

RECENT AND PLANNED RELEASES OF INDONESIAN EXTREMISTS: AN UPDATE

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I. INTRODUCTION

Analysing releases of convicted terrorists in Indonesia can help illuminate the state of prisons, track the evolution of extremist organisations and assess future risk. In August 2018, it also provides a benchmark for looking at how Indonesia's criminal justice system handles terrorism offenders just as a new, strengthened counter-terrorism law comes into force.

This report looks at 144 prisoners released since January 2017 or scheduled for release between now and December 2019. Some striking facts emerge from the data that suggest new challenges for the Indonesian government:

- In the period January 2017-August 2018, some 70 convicted terrorists were released. In the same period, close to 400 terrorist suspects were arrested, including more than 280 between May and August 2018 alone. The prison system was already overburdened. With many more coming in than going out, and most of those likely to receive heavier sentences than in the past, it is not clear how already overburdened detention centres, prosecutors, courts and prisons are going to cope.
- Of the 144, the largest cluster by far – more than 50 prisoners – consists of those affiliated with Mujahidin Indonesia Timur (MIT), the small Islamist insurgency that fought in the hills outside Poso, Central Sulawesi (see Appendix I). It was one of the first groups in Indonesia to declare allegiance to ISIS leader Abu Bakar al-Baghdadi, and MIT's late leader, Santoso, called himself the amir of ISIS forces in Indonesia. Successful reintegration of this cluster could mean the difference between a peaceful Poso and another eruption of violence. The good news is that the Poso police have a carefully thought-through program in place.
- The group as a whole had an average sentence of 5.54 years, meaning that many were arrested just as ISIS was beginning to attract recruits in Indonesia. It includes the first significant cluster of prisoners with Syria connections to be released (eleven in all). This raises the question of how prison management issues may change as the population of terrorist inmates gradually becomes to be dominated by ISIS supporters from Jemaah Ansharud Daulah (JAD).
- The diversity of the group underscores how complex Indonesian terrorist networks are. It includes a cluster of nine men representing splinters of Darul Islam in West Java that fell apart, regrouped, expanded and splintered, sometimes reaching beyond their geographic base but always coming back to it. It also includes a cluster of fourteen men from Solo, representing several different groups whose members sometimes joined against a common enemy (the police) but who also stayed strongly rooted in specific neighbourhoods. These groups pre-dated ISIS and JAD and will outlast both.
- All 144 were arrested under the 2003 anti-terrorism law, meaning almost all had a direct link to a violent crime, even if some were only involved peripherally as couriers, for example, or as hiderees of fugitives. (The returnees from Syria, ironically, are an exception and have no connection to violence on Indonesian soil.) With the 2018 law now permitting arrests on much broader grounds, such as membership in a terrorist organisation, there may be more peripheral players taken into custody than ever before, making it all the more important that these individuals are not further radicalised in prison.
- Finally, this analysis shows the ongoing difficulty of pre-release risk assessment and post-release monitoring. Two of those released in 2017 were re-arrested in 2018 for involvement in violent extremist networks. One had been deemed entirely rehabilitated

at the time of his release; the other was known to be high risk and police had done their best to keep an eye on him.

Each of these challenges will be examined in turn.

II. THE INFRASTRUCTURE CRISIS

Indonesia does not have enough maximum security facilities to hold a dramatically increased number of extremists before and after trial. The number of incarcerated extremists has skyrocketed since the bombing attacks in Surabaya on 13-14 May 2018. This is the combined result of the round-up of suspects after Surabaya, the application of a strengthened anti-terrorism law that went into force on 22 June 2018 and the determination of the Jokowi government to ensure that two major international events hosted by Indonesia – the Asian Games in August and the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank in October – proceed smoothly.

The huge intake is already straining the capacity of police remand centres but soon the burden will shift to prosecutors who have to prepare the cases for court. The 26 prosecutors designated for handling terrorism cases are already stretched thin, and their caseload is about to double in October or November 2018 when police dossiers on the new arrests reach them. The burden then passes to the courts to try them and the regular prison system to hold them, once sentenced. In the past, a steady stream of releases of prisoners who had completed their relatively lenient sentences kept the prison population manageable. If arrests continue to climb under the new law AND suspects are given longer sentences, the prison system could also face a crunch point, even with new maximum security facilities under construction. There has been little forward thinking about how all this might affect rehabilitation programs.

