

# **MANAGING INDONESIA'S PRO-ISIS DEPORTEES**

**17 July 2018**  
**IPAC Report No.47**

## CONTENTS

I.	Introduction.....	1
II.	Waves of Migration (Hijrah) to Syria.....	2
	A. Changing Motivations for Joining ISIS .....	3
	B. Increasing Difficulties Crossing Into Syria .....	4
III.	Who Are the Deportees?.....	5
IV.	The Story of Iman Namakule.....	6
V.	Social Rehabilitation Program for Deportees.....	8
	A. Unclear Legal Basis for Holding Deportees.....	8
	B. Inadequate Funds, Infrastructure and Trained Staff.....	9
	C. Rehabilitation Activities .....	10
	D. Follow-Up and Monitoring.....	10
VI.	How Dangerous Are the Deportees? .....	11
VII.	Conclusions.....	12

## I. INTRODUCTION

---

Indonesia urgently needs to develop a strategy for assessing, monitoring and where possible reintegrating the men, women and children who tried to join Islamic State in Syria but were caught and sent home before they could do so. As of mid-2018, over 500 Indonesian nationals had been deported, mostly from Turkey, and efforts to emigrate (*berhijrah*) had virtually ceased. About 35 had been arrested, either for crimes committed long before they left or on charges of supporting ISIS financially or through Internet propaganda – and in a few cases, for crimes committed after they returned. The others have been allowed to return home after a rudimentary rehabilitation program. Indonesia has almost no capacity to monitor them or assess the risk they may pose, either in attempting terrorist acts or radicalising others.

By May 2018, the flow of deportees from Turkey had all but stopped but the need to keep track of those who have returned remains high.

The terms “deportee”, “returnee” and “foreign terrorist fighter (FTF)” are frequently used interchangeably, when in fact they denote different groups. UN Security Council Resolution 2178 defines FTFs as individuals:

who travel or attempt to travel to a state other than their residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration, planning or preparation of, or participation in, terrorist acts or the providing or receiving of terrorist training, including in connection with armed conflict.<sup>1</sup>

It is the broadest of the three categories and by including those who “attempt to travel”, it encompasses some of the deportees. But it also implies that FTF by definition are terrorists or would-be terrorists, whereas many Indonesian deportees are families who were attracted by the idea of living in a pure Islamic state. They were not interested in acquiring terrorist skills.

“Returnees”, as used by the Indonesian government, refers to nationals who succeeded in crossing into Syria or Iraq and voluntarily returned, sometimes out of disillusionment. They include anyone who joined a militia, pro-ISIS or anti-ISIS, but also include Salafis who went to deliver humanitarian aid through Ahrar ash-Sham and other militias. “Returnee” does not automatically imply “pro-ISIS combatant”.

“Deportees” are mostly people who never set foot in Syria because they were caught before they could do so. There are one or two cases of people who reached Syria, decided to leave and got caught on the other side and deported. Generally, however, those who reach Turkey after having been in Syria simply pay a visa overstay fee and then are free to make their own way home.

These distinctions are important because the needs of each group and the dangers they pose may be different. A returnee who had served as an ISIS military commander probably would be a bigger risk than a deportee who never set foot in a conflict zone. On the other hand, non-combatant returnees may be less of a risk than frustrated deportees. The risk of different groups may change over time as well. Returnees coming back to Indonesia in 2013 or 2014 may have a lower propensity to violence than combatants trying to return after ISIS defeats in Mosul and Raqqa. The response of these groups to deradicalisation programs will also be very different.

The ease with which some deportees slip back into old networks is illustrated by case of Khalid Abu Bakar, the cleric who led a religious study group in Surabaya for the families that carried out suicide bomb attacks there in mid-May 2018. Khalid was deported from Turkey in

---

<sup>1</sup> U.N. Security Council Resolution 2178 (2014) available at <http://www.refworld.org/docid/542a8ed74.html>.

early 2017 after waiting unsuccessfully for almost a year to cross into Syria; he seems to have strengthened his ties to JAD as soon as he got home. His son-in-law, Muhammad Mustaqim alias Rizki Maulana from Lamongan, East Java, was deported in 2016 and arrested on 23 June 2018, allegedly for plotting extremist violence in Depok.

Even when deportees are identified as possible troublemakers, the question is not just whether to monitor them but for how long and by whom. For those who were never hardcore, it is critically important that they be accepted back by their communities so that social ostracism does not push them back into extremist circles.

## II. WAVES OF MIGRATION (*HIJRAH*) TO SYRIA

---

Indonesians began leaving to join the war in Syria in late 2012. Departures peaked in late 2015 and 2016, and deportations picked up accordingly, with the most sent back in 2017. The increase in arrests on the Turkish side of the border reflected a tougher stance on the part of Turkish authorities as well as the changing fortunes of ISIS on the battlefield which made it harder and harder for supporters to cross over.

