached Mindanao successfully. Others have been arrested for attacks on police since the Marawi siege erupted and could well have been inspired by it. The four groups are:

- the Poso network and Mujahidin Indonesia Timur (MIT);
- the Sumatra network of Abu Husna's Katibul Iman, which the Indonesian police are now calling Jamaah Ansarul Khilafah;
- the prison network around Syaiful Anam alias Brekele; and
- perhaps the most important, the al-Hawariyun network around Abu Nusaibah, a Jakarta-based preacher now in custody who in late 2016 had tried and failed to turn the massive street protests against Jakarta's then governor into a riot that ISIS groups could exploit.

#### A. *Poso, MIT and Makassar*

For five years, from 2011 to 2016, Indonesia faced a small extremist insurgency, based in the hills outside Poso, Central Sulawesi that from 2013 onwards called itself the Mujahidin of Eastern Indonesia (Mujahidin Indonesia Timur, MIT). Its leader, Santoso, became one of the first Indonesians to swear allegiance to al-Baghdadi. At the height of his strength, in late 2014-early 2015, Santoso may have had as many as 50 combatants, including several Uighurs who had joined him through contacts with Indonesian ISIS members in Syria.<sup>27</sup>

Santoso was killed in a joint military-police operation in July 2016 and only a few MIT fighters remain at large. But he ran a series of terrorist training camps for extremist fighters from 2011 until his death, and alumni of those camps remain scattered through Indonesia -- in Sulawesi, West Nusa Tenggara, Kalimantan and parts of Java. It is likely that a few have found their way to Marawi. The potential for acts of violence in Indonesia from this group is high, since there is a strong motive for revenge against the police.

Contacts between MIT leaders and Mindanao were established long before ISIS emerged; they go back to the mid-1990s when a Makassar-based Darul Islam faction had its own training

<sup>26</sup> Ibnu Qoyyim alias Abu Nida is a KOMPAK member from Bekasi, outside Jakarta, who went to Mindanao to train in 2003 and has been there ever since. Upon arrival in the Philippines, he joined the group around Bali bombers Dulmatin and Umar Patek, eventually ending up with the Basilan faction of the Abu Sayyaf Group. Until this year, the last concrete report of his whereabouts was from 2006 when another KOMPAK man, Ahmad Wildan alias Mohammed Baehaqi was arrested in Mindanao. At the time, Ibnu Qoyyim (whose name appears in various reports as Qoyim, Qayim, and Kayim) was in Jolo but he apparently moved back to Basilan with Isnilon Hapilon shortly thereafter, where he married a local woman. When JAD members arrived there to train in June 2016, their instructor in shooting and bomb-making was Ibnu Qoyyim.

Abu Walid and Ibnu Qoyyim would have worked together in the Philippines. Abu Walid, then known as Faiz Syaifudin, arrived around July 2003 and stayed until August 2004 before returning to Indonesia. Ibnu Qoyyim arrived in September 2003, so they would have had almost a year of overlap. Abu Walid then returned to Mindanao in December 2004, only to get arrested and detained for the next nine years until he was tried and acquitted in December 2013 and deported back to Indonesia the following March. There would have been ample opportunity for contact with Ibnu Qoyyim during that time, since Philippine prisons are no better than Indonesian ones in terms of controlling communications.

<sup>27</sup> Santoso was a former member of the local Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) affiliate who in 2010 had been appointed the head of military affairs for an organisation founded by the man who had once led JI, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. Santoso's unit killed two policemen in May 2011 and from then on he was high on the police wanted list, but because he knew the surrounding jungle well, he managed to evade capture. In 2013, he decided to leave JAT and set himself up as the commander of a new group, the Mujahidin of Eastern Indonesia (MIT).



camp on MILF territory.<sup>28</sup> That faction provided instructors for Santoso’s training courses and had fighters in Poso but also began sending members to Syria. The head of the group, Ustadz Basri, was arrested in 2015 and later tried and sentenced to eight years in prison; his son died in Syria fighting for ISIS. DI-Makassar members are potential recruits, both for the Philippines and for violence at home.

MIT also received substantial funds from Bahrumisyah for logistic support and for arms purchases. In 2015, Bahrumisyah and Abu Walid, wanting to purchase guns in Mindanao for Santoso, arranged for funds to be sent to the account of the Filipina wife of an old friend fighting with Ansarul Khilafah Philippines (AKP), part of the pro-ISIS coalition based in Sarangani province. The friend was Saifullah Ibrahim, the former Jemaah Islamiyah member from the Solo area who probably took part in the loyalty oath sworn in SICA prison to al-Baghdadi by Manila’s top terrorist detainees and who was killed in November 2015.<sup>29</sup>

### *B. Brekele and the Prison Network*

Bahrumisyah relied for much of his support to Santoso on a Poso veteran named Syaiful Anam alias Brekele. Brekele had spent years in Poso as a JI operative and trainer.<sup>30</sup> He was involved in numerous acts of violence and was eventually arrested in March 2007 and charged with involvement in the 2005 bombing of a market in the largely Christian town of Tentena, near Poso that killed 22 people. Sentenced to eighteen years, he managed to run a major information hub on Syria from behind bars in a maximum security prison and in January 2016 was involved in a plot with Bahrumisyah to purchase guns from the weapons depot of a different prison with the aim of conducting terrorism in the Jakarta area.

Brekele was never isolated as some of the leading pro-ISIS inmates were, although he is under strict surveillance in prison now. His network among ex-Poso fighters, ex-JI members and ex-prisoners – as well as soon to be released prisoners – is extensive.

### *C. Abu Husna’s network*

Abdurrahman bin Thoyib alias Abu Husna is a former JI member who among other things had inducted Saifullah Ibrahim, the AKP fighter mentioned above, into JI in 1994. Abu Husna swore an oath of allegiance to al-Baghdadi in July 2014, while he was serving a terrorism sentence and sharing a cell with an old friend, Abu Bakar Ba’asyir. Shortly after his release from prison in August 2015, he founded a pro-ISIS organisation called Katibul Iman but more recently police have referred to it as Jamaah Ansharul Khilafah (JAK).<sup>31</sup> The group’s main recruiter, Abu Jundi, was arrested in December 2015 after he had made several trips to Sumatra to organise pro-ISIS groups. He was also accused of collecting funds to send people to Syria.