A. Detention Centres

The number of Indonesians arrested on terrorism charges grew steadily after the January 2016 attack in central Jakarta. The swelling population of extremists led to severe overcrowding of the one detention centre used to hold them at the headquarters of the police mobile brigade (Brimob) in Kelapa Dua, Depok, outside Jakarta. A deadly riot in May 2018 was a disaster waiting to happen.

The Brimob center had been used to detain newly arrested terrorism suspects since 2011. It was designed to hold errant police facing disciplinary measures, not violent extremists, and it had a capacity of “ideally 64, maximum 90,” according to Indonesian police chief Tito Karnavian.¹ In mid- 2013 it was holding 39 men awaiting trial, on trial or newly sentenced on terrorism charges, while a detention centre at Jakarta police headquarters, which was being phased out, held 80.² By 2015, the Brimob centre was holding 88, including 39 who had been tried and sentenced but not yet moved to the regular prison system.³ By mid-2017 the number had jumped to over 150 – the result of sweeps following the Jakarta attacks, intensified police-military operations in late 2015 and 2016 in Poso, Central Sulawesi and new activity on the part of the pro-ISIS Jamaah Anshorud Daulah (JAD), especially as travel to Syria slowed down and attention turned to action at home.

The overcrowding generated intense pressure on the Corrections Directorate of the Ministry of Law and Human Rights to transfer all the sentenced prisoners to the regular prison system. That

1 “Kapolri: Asal-usul Keberadaan Rutan Brimob Bukan untuk Pelaku Terorisme,” www.idntimes.com, 10 May 2018.

2 “Daftar Tahanan di Rutan Kelapa Dua, Depok”, undated Indonesian police list, obtained in July 2013.

3 “Data Tahanan di Rutan Kelapa Dua, Brimob, Depok Sampai Dgn Tgl 7 Jan 2015”, obtained in January 2015.

process was underway in November 2017 when hardcore inmates rioted over the confiscation of an inmate's cell phone. The riot intensified the pressure to transfer 124 of the most dangerous convicts to the newly renovated Pasir Putih maximum security prison in the penal complex on Nusakambangan island off the south coast of Java.⁴ Determination of high risk offenders went slowly, however, while new arrests continued. When the riot broke out on 8-9 May 2018, the Brimob centre was holding 155 men as well as a woman and infant child. All were immediately transferred to other facilities, including 90 to a relatively new prison in Gunung Sindur, Bogor.⁵

The closure of the Brimob centre coincided with the huge increase in new arrests, forcing many of the suspects to be held in provincial police or Brimob facilities in the regions where the arrests took place. It is a temporary solution; a new maximum security holding centre is being constructed on the grounds of the police training centre in Cikeas, Bogor.⁶ In the meantime, there is the question of where these suspects will be held when they are eventually brought to Jakarta for trial.

With all of the makeshift arrangements in place, it will be nothing short of a miracle if there are no escapes or escape attempts by some of the suspects arrested since May.

B. Prisons

Despite the increase in terrorism arrests in 2016 and the overcrowding at the Brimob centre, the number of terrorism offenders in the regular prison system stayed fairly steady from 2015 to 2017, thanks to the steady stream of releases. Large clusters of prisoners finished their terms, including many of the more than 100 arrested after the 2010 breakup of a terrorist training camp in Aceh. Many of the Poso prisoners, as noted, will be out in 2019, and there are few clusters as large in the pipeline, so the pace of releases may slow.

That means the prison system will have to brace itself for a significant increase in convicted terrorists, quite apart from the increase of ordinary criminal offenders being rounded up before the Asian Games.⁷ A new "super-maximum" security facility, Karanganyar Prison, is being built on Nusakambangan, modelled after the U.S. Federal Correctional Institute in Pollock, Louisiana. When completed, it will have a capacity of 500, with state of the art technology for round-the-clock monitoring. Land-clearing began in 2016. In late May 2018, officials said the prison was 40 per cent complete, but observers said as of late June, only the outer gates and security posts were finished.⁸ For budgetary reasons, however, construction reportedly has to be completed before the end of the year, so workers are busy around the clock trying to meet the deadline.