This can be seen from the following table:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Deportees<sup>2</sup></b>
2014	14
2015	162
2016	171
2017	226
<b>Total</b>	<b>573</b>

Deportation procedures were generally as follows: Turkish authorities would inform the Indonesian embassy in Ankara of arrests. The Indonesian Foreign Ministry would share the information with Detachment 88 and the State Intelligence Agency, BIN. Detachment 88 would occasionally send officers to Turkey to accompany the deportees home; at the very least they would meet the deportees at the airport in Jakarta and do an initial debriefing. If any of the deportees faced charges for earlier crimes, those individuals would be moved to the detention center of the paramilitary police (Brigade Mobile, Brimob) for further interrogation. (This was the remand centre where a deadly riot took place on 8-9 May 2018 and the terrorism suspects have since been moved elsewhere.) The other deportees would be placed in a Social Affairs shelter for a short period, usually a week or two, and then be allowed to return home. As numbers of deportees picked up, the government tried to use the National Counter-Terrorism Agency (Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terorisme, BNPT) to put together a more structured program but it was never more than a few lectures by former prisoners who had disengaged from violence.

---

2 This table only reflects the deportees identified by the police, but the true number is higher, since some slipped through the net and were only later discovered to have returned. One example is that of Suryadi Masoed and his wife. They were deported in February 2017 without the knowledge of the Indonesian police because of weaknesses in coordination between the Indonesian and Turkish authorities. The data above also includes some deportees from the southern Philippines. Some Indonesian government agencies suggest the total number of deportees is only in the 200's, but they are basing it on the numbers who went through Ministry of Social Affairs shelters – which the government only began using systematically in 2017.

### A. *Changing Motivations for Joining ISIS*

As earlier IPAC reports have documented, Indonesians began leaving to join the Syrian conflict in late 2012.<sup>3</sup> One of first was Wildan Al Mukholad, from Lamongan, East Java, who in late 2012 abandoned his studies in Egypt to fight against the government of Bashar al-Assad and later joined ISIS, only to die as a suicide bomber in Iraq in February 2014. More Indonesians began leaving in 2013 after the establishment of ISIS in Syria and the beginning of its aggressive recruiting of foreign fighters.

The first group to leave directly from Indonesia was led by Salim Mubarak Attamimi alias Abu Jandal. In October 2013, he took a group of ten Indonesians from Malang and Jakarta to Turkey. Wildan met them on the Turkish-Syrian border and guided them in.<sup>4</sup> A second Indonesian group left in 2013 led by Abdul Rauf, who had been released from prison in 2011 after serving nine years for his role in the 2002 Bali bombings. These early fighters wanted to defend fellow Sunnis against what they saw as Assad's murderous Shi'a regime. Because they wanted to fight, they did not bring family members.

After Abu Bakr Al Baghdadi declared the caliphate in late June 2014, however, ISIS called on all Muslims to join:

Immediately emigrate, O Muslims to your Daulah (Islamic State). This is your Daula, hurry because Syria is not for the Syrians, and Iraq is not for Iraqis. This Daulah is for all Muslims. O Muslims wherever you are, whoever is able to emigrate to the Islamic Daulah, then let him do it, because migration to the land of Islam is obligatory.<sup>5</sup>

This call to *hijrah* was rooted not just in a sense of religious obligations but also in ISIS's urgent need for people to run the vast territory it had acquired with such speed: administrators, accountants, teachers, doctors, engineers and religious experts, all were in short supply. To lure such professionals, ISIS offered incentives: housing facilities, free health care and free education.

Here we do not pay any rent, Daulah gives us a home for nothing. We do not pay electricity or water bills either, Daulah gives us a supply of food every month such as spaghetti, pasta, canned food, rice, eggs, etc. A monthly allowance is given not just to the husband and wife or wives, but also for each child. Medical examinations and treatment are free, Daulah pays for it all.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to those who emigrated to live in the caliphate, some Indonesians also went because they believed that ISIS was the manifestation of the *khilafah ala minhajul nubuwwah* or the caliphate that would emerge at the end of time. ISIS itself actively promoted this narrative. Its leaders claimed to be the last caliphate before *al-malhamah qubra*, the Islamic Armageddon, and tried to persuade Muslims around the world that by joining, they would be part of the final victory of Islam led by the Islamic messiah, the Imam Mahdi.

3 See IPAC, "Indonesians and the Syrian Conflict", Report No.6, 29 January 2014 and "The Evolution of ISIS in Indonesia", Report No.13, 24 September 2014.

4 Several members of the Malang group returned voluntarily to Indonesia. Abdul Hakim Hunabari left in August 2013, returned in November 2013, was arrested in March 2015, was tried and sentenced to three years in prison and was released in March 2018. Ahmad Juaedi left in March 2014, stayed only five months, disappointed that the stipend he received was not as much as he expected. He was arrested and released at the same time as Abdul Hakim Hunabari. Helmi Alamudi from the same group got a slightly longer sentence; he is due out in September 2018. Muhidin Gani and Kiki Rizky returned in November 2013 after less than four months with ISIS, only to be arrested for ongoing pro-ISIS activities in 2017.

5 Dabiq Magazine No 1, "The Return of Khilafah", 5 July 2014, available at [www.clarionproject.org](http://www.clarionproject.org).