An Indonesian from Aceh named Rino Kaswara Kasmar, 34, arrested in Slim River, Perak, Malaysia in June 2017 for promoting membership in ISIS, was reportedly affiliated with Abu Husna.<sup>32</sup>

28 In 2011, Abu Umar, a senior DI leader from Java with close ties to the Makassar group, was arrested for trying to smuggle in weapons from Mindanao; his stepson trained with Abu Sayyaf on Jolo.

29 For more on Saifullah Ibrahim, see IPAC, “Pro-ISIS Groups in Mindanao and their Indonesian and Malaysian Links”, op. cit.

30 He is one of the few in Bahrumisyah’s network who has the murder of a Westerner on his hands, as he was involved in the killing of an Italian tourist in Poso in August 2002.

31 The nomenclature becomes extremely confusing because when the group now calling itself JAD was formed in Malang in November 2015, it called itself Jamaah Ansharul Khilafah (JAK). In fact both terms – Jamaah Ansharud Daulah and Jamaah Ansharul Khilafah -- are generic, referring to anyone who has sworn allegiance to al-Baghdadi as the head of Islamic State. For more on Abu Husna and Katibul Iman, see IPAC, “Disunity Among Indonesian ISIS Supporters,” op. cit.

32 “Indonesian tailor faces three charges over terrorism activities”, [www.thestar.com.my](http://www.thestar.com.my), 7 July 2017.

#### *D. Yoki Pratama and the Abu Nusaibah network*

The most important component of Bahrumisyah's network in terms of recruiting fighters for the Philippines may be one of the least known. Called al-Hawariyun (The Helpers), it was led until his arrest by a Jakarta-based preacher named Solihun (sometimes written Saulihun), better known as Abu Nusaibah, who was a regular preacher at the al-Fataa Mosque in Menteng, Jakarta.

Abu Nusaibah was arrested on 18 November 2016 after eight of his followers were accused of trying to cause a riot during the massive street protest in Jakarta on 4 November to demand the arrest of the then-governor, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, known familiarly as Ahok. They reportedly hoped to then exploit the ensuing chaos to attack police, seize their guns and plant the ISIS flag on the presidential palace.<sup>33</sup>

The group had its origins in study circles led by a radical cleric named Ustadz Nanang Ainur Rafiq, who left for Syria to join ISIS in 2015. After his departure, Abu Nusaibah and another teacher named Wandu alias Abu Usamah, took charge and the study circles became known collectively as Martyrs' Group (Kafilah Syuhada). Ustadz Nanang was killed in a battle against Kurdish fighters in Manbij, Syria in June 2016. Sometime thereafter, in a 2016 meeting in Jakarta, Kafilah Syuhada was restructured and renamed Kafilah al-Hawariyun. The meeting was attended by Abu Husna, who agreed to act as an adviser. Brekele also agreed to become an adviser and to help the group open a communication channel to Abu Walid.

The group discussed but rejected the idea of joining JAD on the grounds that it had a different interpretation of the struggle. It is unclear what the difference was.

The arrest of Abu Nusaibah and Abu Usamah on 18 November 2016 left al-Hawariyun in disarray. Two members of its Tangerang cell, Yoki Pratama and Anggara Suprayogi, were determined to continue to fight. Both had been students of Ustadz Nanang and Yoki had been part of the military team of al-Hawariyun who had taken part in several outdoor training sessions in and around West Java. Anggara was married to a woman who had been part of a cell of radicalised Indonesian domestic workers in Hong Kong. In early 2017 both men planned to go to Syria. They made contact in Raqqa with an Indonesian named Pak Ardun alias Abu Reza, a member of Khatibah Nusantara, who urged them to go to Mindanao instead. He told them he was willing to help finance their travel and gave them a Telegram contact which proved to be that of Dr Mahmud. Dr Mahmud welcomed their plan and put them in touch through Telegram with an Indonesian, Rochmat Sepriyanto, who was a member of JAD in Tegal, Central Java. The connection between one Indonesian group (al-Hawariyun) and another (JAD) was thus made through contact first with Khatibah Nusantara in Raqqa and then with Dr Mahmud in Mindanao.

Rochmat had already sent several JAD members to Mindanao in February [see Appendix I]. He could not refuse to assist Yoki and Anggara, even though they were from a rival organisation, because his instructions came from Dr Mahmud, higher up in the ISIS hierarchy. He booked Yoki on a flight to Manila with an onward connection to Cagayan that left on 3 March, while Anggara left with another member of al-Hawariyun, Yayat Hidayat Tarli on 3 April, following the same route.

Yoki and Anggara underwent basic training before being incorporated into the Maute fighters. Sometime in May, before the assault on Marawi began, Dr Mahmud asked them to recruit more Indonesians. He also contacted a JAD member in Syria named Munawar and asked him to recruit more as well. At the time, Munawar was arranging the departure of a few JAD members from Bima to Syria; he asked them to prepare to go to Mindanao instead. The Bima men left for

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<sup>33</sup> "Kelompok Abu Nusaibah Berencana Kibarkan Bendera ISIS di Istana", *beritasatu.com*, 30 November 2016.

Manila in mid-May but were turned back by airport immigration and deported.

Meanwhile Yoki and Anggara were trying to contact their friends from the Tangerang study circle. They managed to reach three – Agis, Nana and Gufron – and told them to come quickly because there was going to be a big “party” at the end of May.<sup>34</sup> They advised the three to contact Pak Ardun in Syria for financial help. Ardun agreed to send funds and as soon as their passports were ready, he transferred Rp.30 million. The Marawi attack began before they could leave, however, and Rochmat, the travel fixer, was arrested on 6 June. Anggara had given them a contact for Dr Mahmud, however, and he told them to come ahead as planned but to get a ticket to Zamboanga rather than Cagayan because the latter was flooded with troops. They left on 29 June but like their compatriots, they were stopped at Manila airport and deported.