Once finished, the new super-max prison combined with the renovated Pasir Putih prison on Nusakambangan may have enough space to hold the most hardcore convicted terrorists, with the less risky spread as they are now among Indonesia's district-level prisons. (As of 14 May

4 Pasir Putih was designated in 2017 as one of five maximum security prisons for high risk offenders. Those deemed to be most dangerous among sentenced terrorist suspects are to be detained there until the new prison, Karanganyar, is finished, and then both will be used. Pasir Putih is being rehabilitated block by block, with new inmates moved in as soon as the new blocks, fitted with state of the art monitoring technology, are ready. As of August 2018, it had 84 inmates and 126 staff.

5 The transfers took place as follows. On 10 May, 153 detainees arrived in Nusakambangan from Brimob centre. On 16 May, one of the ringleaders of the riot, Wawan, arrived in Nusakambangan. Prosecutors, however, were worried that some of the prisoners were facing trial, on trial or serving as witnesses in trials, and if they were held beyond the legal limits, they would have to be released. Accordingly, on 20 May, 56 prisoners were moved back from Nusakambangan to Gunung Sindur prison in Bogor. On 24 May, three more arrived in Gunung Sindur from Nusakambangan. On 29 May, 50 terrorism offenders being held at Jakarta police headquarters (who had already been tried) were moved to Nusakambangan. On 30 May, another 31 detainees were moved back from Nusakambangan to Gunung Sindur.

6 "Kapolri usul rutan baru tahanan teroris dibangun di Cikeas," 22 May 2018.

7 The Jakarta police commander said 247 had been arrested for petty street crime in the the capital alone since a new order to shoot on sight came into force on 3 July. Nationwide, the two-week figure was 320. "Police arrest 247, Shoot 11 Robbers to Death in 2-week Operation," *en.tempo.co*, 14 July 2018.

8 "Lapas Karanganyar di Nusakambangan disiapkan jadi Lapas 'Super Maximum Security'," *kompas.com*, 22 May 2018.

2018, 280 convicted terrorism offenders were being held in 113 different prisons.)⁹

Finding sufficient physical space is one thing. Ensuring enough trained staff and putting together new programs that reflect the decision to keep high-risk prisoners segregated is another. As of June 2018, the staffing at Pasir Putih where the terrorists considered most dangerous are held was still less than half of the total planned – and staff have to be not just hired but given intensive briefings about who their inmates are and what they should watch for. In the past, close relationships have developed between some guards and inmates that led to security breaches, such as staff alerting inmates as to when raids to search for mobile phones would take place.

All the new maximum security facilities have individual cells, instead of the more usual multiple-occupant cells that most regular prisons rely on. This, plus 24-hour CCTV monitoring and more stringent control of visitors, packages and cell phones, can cause the same kind of anger among the inmates that led to the rioting at the Brimob centre on 8 May.¹⁰ This increases the pressure on prison authorities and the National Anti-Terrorism Agency (Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terorisme, BNPT) to come up with creative, targeted programs for the prisoners aimed at persuading them to disengage from violence. There are few effective programs in place, despite BNPT's claim of phenomenal success in deradicalisation.¹¹

The danger is that the model instead becomes the BNPT Deradicalisation Centre in Sentul, Bogor. Sentul was supposed to be a halfway house for “rehabilitated” terrorism offenders who were soon to be released. Those transferred to Sentul were deemed to be model prisoners, cooperative with the prison authorities, loyal to the Indonesian republic, and ready to return to society.¹² As of May 2018, the inmates were reportedly so unhappy that a few had “re-radicalised”, angry that the promises made by government officials had not been fulfilled. Despite their good behaviour, they were under more restrictions than before, interaction with their friends was harder, it was difficult for family members to visit and they were bored. The anger was such that at least a few had begun to look at BNPT officials as *thaghut* oppressors again.

Isnaeni Ramdhani has the dubious distinction of being the first Sentul alumnus to return to violent extremism. Released from Sentul in early 2018 and considered fully rehabilitated, he was re-arrested on 31 May 2018 following the Surabaya attacks because of his ties to a JAD group in Probolinggo.