6 Siti Khadijah, "Kisah Ummu Sabrina di Bumi Khilafah". It was serialised by a number of radical blogs and websites.

### B. Increasing Difficulties Crossing into Syria

Until 2014, it was relatively easy for Indonesian extremists to enter Syria. All they had to do was to buy a ticket Jakarta-Istanbul, head for the Syrian border, then find a contact to help cross over. It did not take weeks or months to get in. Kiki Rizki, a returnee who joined ISIS, said that when he arrived in Istanbul in October, he took a domestic flight to Gaziantep, a border city of some 1.7 million people. From Gaziantep they drove to the town of Kilis and waited until evening. After dark, he and his companions crossed into Syria through holes in the barbed wire border fence.<sup>7</sup>

There was no tight security along the border, in part because in the early years of the conflict, the Turkish government was encouraging a flow of logistical support to various opposition groups in Syria. As the number of FTF rose, however, from an estimated 8,000 in 2013 to at least 12,000 by 2014, political pressure on Turkey to tighten its borders also increased.<sup>8</sup> Terrorist acts inside Turkey added to a government decision to crack down, and the Erdogan government began to actively arrest and deport foreigners wanting to join ISIS. Loss of territory to Kurdish and coalition forces in 2015 made crossing even harder.

These difficulties, however, did not dampen the enthusiasm of Indonesians to join, even as the costs of going to Syria rose with longer waits in Turkey. Of the 92 Indonesians deported in 2017 whose data we have, 61 per cent waited more than six months and 4 per cent more than one year. Indonesian *muhajirin* also had to prepare money to pay the mafia that would smuggle them into Syria at a rate of \$500 per person – with no guarantee of money back if the crossing failed. Khaerul Anam, the amir of JAD from West Java, left in March 2016. He paid smugglers \$3,000 to bring him and his family to Syria and waited almost a year in Istanbul for the green light. The plan was to use the Hatai-to-Idlib route. But after he finally got word in January 2017 that he could cross and he and his family arrived in Hatai, they were caught by the Turkish security forces. They were then deported back to Indonesia, and the \$3,000 was gone.

Khaerul Anam's capture in Hatai is interesting, however. In the past, ISIS supporters rarely entered Syria via Hatai, because Idlib, on the other side of the border, was controlled by anti-ISIS forces such as Ahrar Al Syam and the al-Qaeda linked an-Nusra Front and its successors.<sup>9</sup> It began to be used by ISIS operatives around October 2016, since the usual routes into Raqqa had fallen into the hands of ISIS enemies. Transit via Idlib was dangerous, however, because ISIS supporters entering areas controlled by HTS or Ahrar Al Sham could be detained by their troops. The prospect did not deter Indonesians. One deportee explained his thinking:

At least if HTS captures us, we won't be deported. At the most, we'll be detained a few months and then we'll be released.<sup>10</sup>

Aji Kurnia Ramadan thought the same – until he was killed. A high school teacher and former karate athlete, he began to be exposed to ISIS's teachings around 2015. In 2016 he quit his job, got married and went to Syria with seventeen others. For months they waited in Turkey. Finally, in July 2017, Aji led the group to Hatai and successfully crossed over to Idlib. They were then arrested by HTS forces and detained for several months. Initially they were to be exchanged in a prisoner swap with ISIS. But the swap failed because ISIS had already executed all HTS prisoners. Aji's captors warned him and his friends not to join ISIS, but after three months of failing to convince them, HTS finally decided to let them all go. On 9 October 2017, they were

7 Trial dossier of Kiki Rizky bin Abdul Kadir alias Abu Ukasah, 14 December 2017.

8 The figure of 12,000 comes from Richard Barrett, "Foreign Fighters in Syria", The Soufan Group, June 2014. By the December 2015 update from The Soufan Group, the number had more than doubled.

9 The al-Nusra Front became Jabhat Fateh al-Sham in July 2016, in theory after breaking with al-Qaeda, and Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) in January 2017. The latter is an alliance of JFS and several smaller groups.

10 IPAC interview with a deportee in Jakarta, April 2017.

taken to the border of an ISIS-controlled area and released. But their problems did not end there. Aji's group was fired on by Assad forces, and five were killed. The remaining twelve reached ISIS and without any training, were immediately given arms. "Learning by doing" most appropriately describes their experience. On 22 October, the group was instructed to undertake an attack against HTS in West Hama and two days later Aji and four others in the group were killed.

Departures from Indonesia began to subside at the end of 2017, after ISIS lost almost all its territory in Syria and Iraq. A few Indonesians still tried to go, including Pak Imam, a man from Tretes, East Java. He retired from his job as a driver in the Sampoerna cigarette factory and using his pension money, left for Syria in November 2017 with his eldest child. His main motivation was humanitarian – he wanted to work as an ambulance driver. But he was also obsessed with meeting the Imam Mahdi and did not believe that ISIS defeats or territorial losses would deter the Mahdi from his prophesied arrival in Syria. Pak Imam was arrested in Turkey and sent back in December 2017.

### III. WHO ARE THE DEPORTEES?

IPAC was able to look at basic data on 92 men, women and children deported to Indonesia in January and April 2017 collected by the University of Indonesia's Center for the Study of Terrorism and Social Conflict. Most – 89 per cent – were deported from Turkey; the rest were sent back from other countries such as Hongkong, Singapore and Japan. The five largest sending areas for the deportees were West Java (24 per cent); East Java (23 per cent); Central Java (13 per cent); West Sumatra (11 per cent); and metropolitan Jakarta (9 per cent). The rest came from Banten, South Sulawesi and other provinces. The sending areas mostly correlate with the strongholds of JAD in Java. West Sumatra has no JAD structure, but it is one of the bases of a pro-ISIS group known as the Abu Hamzah Faction (FAH), named after its founder.<sup>11</sup>

The 92 were overwhelmingly ISIS supporters with only 8 per cent supporters of non-ISIS groups.<sup>12</sup> The ISIS supporters were more extreme, with 86 per cent of them espousing a *takfiri* ideology, though the depth of their beliefs varied. One individual refused to respond to greetings from government officials because he believed they were *thaghut* (idolaters but often used in the sense of oppressors). Yet he was willing to sign an oath of allegiance to the Indonesian government so he could leave the Ministry of Social Affairs shelter where he was being held and return home. He justified his doing so on the principle that in emergency conditions, some flexibility in practice is allowed. Others refused to sign the oath, believing that they would be leaving the faith if they did so. They only signed when they were threatened with criminal prosecution. None of the non-ISIS deportees held *takfiri* views.