Yoki and Anggara had a brief moment of fame as they appeared with two other Indonesians on a wanted poster issued by the Philippines police around 31 May. Yoki died in Marawi on or around 20 June 2017; news of his “martyrdom” was circulated over Telegram.<sup>35</sup>

### *E. Conclusion*

The lines of authority revealed by Yoki and Anggara’s contacts underscore that Khatibah Nusantara is senior to Dr Mahmud because he receives instructions from its members. For the men who consider themselves the “East Asia Wilayah”, Bahrumisyah is considered either part of ISIS central or at the very least, the channel to it. Dr Mahmud appears to be senior to anyone operating in Indonesia, meaning whatever the inter-group frictions, all recognise a chain of command within the ISIS hierarchy that they are obliged to obey by virtue of their oath. This suggests that after Marawi is finally cleared, Dr Mahmud, if he survives, could play a critical role both in terms of regrouping in the Philippines as well as coordinating return and placement of Southeast Asian fighters from the Middle East and setting a regional strategy for further attacks.

Should he be killed -- and he certainly has been targeted and announced as dead several times only to later reappear – the coordinating role might conceivably be assumed by Abu Walid.

## **V. SURYADI MAS’OED AND THE JAD NETWORK**

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Back in Indonesia, the JAD organisation has been badly hit by arrests and appears to be operating as a network of autonomous cells rather than as a single organisation but it still has more members than any other violent extremist organisation in the country. Returning fighters from Marawi could give it a deadly dose of leadership, skills and unity; they could also help break down some of the barriers between JAD and some of the pro-ISIS groups in Bahrumisyah’s network.

Initially called Jamaah Ansharul Khilafah (JAK), the coalition was founded in November 2015 at a meeting in Batu, Malang and came to international attention as the group behind the January 2016 bombings in Jakarta. It began calling itself JAD later that year. Aman Abdurrahman, the group’s ideological leader, was already behind bars when the group was created. The operational head was Zainal Anshori from Lamongan, East Java, a former leader of the Lamong branch of the Islamic Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam, FPI), a thuggish anti-vice organisation. From the beginning, another critical operative, on death row for his role in the 2004 Australian Embassy bombing, was Iwan Dharmawan alias Rois. If JAD and Bahrumisyah’s network had ideological differences, they were exacerbated by the personal animosity between Rois and

<sup>34</sup> This Gufron is not the same as the JAD member, Muhammad Gufron, who left for Mindanao on 21 February 2017 with Mochammad Jaelani Firdaus, also of JAD.

<sup>35</sup> The other two were Yayat Hidayat Tarli of al-Hawariyun and Al-Ikhwan Yushel of JAD.

Brekele, the friend of Abu Walid, who is also imprisoned.

Rois became the key to JAD's links to Mindanao. While many senior JAD members had trained in the Philippines in the late 1990s or early 2000s, their ties were mostly to the MILF, which has rejected ISIS, or to Jolo-based Abu Sayyaf factions, which have concentrated more on kidnapping. The ties to Mindanao were only revived in 2015 and led to JAD sending men to train with Isnilon Hapilon on Basilan.

#### A. *Rois Works from Death Row*

Rois, leader of the Darul Islam faction known as Ring Banten, a JAD component group, was sentenced to death in 2005 and has been in an isolation cell since the January 2016 attacks, in which he played an instrumental role from behind bars. He was an early supporter of ISIS and through a steady stream of visitors, became an important hub for information on Syria as Indonesians began leaving to join in 2013.<sup>36</sup>

Rois wanted to build up the armed capacity of ISIS in Indonesia. In early 2015, he asked an old friend, Suryadi Mas'oeed who had just been released from prison, to visit him in Nusakambangan. When they met, Rois told Suryadi he needed someone to buy arms in Mindanao and get them into Indonesia. Suryadi had all the qualifications for the job. A Makassar native, he had made six trips to Mindanao between 1997 and 1999 to bring jihadists to the MILF's Camp Abu Bakar in Central Mindanao for training. In March 2000 he returned to try and rescue two stranded members of Ring Banten during then President Estrada's "all-out war" on the MILF. He ended up staying five months and but returned with the stranded men and was close to Rois thereafter.<sup>37</sup>

Suryadi agreed to the plan under one condition: that Rois would help his family get to Syria, so he could do the job without distractions. Rois agreed and summoned his younger brother, Adi Jihadi, to visit him in prison. All the communications between Rois and Adi were through Telegram.

#### B. *Adi Jihadi and Suryadi*

When Adi came to see him in early 2015, Rois instructed him to open an account at Bank Mandiri that could be accessed by ATM and online banking.<sup>38</sup> Adi opened the account, and shortly thereafter received several electronic deposits from senders he did not know. He gave Rois the user name and password so that his brother could control the account from prison.

Around August 2015, Rois summoned him again and gave him a new assignment. He was to work with a man named Rijal from Cirebon to help arrange travel to Syria for those who wanted to join ISIS – including Suryadi's two wives and two children. Working through a local travel agency, Adi and Rijal took the names of individuals who had been vetted by Rois and arranged ticket, visa, accommodation in Jakarta and travelling expenses for a total fee of Rp.25 million per person. Between August and November 2015, Adi and Rijal arranged the travel of some 60

36 One of the first Indonesians to die for ISIS was one of Rois's protégés from Ring Banten who left for Syria with Rois's assistance and was killed in Ramadi, Iraq in May 2014.

37 For more details see International Crisis Group, "Jemaah Islamiyah in South East Asia: Damaged but still Dangerous," Asia Report No.63, 26 August 2003, pp.19-20. Suryadi and Rois also fought together in Poso. He was first arrested 12 November 2002 for armed robbery, before the Makassar bombing took place but was convicted of taking part in some planning meetings and storing firearms for the bombings. He was released on 8 April 2009, but was rearrested 12 May 2010 in connection with a terrorist training camp in Aceh. He was falsely reported on social media to have died 2 Aug 2016 in Syria, perhaps part of a deliberate disinformation campaign to cover his activities.

38 Adi reportedly tried to use Rp1 million (about US\$75) to open the account at his local branch but was told it was insufficient for Internet banking. He informed Rois and shortly thereafter received a transfer of Rp.100 million; he did not know who the sender was. Additional deposits followed until the balance was Rp 150 million.



people.<sup>39</sup>

In September 2015, shortly after Adi Jihadi had seen off Suryadi's family, Rois told him to expect a drop-off of money at a shopping mall in Serang, Banten at a specified time and date. A man with a Javanese accent handed over a sack of \$100 bills totalling \$30,000. Adi changed the entire amount into Rp.200 million, then sent tranches of Rp.50 million to the Philippines via Western Union, using four different ID cards and sending the money to four different accounts in the Philippines. This was to be used for the purchase of arms with any extra left over to help the local mujahidin.