III. THE MIT RELEASES

Releases of convicted terrorists tend to take place in clusters because most terrorist plots and actions involve a group rather than a “lone wolf” and those involved are given similar sentences. Many arrested in 2010 for involvement in the Aceh training camp, for example, got sentences of seven or eight years, meaning that with remissions, most were released in 2015-2017. The

9 Data from Corrections Directorate, Ministry of Law and Human Rights, 14 May 2018.

10 Visitors, who can be only immediate family members, are allowed only once a month for a maximum of 30 minutes, and there is no direct physical contact allowed with the inmates. Conversations are recorded, and no outside food or care packages are allowed.

11 “BNPT claim program deradikalisasi berhasil 100 persen,” *detik.com*, 22 May 2018. BNPT takes the number of terrorist suspects convicted and released (over 600 since 2002), subtracts the number of recidivists (about 60) and claims everyone else to have successfully been deradicalised. Many released prisoners, however, decide on their own not to return to violence because of family pressures or their own cost-benefit analysis (see Julie Chernov-Hwang, *Why Terrorists Quit: The Disengagement of Indonesian Jihadists*, Ithaca: 2018). There is little reason to believe there is a causal link between BNPT programs and their decision to stay out of jihad operations.

12 For more on Sentul, see IPC, “Update on Indonesian Pro-ISIS Prisoners and Deradicalisation Efforts,” Report No. 34, 14 December 2016. Prison authorities had been opposed to the idea of a “deradicalisation centre” from the beginning because they preferred to have the cooperative prisoners help out with some of the more hardcore inmates. They did not want to see their “successes” being transferred out. Nevertheless, plans for Sentul went ahead and the first seven prisoners were transferred there in February 2017. As of May 2018, the Centre had fourteen inmates.

biggest cluster by far for the 2017-2019 period consists of men – and three women – linked to Santoso’s MIT. Most of the 53 prisoners involved got relatively light sentences of three or four years. A few, who were directly involved in murders of police, got a little longer, but the average for the whole group was still just over four years.

Most of the 53 will go back to the Poso area. At least seven are from Bima, Sumbawa and include a few considered particularly militant.¹³ Given the history of Poso, both as a past site of communal conflict (1998-2001) and a centre of violent extremism and military training (2000-2007 and 2010-2016), planning the return of these released prisoners becomes critical.

Police are well aware of the ease with which former combatants were re-recruited in 2010-11 after a lull of about three years during which some of the extremists had seemingly distanced themselves from jihadi activities. They are also mindful that at least one extremist cleric, Ustad Yasin, released from prison in November 2016, is back in the area preaching and that seven members of Santoso’s group are still at large – including Ali Kalora, who in May exhorted fellow *mujahidin* to go to the aid of the rioters in the Brimob detention centre. The wives of Santoso, Ali Kalora and one other fighter now in prison are among those scheduled for release in 2019.

Fortunately, the Poso police (Polres Poso) on their own initiative have put a useful rehabilitation program in place that may help. It involves getting to know the prisoners while they are still in detention (not just in the Poso area), getting to know their families, developing an ongoing relationship with them and deciding who might benefit from assistance once released. Some have been helped to set up small businesses – no cash transfers involved – with additional mentoring from someone already engaged in that business. One such beneficiary, Mulyadi, now aged 28, is among the group of 144 analysed in this report. He was released in August 2017 after serving about three-quarters of his three-year sentence. He had taken part in military training with Santoso and served briefly as a courier, sending homemade guns up to the hills. Police, together with some ex-prisoners who had become successful businessmen, helped Mulyadi set up a business in his village refilling bottled water jugs. The local police sponsored a ceremony marking the opening of his enterprise, with the district and subdistrict police commanders, the village head, a religious leader and several ex-prisoners on hand.¹⁴ The police keep in touch with him and keep an eye on how the business is going. About a dozen ex-prisoners have been helped in this way so far.

The Poso police have mapped out who among the MIT prisoners is out, who is in and who is due for release in a way that enables them to deploy limited resources on the problem cases. In one case, medical assistance to the child of one particularly tough inmate led first his wife, herself an extremist, then the inmate himself to change their attitudes toward the police.¹⁵ The rehabilitation program is not a sure safeguard against recidivism. Santoso himself, after all, was the beneficiary of a post-conflict employment program and used his new job to hire friends who later joined his extremist military activities. There is also a question of whether the police command will be able to handle a large cluster of releases at once. But the police deserve credit for understanding the urgency of problem. Those they help will likely become a valuable source of information as well on some of the others released.