56 per cent of the adults were women and 44 per cent men. Seventy of the 92 had left with family members, while only 19 left on their own. The remaining three had gone with friends.

Many in the group were older than one might expect. The age distribution was as follows:

Age group	% men	% women
Below 20	15	16
20-29	24	29
30-39	44	39
40-49	15	12
Over 50	2	4

11 Abu Hamzah is the father-in-law of the late Indonesian ISIS commander, BahrumSyah. For more on Abu Hamzah see IPAC, "Disunity Among Indonesian ISIS supporters and the Risk of More Violence," Report No. 25, 1 February 2016, p.3.

12 One of the non-ISIS deportees was Syaiful Haraq, an activist of "Syam Organizer" from Lampung. He had gone back and forth to Syria several times but was finally caught in Hatai and deported.

The women tended to be more radical than the men, with 41 expressing *takfiri* views as opposed to 32 men. As with the example above, they refused to respond to greetings from government social workers, even though they were Muslim, because of the belief that the government is unIslamic because it does not apply Islamic law. They refused to eat meat, not because they were vegetarian but because they insisted that all meat be slaughtered by a member of their group. In one case, a woman refused to sign the loyalty oath to the Indonesian government, while her husband had no problem with doing so. Another woman tried to bribe a Social Affairs staff member to sign it for her so that she herself would not be tainted:

I don't care how much it costs, I now am living an Islamic life, I don't want to be thrown back into a state of ignorance (*jahiliyah*) by pledging loyalty to the Indonesian republic.<sup>13</sup>

Eight of the 13 children (defined as under 18) in the group also held extremist views, apparently acquired from their parents.

Economic data on the 92 is sparse but in general, the group seemed to be mostly middle-class. Most paid their own way to Syria and accommodation costs in Turkey. A round-trip ticket from Jakarta to Istanbul is Rp. 15 million [US\$1,056] per person. Renting a room in Turkey costs a minimum of 1200 Lira per month [US\$262], meaning for six months this could total \$1,572. The cost of meals and transport runs around 1000 Lira per month [US\$218] so the total for a six-month wait would be about \$2,880. This means that living in Turkey between six months and a year required an outlay of between Rp. 40 million to Rp. 80 million per person. Finally, the going rate to a smuggler cross into Syria was US\$500 per person. The total cost of *hijrah* per person around could thus run between Rp 50 and 100 million. Add the cost of family members and it becomes clear that only people who are reasonably well-off could even begin to think of making the trip. Khalid Abu Bakar – as of this writing being sought in connection with the May 2018 Surabaya bombs – went to Syria with children and grandchildren in 2016 only to be deported in early 2017. He reportedly spent about Rp. 500 million for the *hijrah*.

In terms of education background, 43 per cent were high school graduates and 30 per cent had tertiary education, ranging from D3 diplomas to post-graduate work – including one with a master's degree from an Australian university. The rest had only reached junior high school or lower.

For most of these people, the decision to go to Syria was a calculated one that was made after assessing pros and cons. For some, the most important factor was their belief that in Syria they can live under Islamic shari'ah, thereby fulfilling their obligations as Muslims. Almost half (47 per cent) said they wanted to emigrate because they wanted to be part of the caliphate. They believed they would get new jobs. Their children would be able to live a better life because they would get a good education and free healthcare. One woman who graduated from a state university in East Java said that in addition to wanting to live in the caliphate, she wanted to get treatment for her first child who was ill with cerebral palsy.

Thirteen individuals said their main motivation was to meet Imam Mahdi. Eleven went to join family members already there, and a few went out of a humanitarian impulse.

#### IV. THE STORY OF IMAN NAMAKULE

---

Iman Namakule's story helps illuminate the deportee experience. Iman, a member of Jamaah Ansharul Daulah from Ambon, was arrested by Turkish security forces in January 2017 and deported to Indonesia a few weeks later. Iman had become radicalised as a student activist.

<sup>13</sup> Interview conducted by the University of Indonesia's Center for the Study of Terrorism and Social Conflict, Jakarta, April 2017.

He had entered Pattimura University in Ambon in 2009 and immediately became an organiser. He joined the Islamic Students Association (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam, HMI) and became an enthusiastic student of religion. In 2012 he joined the discussion group in the Batu Merah area of Ambon led by Abu Ghar, a former prisoner, and studied with him for two years.<sup>14</sup> When Abu Ghar swore a loyalty oath (bai'at) to ISIS, Iman did the same. He was so preoccupied with his religious studies that he dropped out of university.