Suryadi's plans to leave for Mindanao were set back temporarily when his second wife, Neneng, was caught and deported by Turkish authorities. It was only in November or December – date not clear – that he left for General Santos City (more commonly known as GenSan) on the southern tip of Mindanao. When he arrived he contacted an old MILF friend at Camp Khalid, Sarangani province, and said he wanted to purchase guns.

The friend helped him arrange the purchase of eighteen firearms, mostly automatic rifles but also five pistols, which Suryadi planned to bring into Indonesia through the Sangihe-Talaud islands off North Sulawesi. Rather than send all the guns at once, Suryadi decided to do a trial run with a package of the five pistols to see if he could get them through. In December 2015, a fisherman he had hired in GenSan brought the package by boat to the islands where JAD's operational head, Zainal Anshori, and a friend were on hand to pick it up.

Suryadi was back in Indonesia when the January 2016 attacks on Jl Thamrin, Jakarta took place and was taken by surprise; no one had informed him of the plans. He was even more startled to learn that two of the guns used were his. He was worried that his involvement in their purchase would become known, so he decided to lay low exploring alternative routes for bringing in the rifles.

It occurred to Suryadi that even if they succeeded in bringing in the rifles, no one knew how to use them. The Jakarta perpetrators could have done far more damage had they been more skilled. Very few in JAD had the firearms training that an earlier generation of terrorists had received in Afghanistan, Mindanao, Ambon or Poso, and if they were old enough to have taken part in those conflicts, their skills were probably rusty. Suryadi suggested and Rois agreed to send a few JAD people to Mindanao for training.

In March 2016, Suryadi and his wife Neneng left for Mindanao. By this time, Suryadi realised that he needed to be in contact with Isnilon Hapilon if he wanted military training for pro-ISIS recruits. His old contacts in the MILF may have been happy to help sell guns but they were not interested in training terrorists and were strongly opposed to ISIS. The problem was that Suryadi had no link to Hapilon.

It turned out, however, that Neneng was part of a Telegram group with a woman on Basilan. This was Myrna alias Khawla, the widow of Abu Anas al Muhajir, the senior Malaysian ISIS leader who had been killed in December 2015. Sometime in April 2016, Myrna met Suryadi and Neneng in Zamboanga and accompanied them to Basilan where they met Hapilon; Dr Mahmud, who had replaced Abu Anas as Isnilon's international liaison; and Muhammad Khattab, a Moroccan instructor. Suryadi told them of his plans and asked Isnilon's help in getting the eighteen guns from GenSan to East Kalimantan as well as assistance in training. Isnilon and his friends agreed to the plan and Suryadi handed over \$25,000 to help in the transfer of the

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<sup>39</sup> These included the family of Bakri Pangara from Makassar (six people) followed by his second and third wives and a few relatives (nine people); the family of Kuswandono, a donor to ISIS, from Yogyakarta (five people); the family of Dr Yusuf Riyanto, head of a girl's pesantren, Maratus Sholihah, in Jakarta that had once been affiliated to JI (20 people); the family of Amar from Bekasi (seven people); Suryadi Masoed's wives and children (four people) and the family of Fachrul Rozi from Pamulang (eight people).

arms, the training and the purchase of twelve more rifles.

While Suryadi and his wife were still in Basilan, however, the Philippines army attacked. In the battle that followed, Ubaida Hapilon -- Isnilon's son -- and Muhammad Khattab were both killed. Suryadi and Neneng got out to Zamboanga and then fled to GenSan to hide while also checking on the guns Suryadi had left in Camp Khalid. He was assured the guns were still safe. In May 2016, he returned to Indonesia and met Adi Jihadi in Serang, Banten to seek his help in recruiting men for training in Mindanao.

### *C. Indonesians Train on Basilan*

Adi Jihadi and a friend, Achmad Supriyanto -- later to be involved in Dr Mahmud's money transfers -- recruited friends from their respective religious study groups, assuring them that all expenses involved in the training would be fully covered. They divided into two groups. Adi, a friend from Bandung and two others flew from Jakarta to Kuala Lumpur with an onward flight to Kota Kinabalu in Sabah. They travelled overland to another small town in Sabah where they met Suryadi, Neneng and four others. They all left for Sandakan the next morning for the ferry to Zamboanga. Suryadi's group left first but the four men with him were all rejected by Philippine immigration and forced to return to Sandakan, while Suryadi and Neneng stayed in Zamboanga. The rejected men, together with Adi's group decided to return to Kota Kinabalu and get a Cebu Pacific flight into Manila. The same four were turned away there, however. Adi's group got in without incident and picked up a flight to Zamboanga where Suryadi met them. The next day, accompanied by a liaison from Isnilon Hapilon, they travelled to Basilan.

Suryadi left the group there for training while he went on to GenSan with the idea of moving the guns to Zamboanga. Adi and his friends began an eight-day training program under the direction of Ibnu Qoyyim, the Indonesian. They learned the basics of firing pistols and M-16 rifles as well as assembling and disassembling them. They also got basic bomb-making instruction.

On the sixth day of the training, the camp, the Philippines military attacked the camp with rockets. Adi and the others were directed first to bunkers that had been dug in the ground, then were ordered to flee to the jungle to a site that was an arduous two-hour hike away. They came down the next day and then returned to Zamboanga, flying out to Manila and from there to Jakarta. They reached Jakarta just as Ramadan was beginning.

Suryadi stayed in Mindanao to arrange for his gun purchases to be transferred to Zamboanga with Isnilon Hapilon's help. They could not guarantee any further dispatch, however; it was up to Suryadi to get them from Zamboanga to Sabah to Indonesia. Suryadi returned to Indonesia to try and work out a Kalimantan route.