13 One of these is Salman alias Bos Arab, born 1973, involved in fund-raising for the Aceh camp, making bombs at the Umar al Khattab pesantren in Bima in July 2011, looking for military training sites in Nusa Tenggara Barat and recruiting fighters for Poso. He is also linked to the deaths of three police officers in Bima. For all of this, he received a sentence of 3.5 years and was released in December 2017.

14 “Lakukan Deradikalisasi, Polres Poso Resmikan Usaha Mantan Napi Terorisme,” www.kabarselebes.id, 10 May 2018.

15 For more on this case, see “Memutus Mata Rantai Konflik di Poso,” *Kompas*, 11 August 2017. The inmate is Ambo Ece, arrested in 2015 and now serving a seven-and-a-half-year sentence in Makassar. His child had polio, and police worked with Nurmi, Ambo’s wife, to get him treatment.

It is important to recall that Santoso and his band of armed jihadis became a potent symbol for ISIS supporters because they were the only *mujahidin* in Indonesia who could plausibly be said to control territory, even if it was a constantly shifting network of jungle camps. MIT's goal was to use jihad to expand control over land where an Islamic community could be set up and *shari'ah* applied. This was also the goal of Jemaah Islamiyah in Poso from 2000 to 2007; the training camp in Aceh; and the pro-ISIS coalition that took over the southern Philippines city of Marawi in May 2017. That goal will not go away, and some of those returning to the Poso area from prison today remain likely recruits for a future leader.

One other note about this cluster: the three women soon to be released represent the first female combatants in Indonesia, encouraged by their husbands to undergo military training and take up arms. What they do, what they tell other women in the religious discussion groups that they rejoin, becomes important to understand at a time when more and more women are becoming involved in jihadi operations, either on their own, with families or as part of husband-wife teams. As more women get arrested, prison employees at women's prisons need to be alert to the danger of recruitment of fellow inmates. Likewise, there is an urgent need for women-specific in-prison and post-release rehabilitation programs.

IV. THE ISIS-SYRIA LINK

The group of 144 released and soon-to-be-released prisoners include the first significant cluster of individuals with Syria links to have completed prison sentences. It is a reminder that Indonesia has to start thinking now about what happens when the men with pro-ISIS JAD links start coming out – as a group they may be tougher to handle than members of other organisation because they have defined themselves so much in terms of enmity to the state, extreme *takfiri* ideology and violence.

That said, the four returnees from Syria in this cluster may not be as high risk as one might think. They were all part of a religious study group (*pengajian*) in Malang, East Java associated with the man known as Abu Jandal.¹⁶ They travelled to Syria between 2013 and 2014, with three staying only a few months and one, Ahmad Junaedi, a full year.¹⁷ Junaedi returned, disillusioned with ISIS and disappointed that the stipend and perks were less than he had been led to believe. All four were arrested in 2015 and charged with taking part in banned military training or collecting funds for travel to Syria. As they had not committed any violence inside Indonesia, they were given relatively short sentences.

Others in the cluster had raised funds or helped arrange travel for others to go to Syria.¹⁸ At the time, police considered the cases a legal breakthrough, because despite the absence of any provision in the 2003 anti-terrorism law banning travel to join a terrorist organisation, prosecutors persuaded the judges to convict, using not only the 2003 law but also a 2008 law on information and electronic transactions that bans spreading hatred on the Internet and a 2013 law on the prevention of terrorism financing.¹⁹

The cluster also includes three deportees who intended to join ISIS but were caught before they could do so. Two were caught in Turkey and sent back, Abu Fida in 2014 and Daeng Stanza

16 Abu Jandal, whose real name was Salim Mubarak Attamimi, was a top Indonesian fighter who left for Syria with two wives and five children in March 2014 and was killed in November 2016.

17 The four are Abdul Hakim Munabari who left for Syria in August 2013 and stayed for eight months; Ridwan Sungkar, who spent a few months in Syria in 2014; Ahmad Junaedi who left in March 2014 and returned a year later; and Helmi Alamudi, who helped finance the men's travel and also went briefly himself.

18 Among those in this cluster convicted for facilitating travel to Syria are Aprimul, Engkos Koswara alias Abu Kembar, Robby Putera and Ajis Hermawan.