At the end of 2014 he moved to Java to study at Pondok Pesantren Ansharullah, an Islamic boarding school led by the late Fauzan al Anshori, an ISIS leader in West Java. He frequently went with Fauzan to Nusakambangan to visit the leading pro-ISIS clerics imprisoned there, Aman Abdurrahman and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. In early 2015 he also joined various ISIS telegram groups, including "Ngopi-ngopi" which became the discussion forum of ISIS supporters in Indonesia. Through this group he became acquainted with someone who called himself Mas Toha. They became friends, and in February, Mas Toha came to visit Iman at his pesantren. They discussed how they both wanted to join ISIS in Syria and Toha told Iman that he had already made preparations to leave. He promised to help finance Iman's departure, and told him to get a passport as soon as he could, which Iman did.

In March 2015, Iman returned to Ambon. A month later he got a message from Mas Toha that he had arrived in Syria. He told Iman to be prepared. In July 2016 – more than a year later – Mas Toha again contacted Iman and said that he should be ready to leave. He sent Iman Eva Air tickets from Jakarta to Taipei and Taipei to Istanbul, as well as a Turkish electronic visa and a hotel reservation in Istanbul. Mas Toha told Iman that when he arrived in Turkey, someone would contact him.

Iman left Indonesia on 25 July 2016 and arrived safely in Istanbul where he stayed at a hotel in the Sirkeci area. Mas Toha again contacted Iman and said to expect a call from an Indonesian known as Abu Muhammad.<sup>15</sup> Two days later, Abu Muhammad sent Iman a message, instructing him to move into an apartment in the Kucukcekmece area of Istanbul. The apartment was a kind of safehouse for Indonesians without family to stay while waiting for the scheduled departure to Syria. There were ten Indonesians there when Iman arrived, including Abdurrahman Hamidan alias Abu Asybal, the *amir makor* or safehouse commander. Abu Asybal, a religious teacher from Palu and a graduate of LIPIA, a Salafi institute in Jakarta, often filled the long days of waiting with religious study sessions.

In October 2016 some of the Indonesians in the house left for Syria and new people joined, but this time, the arrivals were not only Indonesians but also foreigners from Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, India and Uzbekistan. Iman stayed behind because Abu Asybal needed his help in a number of tasks, including sending money to Thailand to reimburse expenses for a failed operation to assist a detained Uighur.<sup>16</sup> In accordance with Abu Asybal's instructions, Iman had

14 Abu Ghar's real name is Nazaruddin Muchtar; he was also known as Harun. He has a long history of violence. He helped radicalise the young man who became the suicide bomber in the 2004 attack on the Australian embassy. He was the explosives instructor in the bomb-making class that led to the first arrest in 2004 of Aman Abdurrahman, though he himself eluded capture. He was finally caught in Buru, Maluku in May 2005 and sentenced to nine years in prison in connection with attacks in Maluku. He was released in April 2011 and returned to Ambon where he became active in setting up an extremist cell. He attended the founding meeting of JAD (then called Jamaah Ansharul Khilafah or JAK) in Batu, Malang in November 2015, and played an important role in the January 2016 attack in Jakarta. He was rearrested later that year and eventually sentenced to another nine years. See IPAC, "ISIS in Ambon: The Fallout From Communal Conflict," Report No.28, 13 May 2016.

15 Abu Muhammad is believed to be Ustadz Dani from Tasikmalaya.

16 Ten Uighurs escaped from a detention centre in Nong Khai, northeastern Thailand, on 19 September 2016. The escape attempt appears to have been planned by ISIS Central, and an Indonesian long active in extremist circles, Suryadi Mas'od, was asked to be on hand to help one of the ten get to Malaysia and on to Turkey. Though Rashit Hashim, the Uighur in question, managed to hide for a week, he never made contact with Suryadi and was eventually recaptured. In the course of trying to find contacts in Thailand, Suryadi asked his Indonesian ISIS contact in Syria for help, and his contact sent him the name of Dr. Mahmud, the late Malaysian extremist who played a critical role in the 2017 siege of Marawi, Philippines.

twice sent money to a man named Yakoh Sue Mae, once on 12 October 2016 for US\$550 and again on 15 October 2016 for US\$500. He also sent US\$1,000 to first wife of Suryadi Mas'ood, an Indonesian who was supposed to assist the operation in Thailand. Iman was not informed at the time what the money was for.

As of January 2017 Iman Namakule was still in Syria, and the situation was getting increasingly difficult. After the New Year's Eve shooting at a Reina nightclub in Istanbul that killed 39 people, Turkish police stepped up arrests of extremist suspects, especially because the police suspected that the Reina attack was carried out by foreigners. In a search of an apartment in the city of Izmir, police arrested 40 foreigners. They found a number of foreign passports, including from Indonesia. Meanwhile, on 16 January 2017, Turkish police came to search the apartment where Iman and the others were staying. Iman, Abu Asybal and several other residents were arrested. The day after the raid, on 17 January 2017, Turkish police captured the perpetrator of the Reina attack in the Esenyurt district of Istanbul. His name was Abdulgadir Masharipov, an Uzbek who had been a fighter in Syria. A search of his apartment turned up Indonesian paper currency in Rp10,000 and Rp 2,000 denominations. Iman and Abu Asybal were held for two weeks, and on 1 February 2017, they were deported to Indonesia.

Abu Asybal was immediately arrested by Detachment 88 on his return for his involvement in transferring funds to the Mujahidin of Eastern Indonesian (MIT) in Poso as well as facilitating the travel of recruits to Poso in the period 2015-2016.