### *D. Plans Disrupted*

In September 2016, Suryadi was contacted by Abu Asybal, a man from Palu, Central Sulawesi who ran the Khatibah Masyaariq safehouse in Turkey for ISIS-bound Indonesians. He had been involved in the 2016 Jakarta bombings but managed to escape the police dragnet. From Turkey, he told Suryadi that a group of Uighurs was planning an escape from a detention center in northeast Thailand. He wanted Suryadi to be on hand to help one particular Uighur in the group get to Malaysia. From Malaysia they would try and get him back to Turkey; if not they would try to get him into Indonesia. Abu Asybal told Suryadi to contact Dr Mahmud in Basilan for the name of someone in Thailand who could help, and Dr Mahmud immediately provided a contact. Suryadi and Neneng then left for Thailand, where the escape took place as planned. Most of the group were quickly recaptured. The one Uighur that Abu Asybal wanted rescued managed to hold out a little longer, and when he was finally tracked down and arrested by police,



he had the mobile telephone number of Suryadi in his pocket.

Suryadi returned to Indonesia and went back to working on how to get the guns from Mindanao to Indonesia. He asked Joko Sugito, head of JAD for East Kalimantan, to assign someone to help. Suryadi also brought in Nanang Kosim on the recommendation of Abu Asybal. Nanang was an Indonesian army deserter from Gorontalo, in northern Sulawesi.<sup>40</sup> In October 2016, he used his military skills to conduct a training session for some 20 pro-ISIS members, including Adi Jihadi, in Banten. He also helped Suryadi set up a post for receiving the gun shipment from Zamboanga in Tarakan, an East Kalimantan town just south of the Malaysian border.

All plans were disrupted, however, by a bomb that exploded at a church in Samarinda, East Kalimantan in November 2016. A young JAD member had taken a homemade bomb from a small JAD stockpile without consulting others in the cell; his action led to the arrest of local JAD leaders, including Joko Sugito. Suryadi decided it was time to join ISIS in Syria. In November 2016, he and Neneng left for Turkey where they met Abu Asybal at the Khatibah Masyaariq (now Khatibah Indonesia) safehouse.

In late January 2017, while waiting for an opportunity to cross into Syria, Suryadi and Neneng were caught by Turkish authorities and deported. Their return was not immediately detected, but Suryadi was arrested on 23 March 2017, in a series of operations that also netted Adi Jihadi and several others who had trained in the Philippines. Nanang Kosim, the army deserter, was killed the same day when police tried to stop his car in Banten. It later emerged that Nanang had been planning to open a training camp in Halmahera, from which the “graduates” would leave to help the pro-ISIS jihad in Mindanao. Abu Asybal, the safehouse manager, was deported in February 2017. He reportedly wanted to go to Mindanao but was arrested before he could do so.

### *E. Conclusions from the Suryadi Story*

The Suryadi story illustrates how well-connected the ISIS network has become, with an Indonesian connecting as easily with contacts in Turkey, the Philippines and Thailand as with his own friends in prison. The Uighur episode again highlights the critical role of Dr Mahmud, who emerges as the liaison with Syria and Turkey even on a matter which has nothing to do with the Philippines.

The story also suggests that methods of financial transfers are crude. With all ISIS’s sophisticated use of social media, one would think that they would do better than Western Union for bank transfers or think more about security. Transfers between Indonesia and Mindanao in relatively small amounts may have attracted little attention, especially because there are strong trading links, especially in cloth but also in agricultural products, between Jakarta, Sulawesi, Kalimantan and Mindanao.

Suryadi’s experience suggests that fears that Marawi and its aftermath could lead to a flood of arms into Indonesia may be misplaced. It is true that JAD had little difficulty purchasing arms, but the obstacles of getting them into Indonesia safely proved to be huge.

One final point is worth highlighting from both Suryadi’s story and that of the Marawi-bound Indonesians linked to al-Hawariyun: the good performance of Philippine immigration personnel in repeatedly picking out suspicious travellers and turning them back. It is true that several slipped through, but as many aspects of the Philippine government’s handling of Marawi have come in for criticism, it is good to have one that can be singled out for praise.

<sup>40</sup> Nanang had been one of the participants in the November 2015 meeting in Batu, Malang, East Java that set up the pro-ISIS coalition that eventually came to be known as JAD. He had helped Abu Asybal hide after the Thamrin bombings.

## VI. THE POLICE ATTACKS AND ARRESTS IN INDONESIA

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One possible impact of Marawi is an increased risk of violence in other countries in the region as local groups are inspired or shamed into action by the Philippine fighters. In Indonesia, some of the attacks against the police in May and June were linked to the Philippines.

The day after the Marawi battle began, two police and a terrorist were killed when bombs brought by members of JAD Bandung to the Kampung Melayu bus terminal exploded. The men were students of a cleric named Ustadz Muhammad Iqbal alias Kiki, who had long been involved in extremist activities. (Kiki had only been released from prison in late 2015.<sup>41</sup>) On 27 May, police arrested a senior former Darul Islam figure from Cisarua, Bandung named Jajang Iqin Sodikin alias Abu Raisya in connection with the bombing. Three weeks later, from his cell at a police holding facility, he urged Indonesians over Telegram to take a lesson from Marawi and join forces together:

Learn from the conquest of Marawi, where patience and fighting in a single front have produced empowerment. (*Belajar lah Dr futuhat marawi...Dmn kesabaran dan dalam satu barisan akan menghasilkan tamkin...*)<sup>42</sup>

Arrests in connection with the bombing led police to other plotters, including Rochmat Septriyanto, the JAD fixer who had helped arrange travel for Indonesians to Mindanao.

On 17 and 18 June, four men from Bima, Sumbawa were arrested on suspicion of planning to attack a local police station.<sup>43</sup> Two were veterans of the fighting in Poso and thus more linked to the Bahrumsyah network than to JAD; there were no known links to Mindanao.

On 25 June, two men from a pro-ISIS cell unaffiliated to any known organisation stabbed two officers outside regional police headquarters in Medan, North Sumatra, killing one and wounding another. One of the attackers, Syawaludin Pakpahan, spent six months in Syria in 2013, not with ISIS but reportedly with the Free Syrian Army. He and his friends had reportedly tried to affiliate with JAD but for whatever reason, JAD rejected them.<sup>44</sup>

On 30 June, two police were stabbed while praying at a mosque next to police headquarters in south Jakarta. The suspect, who was shot and killed by police, was a 28-year-old perfume seller from West Sumatra who appears to have self-radicalised. He had no links to JAD.