19 The laws in question are UU 11 Tahun 2008 tentang Informasi dan Transaksi Elektronik and UU No.9 Tahun 2013 tentang Pencegahan dan Pemberantasan Tindak Pidana Pendanaan Terorisme.

in 2015. For both, police used the old tactic of trying to find an earlier crime they could punish them for if they were not sure of conviction for their pro-ISIS activities. In Abu Fida's case, it was hiding fugitive terrorist Noordin Top in 2004. He received a three-year sentence and was released in May 2017. Daeng Stanza had been involved with cleric Aman Abdurrahman since 2004, when a bomb-making class in Cimanggis, outside Jakarta, resulted in a premature explosion and sent Aman to prison. The third deportee in the group, Moh. Sibghotullah, was arrested in 2014 in Kuala Lumpur, en route to Syria together with his family and that of an Indonesian already fighting (and later killed) there, Bagus Maskuron. Sibgho, as he is known, got a slap-on-the-wrist sentence of two years and eight months, since he had not committed any serious crime under Indonesian law. He was released in August 2017 and on 18 July 2018 was re-arrested at his home in Sragen, Central Java under the new anti-terrorism law for links to a pro-ISIS group in Yogyakarta.

In the future, Indonesia will have to be prepared for more offenders with Syria links being released, raising the question of how to avoid the development of a possibly dangerous "ISIS alumni network" among ex-prisoners (or perhaps turn one to positive use); how to monitor possible ongoing communication with contacts in Syria; and how to ensure that preachers among released prisoners are prevented as much as possible from disseminating *takfiri* ideology.

V. THE COMPLEXITY OF TERRORIST NETWORKS

The affiliations of the prisoners released or due for release underscore the complexity of Indonesia's extremist networks. Indonesia's terrorism problem is not just about JAD. Terrorist groups in West Java and Solo, not to mention Makassar, Bima and Ambon, have histories that go back long before ISIS ever came into existence. Their ultimate aim, sometimes only vaguely defined, has always been an Islamic state in Indonesia, more than a global caliphate. That goal will remain, whatever happens in Syria, so Indonesia should not let the current preoccupation with returning "FTF" (foreign terrorist fighters) obscure a much more entrenched problem, with violent extremists whose roots go back sometimes as far as three generations.

One cluster among the 144 is an example. Its members are from several West Java-based groups that are all splinters of Darul Islam: the Abu Umar group, the Abu Roban group and the Mujahidin of Western Indonesia (Mujahidin Indonesia Barat, MIB). They are also linked to the branch of Jamaah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT) that later became the nucleus of JAD in West Java. The history of these groups is described in an earlier IPAC report.²⁰ The key point, however, is that just as there was a constant process of splintering and realignment before these particular prisoners were arrested, that process will continue after their release. These men are being released into communities that have a history of extremism going back to the 1950s, and while many will quietly resume their lives, the appeal of an Islamic state will persist for them and their children.

The sentences of these men were heavier than the norm, averaging almost seven years, meaning most were arrested before ISIS had emerged, though several of their associates, still in prison, have become deeply committed to its cause. With the right leadership, any of these men could easily get back involved in violent networks. While West Java was their stronghold, many members became involved in operations much further afield. Several looked to Santoso in Poso as a role model and were involved in training with him or trying to get him supplies; others were involved in the Aceh training camp. Several men in this cluster were part of a cell linked to a bomb that exploded prematurely in Bojong, Depok in 2012. Members of the Abu Roban group were involved in bank robberies to raise funds, from Lampung to Central Java in 2012-2013.

A particular danger of this group is its ties to major terrorist leaders still in prison. The

20 IPAC, "Weak, Therefore Violent: The Mujahidin of Western Indonesia," Report No.5, 2 December 2013.

incentive, indeed obligation, among *mujahidin* to visit those still detained is very high. That obligation ensures communications continue, not just between the inmates and their newly released friends, but between the friends and other visitors who come to the prison and their families. Prison visits become a major mechanism for expanding extremist alliances.²¹

In this case, a detained leader that this cluster would normally have felt obliged to visit is Iskandar alias Abu Qutaibah, who became the spokesman for the rioting prisoners at the Brimob centre on 9 May. Iskandar was active in JAT, MIB, the Abu Roban group and JAD; his geographic range was from Lampung to Bima. Close to Aman Abdurrahman, he reportedly became the operational commander of JAD after its first amir, Zainul Anshori, was imprisoned in March 2017. At the time, Iskandar was out of prison, having been released in December 2016 after serving a three-year sentence related to the Abu Roban robberies. He was re-arrested in June 2017 for JAD activities. As of July 2018 he was in the newly renovated Pasir Putih prison on Nusakambangan, where visitors are restricted to immediate family.