## V. SOCIAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM FOR DEPORTEES

---

Until Indonesia's new counter-terrorism law was passed in June 2018, police had few legal tools to hold high-risk deportees. Even if it was clear that they had intended to join ISIS, they were not considered to have violated the 2003 Anti-Terrorism Law because they were caught in Turkey. There was also nothing in the law that could force them to undergo rehabilitation or deradicalisation programs. The lack of a legal framework was one of the reasons the government was so slow in crafting a program for deportees. Only in 2017 did a program begin to emerge.

### A. *Unclear Legal Basis for Holding Deportees*

The immediate impetus for this initiative was the arrival of 75 deportees (41 adults and 34 children) between late January and early February 2017. The extensive media coverage of these arrivals put pressure on the government to act, so three institutions – Detachment 88 of the police, BNPT and the Ministry of Social Affairs put together a makeshift program. Detachment 88 did the first assessment of the deportees to determine whether they had committed a criminal offence before they left and processing them accordingly. In some cases those suspected of an offence would be sent to the Brimob police headquarters remand center for further investigation. If there were no suspected crimes involved, the deportees would be sent to the Ministry of Social's shelter to participate in a social rehabilitation program designed by BNPT along the lines of the deradicalisation program used in prisons for convicted terrorists.

This raised several problems for the Social Affairs Ministry. One was its legal basis for holding deportees, which was weak. In theory, it had two laws it could use, the 2014 Child Protection Law and the 2009 Social Welfare Law. Article 59 of the first specifically mentions the protection of child victims of terrorism, but its provisions do not apply to adults. The Social Welfare Law grants the ministry a role in the rehabilitation of people who experience social upheaval. This includes the poor, the victims of natural disasters, the displaced, and victims of violence, discrimination or exploitation but it does not mention people exposed to extremism.

BNPT has a stronger legal mandate to handle deportees because one of its functions is deradicalisation of those exposed to radical or extremist teachings. BNPT, however, had no funds for deportee programs; it also had no facilities to accommodate the hundreds of deportees and no trained staff to work with them.

### *B. Inadequate Funds, Infrastructure and Trained Staff*

The returning Indonesians were therefore placed in the Handayani Shelter of the Ministry of Social Affairs.<sup>17</sup> It was supposed to be used for children who had some confrontation with the law, either juvenile delinquents or children who were victims of violence. But now the shelter was being asked to accommodate adults, and it had no funds to do so as the request came after the budget planning process was finished. A few civil society organisations came to the rescue. One was Civil Society Against Violent Extremism (C-SAVE), an NGO coalition. They could at least help with the return of the deportees to their home towns, with staff sometimes accompanying them on the journey. To ease the budgetary burden on Handayani, some adult deportees beginning in mid-2017 were moved to the Trauma Recovery Center (RTMC). This shelter was usually used to house undocumented migrants often deported in waves from Malaysia and sometimes the Middle East. The deportees who had children were allowed to stay in Handayani.

The infrastructure in both the Handayani and RTMC shelters was wholly inadequate to deal with extremist deportees, however. For one thing, juvenile delinquents were not separated from the deportee children. An incident occurred in February 2017 where one juvenile offender was persuaded by a 12-year-old deportee to pledge loyalty to ISIS, simply by virtue of the fact that they shared a room for several days. The same child also caused a disruption by damaging the holy book used by a non-Muslim.

There was also no ability to separate the deportees with different degrees of radicalism, so that those who were inclined to be cooperative with authorities became less cooperative because of interaction with the hardcore among them. One radical couple, former prisoner Ali Azhari and his wife, were particularly active in persuading fellow deportees to stay strong and not cooperate. They should have been immediately placed apart from the others when their extremist activities became clear.

Another problem that arose was the lack of trained staff. The Ministry of Social Affairs had no experience working with extremism, had no idea who they were getting in their shelters and were not prepared for how to handle them. BNPT provided no training or preparation and throughout 2017 never once held a training workshop for Social Affairs staff. Again, some civil society organisations filled the gap. The Center for the Study of Terrorism and Social Conflict at the University of Indonesia, in cooperation with the Indonesian Strategic Policy Institute (ISPI), conducted emergency capacity building programs to brief Social Affairs staff on terrorism networks in Indonesia; ISIS ideology; arguments used by its supporters; and where available, background briefings on some of the deportees.

In addition, ISPI introduced a simple instrument to assess the radicalism of the deportees so staff could quickly know who the troublemakers would be. It was deliberately made as simple as possible so that staff with little formal education could assess the behavior of deportees in a way that would facilitate shelter management. The instrument in essence was a checklist of ten actions that would indicate commitment to *takfiri* beliefs. This included not responding to official greetings, refusal to pray at the government mosque, refusal to eat meat and so on.

<sup>17</sup> The full name is Panti Sosial Marsudi Putra (PSMP) Handayani.

Other civil society organisations also came to assist with the deportees.<sup>18</sup>

### C. Rehabilitation Activities

The Handayani shelter tried to provide rehabilitation activities as best it could. It invited clerics from the Ministry of Religious Affairs to challenge some of the ISIS teachings the deportees had absorbed and put together some educational programs for the deportee children. The biggest impact, however, appears to have been not through formal activities but from the empathy of the Handayani social workers. Most were used to dealing with children so they were very patient. They also lived at the centre so they were basically on call 24 hours. Each social worker had responsibility for one or two deportees and came to know them well even over a relatively short period. The result, as shown in an interim evaluation conducted in April 2017 by the University of Indonesia's Center for the Study of Terrorism and Social Conflict, was that 90 per cent of the deportees experienced a decrease in their hatred of government officials. The kindness of the social workers did not jibe with their understanding of ISIS doctrine that all officials were *thaghut*. With a modicum of follow-up, it might be possible to build on this first crack in the foundation of their ideological beliefs, but as yet there are no resources or programs in place to do so.