On 4 July, a youth named Ghilman Omar Harridhi hung an ISIS flag outside a subdistrict police station in Kebayoran Lama, Jakarta. He was also unaffiliated to any organisation.

On 8 July, a pressure cooker bomb exploded prematurely at a dormitory in Bandung. The bomb-maker, who was immediately arrested together with three others, was reportedly obsessed with going to Marawi to fight and intended to leave after he detonated the bomb.<sup>45</sup>

These attacks suggest that for the moment, whether the attackers are JAD, Poso-linked or lone wolves, the Indonesian police are still the major target. Once the battle for Marawi is over, it is possible that Southeast Asian ISIS leaders might encourage Indonesians to go after other

targets, including foreigners or foreign institutions – especially if one of them comes back to lead the operations.

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41 International Crisis Group, "Indonesian Jihadism: Small Groups, Big Plans," Asia Report No.204, 19 April 2011.

42 Posting on Telegram, 18 June 2017.

43 The four were Kurniawan, 27, and Nasrul Hidayat bin Ahmad, 19, arrested on 17 June 2017 in Dore village, Palibelo, Bima and Rasyid Ardiansyah alias Olga and Raras bin Yasin, arrested on 18 June.

44 The other attacker, Ardial Ramadhana alias Ardi, 31 was shot and killed by police. Others arrested in the case were Hendri Pratama alias Boboy, 17; Firmansyah Putrayudi, 32, Edi Sofyan and Imam.

45 "Suspect 'obsessed' with fighting in Marawi," *Jakarta Post*, 10 July 2017.

## VII. THE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST AMAN ABDURRAHMAN

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Even as Marawi was inspiring Indonesian extremists to unite, JAD was being torn apart by an ideological dispute that reflected a wider rift within the ISIS leadership.

On 12 June 2017 (17 Ramadan) ISIS supporters in the region were startled by a statement from Syria entitled “Except for those who repent, do good works and give an explanation”. The statement was directed against imprisoned JAD leader Aman Abdurrahman. It demanded that he atone for his “deviant” views, in which he was unwilling to brand all civil servants and voters in elections as non-believers (*kafir*).

The demand for atonement goes back to the extremist *takfiri* views Aman had held from about 2002 to 2009 when he condemned without exception all civil servants and anyone who took part in democracy elections on the grounds that they were supporting a man-made rather than a God-given system. But he moderated these views after reading and translating a treatise by Jordanian scholar Abu Muhammad Al Maqdisi on the 33 circumstances under which Muslims can be branded as *kafir*.<sup>46</sup>

After ISIS was formed and Aman took the oath of loyalty to Al-Baghdadi, his views were never questioned, especially because ISIS leaders themselves differed over when a Muslim can be declared a *kafir*. One faction agreed with Aman; this was led by Turki al-Binali, a young Bahraini cleric who became the grand mufti of ISIS and the chair of its fatwa committee.

The more extreme group was led by Syaikh Ahmad Al Hazimi, a Saudi, and the late Ahmad Abousamra, better known as Abu Maysarah As-Shami, a Syrian-American. These two sides clashed, with several followers of Al Hazimi ending up in ISIS prisons or executed because they declared senior figures such as Al-Binali himself to be *kafir*.<sup>47</sup> In the beginning, ISIS was closer to the views of Al-Binali in part because of the latter’s close relationship to al-Baghdadi.

The split between the top ulama affected Indonesians in Syria. This was especially the case within Khatibah Masyaariq, now better known as Khatibah Indonesia. Most of its members were Aman’s students and they fell out along ideological lines, with several, like Siswanto from Lamongan, following al-Binali because his views were closer to Aman’s. Among those who followed the al-Hazimi line were Syamsul Hadi, who had been one of Aman’s trusted students (in Syria since early 2016), as well as Ushdul Waqa and Abu Maysaroh Al Qathtani, an Indonesian of Arab descent who has been active on Telegram.

The extremists gained ground, especially after al-Binali himself was killed in a coalition attack in Syria on 31 May 2017. There were immediate repercussions for his followers. Siswanto was removed from the shura council – the top decision-making body – of Khatibah Indonesia. Other members demanded that he renounce his views which were considered *murji’ah*, a term of opprobrium used by jihadists against apolitical Salafis and those who do nothing when Muslims

are attacked. They also wrote a letter demanding that Aman Abdurrahman repent and said that they now represented the official views of the Daulah.

Aman responded from his isolation cell on Nusakambangan on 14 June:

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46 The transliteration of the Arabic title of this treatise is *Ar-Risalah Ats-Tsalatsiniyah fi At-Tahdzir min Al- Ghuluw fi At-Takfir*. Following al-Maqdisi, he said not all civil servants should be condemned -- for example those who still have only “honorary” status because they never took the oath of loyalty to the Indonesian republic. At the same time not everyone who casts a vote should be condemned because not all understand that democracy is the biggest form of idolatry. His return to a less extreme stance caused a falling out with another cleric, the late Halawi Makmun who held to the more extreme interpretation that individuals can be branded *kafir* by virtue of their membership in a group, regardless of their own characteristics. These differences mirror the debate between *takfir am* and *takfir mu’ayyan* among Indonesian terrorism prisoners described in IPAC, “Support for ‘Islamic State’ in Indonesian Prisons”, Report No.15, 19 January 2015.

47 See Tore Hamming, “The Extremist Wing of the Islamic State,” [www.jihadica.com](http://www.jihadica.com), 9 June 2016.

Please disregard everything that I have ever conveyed, orally or in writing, that is not in accordance with the official *manhaj* of the daulah, and let us all reconcile the approach of the daulah relating to both the status of voters and elections as well as the status of civil servants as kafir. Any recordings or writings of mine on this topic should be destroyed.<sup>48</sup>

But Aman's response did not satisfy his critics. They humiliated him further by issuing a new demand on 3 July 2017 that he explain his position on the *kafir* nature of civil servants and voters so that no one would misinterpret them again. They said that without a direct explanation by Aman, his students could be trapped into making interpretations based on their own instincts. They said they were bringing Siswanto before ISIS's Syariah Court to be tried because he refused to accept their views.<sup>49</sup>

Aman complied and on 14 July issued a new message, again circulated on Telegram and other social media, reinforcing his commitment to the extremist line and again telling his followers to destroy any writings or online postings that differed from it as well as to remove all material by al-Maqdisi and like-minded scholars from his website, millahibrahim.net. He noted that since he had been isolated, he had not had access to a single statement from ISIS or his fellow supporters – which should be a source of satisfaction to the prison authorities. Clearly this issue was considered so critical that it must have been conveyed to him by a family member.