It will be interesting going forward to see if the restrictions on visitors have any discernible impact on the way extremists communicate or on the ability of the hardcore to access information on developments in extremist communities at home and abroad.

VI. THE JEMAAH ISLAMİYAH CLUSTER

Nine of those released or due for release are JI or “neo-JI”, a term used by police to refer to people involved in JI activities after a long lull that followed the organisation’s 2007 decision to abandon violence in Indonesia, at least for the time being.²² These nine were almost all picked up in a raid in Klaten, Central Java in 2014 for involvement in a project to produce home-made guns; there is some suggestion that they wanted to use the guns to train for going to Syria, where some of their colleagues had joined the al-Qaeda-linked al-Nusra Front or its subsequent incarnations. (JI as an organisation is virulently anti-ISIS.) Their average sentence was four and a half years, and most received remissions for good behaviour.

Their arrests and pending releases are a reminder that JI is still alive and well and committed to *ihad*, or military preparation for war, even if for now, the wars they want to fight are not in Indonesia. Information on the total number of JI members trained in Syria is poor, among other things because the moratorium on violence at home means very few get arrested, and therefore very little information comes out about JI’s underground activities.

JI remains the only extremist group in Indonesia, however, with a systematic recruitment and indoctrination strategy and a long-term vision of what it wants to achieve. One man in this cluster of releases illustrates the breadth of experience that JI can bring to bear. Noor Chandra Pindariza was recruited in 1997, inducted into JI in 2000, helped hide Noordin Top in 2004, lived in Poso in 2004-2005, reactivated the JI branch in Lampung in 2010 and became responsible for a JI agricultural program to develop plantations in Sulawesi as a source of income. He was arrested in September 2014, given a four-year sentence, and released in 2017.

With al-Qaeda active in Yemen, where many Indonesians went to study until the escalation of the war there, and showing interest in the fate of the Rohingya in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh, where many Indonesian groups are providing humanitarian aid, it is important that JI stay in the government’s sights.

21 See International Crisis Group, “How Indonesian Extremists Regroup”, Asia Report No.228, 16 July 2012.

22 The background to that decision is explained in IPAC, “The Re-Emergence of Jemaah Islamiyah”, Report No.36, 27 April 2017.

VII. THE BHRUM NAIM CLUSTER

One other cluster among the 144 is worth singling out – five men linked to the late Bahrūn Naim, almost certainly killed in Syria in late 2017.²³ Bahrūn Naim used multiple social media accounts to draw people he knew into online extremist networks, sometimes resembling virtual organisations with departments for fund-raising, military affairs and recruitment. He drew frequently on a one-time anti-vice organisation in Solo called Tim Hisbah, whose members had moved from thuggery to terrorism long before he drew them to ISIS.

But he also drew on the network of people he knew from Hizbut Tahrir, of which he once had been a full-fledged member. Hizbut Tahrir is an international organisation, banned by Indonesia in late 2017 for its doctrine that a caliphate should replace all other forms of government. While HT leaders in Indonesia and abroad rejected the ISIS self-declared caliphate, many members and supporters were attracted. One HT member who joined Bahrūn Naim's ISIS network was Gigih Rahmat Dewa, a factory worker on Batam island, near Singapore. While Gigih himself will not be released until 2020, a few others in the Batam cell will get out in 2019.²⁴

One might think that within the Batam group, Gigih, who had the closest ties to Bahrūn Naim, would be the most militant, but in fact he reportedly appears to be more inclined to disengage than some of his colleagues in the cell.

VIII. POST-RELEASE MONITORING

The Indonesian prison system is still struggling to find a tool for assessing high-risk offenders that is reasonably accurate, culturally appropriate and simple enough for staff with limited education to use. Five different survey instruments, funded by different donors and promoted by different parts of the corrections bureaucracy, have not produced the desired result.