In contrast to the Handayani activities, BNPT paid very little attention to the deportees moved to the Trauma Recovery Center. Throughout 2017 its entire involvement in rehabilitation consisted of arranging for two visits by former prisoner Sofyan Tsauri and a BNPT staff member to conduct sessions in why ISIS teachings were wrong. A memo signed between BNPT and the Ministry of Social Affairs in April 2018 specifically mentions cooperation in rehabilitation activities but a BNPT official acknowledged that there were no formal programs in place as of July.<sup>19</sup>

### D. Follow-Up and Monitoring

BNPT says that it has mapped out the places that deportees have returned to and is working with the Ministry of Home Affairs to monitor their activities.<sup>20</sup> The mapping is an important first step but much more needs to be done. BNPT did develop a month-long program at its facility in Sentul for an extended family that returned in August 2017 after two years with ISIS, and its staff stayed in close touch with family members afterwards. A similarly structured rehabilitation and monitoring program is not yet in place for deportees, and it is not something that can be accomplished by decree. If neighbourhood and community groups (*rukun tetangga*, *rukun warga*, or RT/RW) that constitute the lowest ranks of the government administrative system are to be involved, then they will have to be trained in what to look for and how to keep an eye on individuals and families without turning them into outcasts. Likewise, there should be a system in place that would require the deportee head of household to regularly check in with a government office, whether this is Social Affairs, Detachment 88 or BNPT, with consideration given to what happens if a deportee fails to report and how many years the reporting requirement should be in place. Prisons throughout Indonesia, but particularly on Java, should also have a watchlist of deportees and a system for reporting visits by deportees to prisoners. There are surely models in other countries that could be adapted for Indonesia's needs, but this is an area that needs more work.

18 These organisations included C-SAVE; Yayasan Prastasi Perdamaian (YPP); SERVE Indonesia; Indonesia Muslim Crisis Center, Generasi Literate, Peace Generation and Yayasan Kakak.

19 E-mail communication, 3 July 2018.

20 "BNPT Pantau Ratusan WNI yang Pulang dari Suriah dan Terpapar Radikalisme," *Kompas*, 30 May 2018.

## VI. HOW DANGEROUS ARE THE DEPORTEES?

---

Public anxiety about deportees is high, particularly in the neighbourhoods to which they have returned. There is justifiable concern that some might become involved in violence, particularly given the ISIS fatwa that states that since the door to hijrah has closed, the door to jihad should be opened.<sup>21</sup>

A case that underscores the grounds for such fears is that of Anang Rachman alias Abu Arumi. He was deported in 2016. After failing to join ISIS, he was determined to undertake *amaliat* – terrorist operations – in Indonesia. He actively recruited people to join him, including a young man named Suliono who was arrested in February 2018 for planning a knife attack in a church in Yogyakarta. Anang also planned a bombing at a Brimob center in Kedunghalang, Bogor. For this he recruited Abid Faqihudin, the 17-year-old brother of a former prisoner, and Ibadurrahman, a former prisoner also linked to Poso, to make a bomb. He also made plans to crash a car into a crowd of police. All these plans came to nought because Anang and his friends were captured in May 2018, just days before the riot in the Brimob remand center in Kelapa Dua – in which Anang reportedly played a major role.

As noted above, some 35 deportees were detained after their return for involvement in crimes committed before they left or for financing others to leave. Meilani Indria Dewi, for example, was an ISIS supporter with a college degree in banking. Without telling her family, she left for Syria in October 2017 with two ISIS supporters from Bengkulu, Muhammad Husni and Lindrika Wiratama. Melani helped finance their departure through her business selling Muslim clothing. All three were arrested by Turkish immigration before they could cross into Syria and were deported to Indonesia on 18 October 2017. Meilani was arrested by Densus 88 under the Anti-Terrorism Financing Law for funding the departure of her two friends.

The question is how assess which of the 500 deportees are likely to be involved in trying to conduct violence in Indonesia. There are at least three factors to consider. The first is group affiliation. ISIS deportees are a bigger risk than non-ISIS deportees because of the fatwa to carry out actions at home because *hijrah* is no longer possible.

A second factor is motivation. Those who left for Syria because they wanted to fight (rather than to bring up their children under Islamic law, for example) are at higher risk of committing violence. Of the 35 deportees arrested by Detachment 88, 27 left because they wanted to fight with ISIS forces. Since they failed to reach that goal in Syria, they may want to carry on the war in Indonesia.