The accusations and response also divided ISIS followers in Indonesia. Some agreed with the initial accusations and blamed Aman, to the point of declaring his supporters *kafir*. Others were more willing stay neutral, saying they did not have enough knowledge to judge. Some felt that if this was indeed the approach of the Daulah, they would no longer use Aman as a reference. Others were angry at Aman's critics, regarding the attack as unfair, given Aman's isolation. One Indonesian expressed frustration that the would-be fighters were wasting their time with trading insults instead of mounting operations against the enemy:

The daulah is divided, debates here and there as if everyone wants to be a mufti or a judge, then after they all get tired debating, they go to sleep and have wet dreams. No attacks! Are you partisans of the Daulah or haters of the Daulah? (*Ini anshar Daulah atau asyrah Daulah?*) I have no idea if this kind of [infighting] happens among brothers who've emigrated from other countries like Britain, Russia, France and so on or only happens to Indonesians!<sup>50</sup>

Aman's last statement may temporarily ease the infighting. If it does not, however, it could lead to one faction deciding to mount a terrorist operation simply to prove a point to the other side.

## VIII. WHERE IS BAHRUN NAIM?

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One Indonesian voice that has been notably silent on Marawi is Bahrn Naim, the Indonesian ISIS activist based in Raqqa, Syria who repeatedly tried to incite attacks in Indonesia via social media. Indeed, Naim's use of Telegram was one reason given by the government for blocking the messaging application in mid-July 2017.<sup>51</sup> He also posted bomb-making instructions on his blog and over multiple social media accounts.

48 "Bayan Ust Abu Sulaiman Yang Ruju' Kepada Manhaj Daulah Islamiyah", widely circulated over Telegram channels .

49 "Catatan Tambahan Atas Bayan 'Kecuali orang-orang yang bertaubat, melakukan perbaikan dan memberikan penjelasan' 3 Juli 2013", widely circulated over Telegram Channels.

50 Telegram posting, 9 July 2017.

51 "Bahrn Naim Gunakan Telegram untuk Lakukan Teror di Indonesia," arrahmahnews.com, 15 July 2017.

But there has been no news of Naim since December 2016, when police foiled a plot he had concocted to have a female suicide bomber blow herself up at the presidential palace in Jakarta. While police claimed that the cell phone of Ahmad Sukri, one of the bombers killed in the Kampung Melayu bus terminal attack in Jakarta on 24 May 2017, showed contact with Naim, it may well have an old contact or communication with one of his Telegram groups programmed to give automatic replies.<sup>52</sup>

It is odd that there would be no exhortation from him to join the fighting in the Philippines and no quasi-intellectual analysis, as there was after the Dhaka bakery attack in July 2016, about what lessons Indonesians can learn from Marawi. It may mean that he is incapacitated; discredited for some reason; or in transit to another location.

## **XI. CONCLUSIONS: THE IMPACT OF MARAWI**

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The initial photographs from Marawi released over social media as the ISIS assault began – smiling fighters hold guns aloft on trucks – seemed to have the same impact as the iconic ISIS victory photos from Mosul in 2014. They generated a shared sense of triumph and strengthened the desire of ISIS supporters in the region to join the battle. Abu Asybal’s case suggests that Southeast Asians ISIS supporters in Turkey, Syria and Iraq may also see the Philippines as an attractive alternative as ISIS is pushed back in the Middle East.

If the estimates of 20 Indonesians among the foreign fighters prove accurate, then Indonesian officials will have to worry about several possibilities: the return of a few men with the potential to organise, unite and lead some of the existing pro-ISIS cells; a new interest in joint operations in Indonesia with new friends from the Philippines and Malaysia; the possible involvement of Indonesians in violent acts in the Philippines or Malaysia; and the establishment of a new regional training site in Mindanao that could attract recruits from Indonesia and Malaysia and even further afield.

As noted at the outset, the cross-regional aspects of the Marawi siege underscore the need for Southeast Asia countries to develop more systematic expertise on each other’s extremist networks, so that Philippine police and military know the difference between JAD and JI, Indonesians know the difference between the Abu Syyaf kidnappers and the Abu Syyaf pro-ISIS factions and Malaysians know the differences among the various Darul Islam factions, including the ones that extend into Sabah. It would be worth thinking about a series of short courses, building on real case studies of cross-border extremism, which would involve officials from all three countries but in small classes where useful discussions could take place. One concrete outcome to aim for would be an up-to-date and more detailed mapping of transnational extremist networks, with particular attention to the role of women. (The Maute women have played important roles in the coalition but they are not the only ones.)

It is particularly important that governments try to identify the current whereabouts and cross-regional communication links of BahrumSyah; Dr Mahmud; Abu Walid; and Ibnu Qoyyim; and to identify possible successors who would play the same liaison roles in the event of their deaths.

In Indonesia, the situation in Marawi has led the military to press its case for an enhanced role in counter-terrorism. Even with the inspiration that Marawi has produced, however, there is simply no chance in Indonesia of a military-style assault by extremists on a town centre. Indonesia does not have the multiple insurgencies that extremists can draw on for fighters and weapons, and even factoring in the return of more skilled fighters, terrorism should be still

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<sup>52</sup> “Pelaku Teror Kampung Melayu Sempat Komunikasi dengan Bahrn Naim”, *kompas.com*, 16 June 2017.



within police capacity to handle. The real burden will be on the police intelligence, particularly of Detachment 88, to interdict and prevent such plots – and it is on the intelligence side where perhaps the Philippines needs to do the most introspection on what went wrong that made the siege of Marawi possible.