A third factor is their social network. If they return to an extremist network, they can be re-radicalised. Two of the main instigators of the May 2018 riot in the Brimob detention center were Anang Rahman, deported in 2016, and Anggi, a former domestic worker deported from Hong Kong for radical activities in early 2017. Both immediately joined extremist cells, with Anggi going straight from three weeks in the Handayani shelter to JAD Bandung. While detained in Brimob headquarters with a child born in detention, she became one of the instigators of the riot there on 8 May 2018. Khalid Abu Bakar, the man being sought in connections with the May 2018 Surabaya bombings, is a similar case. After he completed the rehabilitation program at Handayani in January 2017, he returned home and immediately began leading JAD study sessions in a mosque in Rungkut area, Surabaya. Some of his students later became the Surabaya suicide bombers.<sup>22</sup>

21 An Indonesian-language ISIS bulletin, *al-Fatihin*, carried an exhortation to jihad in the article “Maka Ikutilah Petunjuk Mereka”, 30 April 2018 (14 Sha’ban 1439), p.8. Widely circulated over Indonesian social media, it called specifically for attacks on polling stations during elections in enemy countries.

22 See “Abu Bakar, Guru Para Bomber Surabaya-Sidoarjo yang Masih Misterius,” kumparan.com, 16 May 2018.

As travel to Syria became more difficult and ISIS lost territory, the number of Indonesian leaving for Syria dropped dramatically. By May 2018, there was no one left in Hanadyani shelters. From January to May 2018, only eight Indonesians were deported, the remnants of the last would be *muhajirin* who left in 2017.

It is possible that Indonesian fighters will look for other conflicts to join, such as Afghanistan or the Philippines, but if so it will be only a few individuals in the absence of any organised program. No other area has the attraction of Syria with the promise of the end-of-time battle and the coming of the Imam Mahdi. A comparison with the Philippines is instructive. In June 2016, ISIS Central began calling on its supporters in Southeast Asia to migrate to Mindanao because crossing into Syria was already very difficult. Relatively few answered the call, however, even with the relative ease of travel from Indonesia and the military achievements of the pro-ISIS alliance in Marawi that enabled it to fend off the Philippine army for five months. Some 40 Indonesian extremists tried to leave for Mindanao between 2016 and 2018. Of those, nine were deported, six were killed fighting, twelve were arrested in Indonesia before they could depart, three were arrested in the Philippines, five were arrested in Sabah and the rest may still be in Mindanao. Unless an ISIS training camp is re-established that reaches out to Indonesians, the number of Indonesians traveling to Mindanao is likely to remain low.

That leaves hundreds of frustrated deportees now back in Indonesia, where there is little capacity to implement sustained rehabilitation or reintegration programs, and where monitoring is almost non-existent.

## VII. CONCLUSIONS

---

A good program for deportees would consist of several elements: a good tool for assessing high-risk offenders; a more structured debriefing and counselling program on arrival back in Indonesia; a specially trained team of social workers, with offices in different parts of Indonesia, that could be deployed to work with new groups of arrivals as well as periodically monitor the welfare of those who have already returned home and work with families; a mentoring program to work especially with adolescent children; and a training program for local officials to understand who the deportees are and the need to balance vigilance with integration into community life. All of these elements require a sustained commitment on the part of the government; there is no quick fix, no two-week lecture series that will turn all deportees into good citizens.

It might be worth thinking about putting a professional team of social workers together that would be specifically trained to work with extremist families, in much the way that Detachment 88 was created after the Bali bombings to fill a clear gap. The team could build on – but would require different skills from – the social psychologists' work at the University of Indonesia. Housed within the Ministry of Social Affairs, they would go through a training process that exposed them to the latest studies on drawing individuals out of gangs, Neo-Nazi movements, religious cults and other extremist movements as well as using basic social work skills to evaluate family dynamics and help work out problems with the communities. Once the team was established, with regional centres in areas of particular vulnerability, its social workers could be deployed to work with released prisoners as well as deportees and returnees. The emphasis would be not on punishment but on understanding family dynamics in a way that could help build new social networks.

Many of the deportee children are now teenagers who could benefit from mentoring programs, if the right kind of program could be designed. It would be worth drawing on the experience of other countries to see how the needs of returning children have been handled and where school-based interventions might be appropriate.

Monitoring the activities of deportees is obviously important, but too much attention from authorities can also undermine reintegration efforts. Some kind of formal reporting procedure by the deportees at regular intervals (for example every three months for the first year, every six months for the following year) that can feed into a more professional evaluation of the individual's or family's welfare would nevertheless be useful.

The problem is not just that Indonesia lacks such a program. It is also that there is no legal basis for requiring such a procedure since most of the deportees have not committed any crime under Indonesian law.

## **INSTITUTE FOR POLICY ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT (IPAC)**

The Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC) was founded in 2013 on the principle that accurate analysis is a critical first step toward preventing violent conflict. Our mission is to explain the dynamics of conflict—why it started, how it changed, what drives it, who benefits—and get that information quickly to people who can use it to bring about positive change.

In areas wracked by violence, accurate analysis of conflict is essential not only to peaceful settlement but also to formulating effective policies on everything from good governance to poverty alleviation. We look at six kinds of conflict: communal, land and resource, electoral, vigilante, extremist and insurgent, understanding that one dispute can take several forms or progress from one form to another. We send experienced analysts with long-established contacts in the area to the site to meet with all parties, review primary written documentation where available, check secondary sources and produce in-depth reports, with policy recommendations or examples of best practices where appropriate.

We are registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs in Jakarta as the Foundation for Preventing International Crises (Yayasan Penanggulangan Krisis Internasional); our website is [www.understandingconflict.org](http://www.understandingconflict.org). The research for this report was conducted with support from the Danish embassy in Jakarta