The reconstruction of Marawi is also a challenge for Southeast Asia, not just for the Philippines. It is important to think now not just about how the displaced will be given a voice in the rebuilding of their city and how infrastructure and social services will be restored, but also how to ensure that extremist teachings do not find fertile ground. Fair treatment of the evacuees is critical to prevent resentment against the government. It will be important to ensure that mosque and Islamic school reconstruction is not accompanied by ideological strings from Middle Eastern donors.

None of this is to neglect the hugely important role that development assistance can play in the Philippines in trying to improve governance, eliminate private armies, address the dysfunctional criminal justice system, stem corruption, uphold human rights and resurrect the peace process. Recruiters were able to build on the narrative of state brutality long before the battle for Marawi began, but the military's reliance on airstrikes after it was underway enabled the fighters to blame the government for the city's destruction. One Telegram posting on 15 July, apparently from a fighter, read in part:

Remember my dear brothers and sisters. We did not destroy Marawi City. We did not bomb it to ashes. [...] We conquered the City for the purpose of implementing the Laws of Allah azzawajal. We ordained good and forbade evil [...] but the response of the Crusader Army was brutal. They fired upon us first in Padian, the civilians know this and as Soldiers of Allah we are obligated to fight back. Wallaahi, We never intended harm to the City and its people.

Part of the appeal of ISIS has been its utopian vision of a pure state where justice, equality and prosperity would prevail. That vision never had any connection to reality but the willingness of even well-educated university students to believe it shows how much has to be done in Mindanao to restore – or create – a belief in democratic government.#



**APPENDIX I**  
**PARTIAL LIST OF INDONESIAN FIGHTERS CURRENTLY IN MINDANAO**  
**OR BELIEVED KILLED THERE SINCE 2016**

1. Anggara Suprayogi, born Tangerang, 26 December 1984. Member of al-Hawariyun. Left Jakarta-Manila, Cebu Pacific, 3 April 2017 and arrived in Marawi shortly thereafter. Put on a wanted poster, 31 May 2017. His Google Plus account features links to Daulah Islamiyah, daulah islam, Daulah IS, Daulah Islamiyyah3 and daulah baqiyah. Married a radical Indonesian domestic worker in Hong Kong late 2016.
2. Yayat Hidayat Tarli, born Kuningan, 25 April 1986. Member of al-Hawariyun. Left on same flight as Anggara Suprayogi, above.
3. Al Ikhwan Yushel, born Palembang, West Sumatra, 1 Nov 1991. Believed to be member of JAD. Left Jakarta-Manila on Cebu Pacific on 28 March 2017 with onward flight to Cagayan.
4. Yoki Pratama Widyarto, born Banjarnegara 17 Sept 1995, Member of al-Hawariyun. Left Jakarta-Manila on Cebu Pacific on 3 March with onward flight to Cagayan on 4 March 2017. Killed in Marawi around 20 June 2017.
5. Mochammad Jaelani Firdaus, born Bekasi, 17 May 1991. Member of JAD. (Two different dates of departure from two different sources, 21 Feb and 7 March 2017). Left Jakarta-Manila on Cebu Pacific with onward flight to Cagayan.
6. Muhammad Gufron, born Serang 20 Oct 1993, same flight as Jaelani, above. Member of JAD.
7. Minhati Madrais, Indonesian wife of Omarkhayyam Maute whom she met at al-Azhar University, Cairo, married 2003. Daughter of KH Madrais Hajar from Babelan, Bekasi. Living in Marawi since 2011.
8. Ibnu Qoyyim alias Abu Nida, former KOMPAK member, living on Basilan, married to local Yakan woman. Served as weapons instructor for JAD trainees in 2016, friend of Abu Walid (Khatibah Nusantara in Syria)
9. Muhammad Ilham Syahputra, born Medan 29 July 1995, affiliation not clear. Left November 2016, possibly killed in Pagiapo, Lanao del Sur; passport found by soldiers in Maute camp there after fighting in April.)
10. Ali Al Amin, born 10 Feb 1968, Tasikmalaya, passport found in Marawi, fate uncertain. May have been a tablighi.
11. Irsyad Ahmad Darajat, brother of Ali Al Amin, born 30 November 1974, Tasikmalaya, passport found in Marawi, fate uncertain. May have been a tablighi.
12. Sheikh Ayman al-Marjuki, listed among “martyrs” in Telegram posting circulated in by Marawi fighters early days of Marawi siege. No information who he is or where from, other than Indonesia.
13. “Mohisen”, killed Jan 2017 in fighting in Butig, Lanao del Sur. Identified by Philippine media as Indonesia but no confirmation of nationality.
14. “Mohammad Muktar”, Indonesian reported killed Feb 2016 in Lanao del Sur

### **MINDANAO-LINKED ARRESTS IN INDONESIA, 2017**

1. Adi Jihadi, younger brother of Iwan Dharmawan alias Rois, born 29 June 1982, Pandeglang. Eight days training, returned early June 2016. Member of JAD and Ring Banten. Arrested 23 March 2017 in Pagelaran, Pandeglang, Banten.
2. Bambang Eko Prasetyo, same group as Adi Jihadi. Member of JAD and Ring Banten. Arrested 23 March 2017 in Ciputat, Tangerang Selatan.
3. Achmad Supriyanto, same group as Adi Jihadi. Arrested 23 March 2017 in Ciwandan, Cilewong, Banten in connection with guns purchases in Philippines. Another in the group, Nanang Kosim (Qosim), a TNI deserter, was killed in the same operation.
4. Suryadi Mas'ud (Mas'ood), Born in Pinrang, South Sulawesi 14 April 1972. Made seven trips to Mindanao in 2015-2016 to purchase guns for JAD. Arrested on 23 March 2017.
5. Rochmat Septriyanto, 32 from Tegal, Central Java, arrested in Gunungkidul, Central Java. Made a living by giving music lessons. He was in direct communication with Dr Mahmud Ahmed about sending people to Mindanao and was also involved in sending people to Syria.
6. Wahyono alias Abu Alif, 29, and
7. Muslim (born Pulau Betung, 27 March 1988), arrested in Jambi on 30 May 2017. Links to al-Hawariyun. Purchase tickets for Wahyono and Sunardi alias Abu Alana to go to Philippines, from Pekanbaru to Toli-Toli, then plan was to take boat to Mindanao, arranged by ISIS supporters in Toli-Toli. Either they were sent back or something else happened to abort the trip.

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