To date, the main burden of post-release monitoring continues to fall on the police. The district-level parole board (Balai Pemasyarakatan, BAPAS) does not have the training or resources nor does the Social Rehabilitation Directorate of the Ministry of Social Affairs which in theory takes over responsibility for released offenders when the parole period is up. It is the police who are most concerned about preventing future attacks, and while the recidivism rate among convicted terrorists remains relatively low, there are enough incidents involving former prisoners that police do their best to keep track of some of those considered most dangerous.

In the cluster of 144, there are several who would be at the top of anyone's list of high-risk releases, one of whom, Sibghotullah, has already been re-arrested. Others include:

- Sulthan Qolbi alias Ust Arsyad alias Asadollah, due for release in December 2018. Born in Madura in 1970, he was arrested in 2006 in West Java for attacking and robbing a priest and later received a 15-year sentence for involvement in a 2005 attack in Loki, Ceram, Maluku in which five Brimob officers and their cook were killed. He also helped radicalise a group in Palembang, South Sumatra when he was on the run from Maluku.²⁵ When he was transferred back to Ambon for trial, he was so persuasive a preacher inside prison that he converted at least one Christian criminal offender, and local officials begged for him to be transferred out. He was moved first to Porong prison in Surabaya, then after five years to Nusakambangan. His original ties were to the organisation KOMPAK but he also worked together with the group around Aman Abdurrahman. He briefly trained

²³ Reports of his death also circulated in July 2018, but the earlier reports are more convincing.

²⁴ They include Eka Saputra, Hati Abisoko, Tarmizi alias Ibnu and Trio Safrido. All received three-year sentences and will be out in 2019.

²⁵ See International Crisis Group, "Indonesia: Radicalisation of the 'Palembang Group'", Asia Briefing No.92, 20 May 2009.

in Mindanao. This is one cleric who should not be allowed to preach after his release, but there are no policies allowing for such restrictions.

- Qomarudin alias Mustaqim alias Abu Yusuf, released on 6 July 2018. A former JI member from Lampung, he taught at the Lukman al-Hakiem pesantren in Johor, Malaysia and trained at Camp Hudaibiyah in Mindanao in 1998.²⁶ He recruited a Lampung contingent for the Aceh training camp and became the instructor there for shooting and map-reading. He was arrested in April 2010 and sentenced to ten years. Close to Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, he was one of the Nusakambangan prisoners to declare allegiance to ISIS in July 2014.
- Beben Khairul Rizal, due for release in December 2018. A Majalengka, West Java native born in 1975, he lived in Lampung and acted as a deputy to Mustaqim, above, helping recruit for the Aceh camp. He was arrested in September 2010 in connection with the robbery a month earlier of a CIMB-Niaga Bank branch in Medan. He received an eight-year sentence, later raised to ten on appeal. Like Mustaqim, he became a committed ISIS supporter in prison.
- Jaja Miharja Fadillah, due for release in July 2019. A member of Ring Banten, the Darul Islam splinter whose members took part in the 2002 Bali bombing and the 2004 Australian embassy bombing, he was also involved in the Aceh camp and the CIMB bank robbery. He was arrested in September 2010, received a seven year sentence and has been in different prisons on Nusakambangan since his conviction. He also took the oath of allegiance to al-Baghdadi in July 2014 and has been a committed ISIS supporter ever since.

These four men can serve as a test case for the ability of the police and prison system to keep an eye on problematic releases. The difficulties of monitoring suspects in any country was underscored by Alain Grignard of the Brussels Federal Police when he said in a 2015 interview:

[Y]ou cannot put more than a very limited number of people under 24/7 surveillance. To tail just a few suspects you need agents in several cars. And you're talking about three different shifts through the day. You also need teams back in the operational center to coordinate wiretaps and file paperwork. All this amounts to hundreds of people being assigned to just one operation. Very quickly the expense becomes prohibitive.²⁷

There is also an issue about how long to keep monitoring in place. The Indonesian police were closely monitoring several of the men involved in the May 2018 Surabaya bombings but pulled the surveillance three months before the attacks, in part because the families seemed to be engaging with their neighbours and did not seem to warrant such close attention. While none of the individuals involved was a released prisoner, the difficulty of knowing when to cease round-the-clock monitoring and how to ensure reliable reporting from non-police informants remains a challenge, whether one is talking about released prisoners, deportees or simply suspected extremists.

26 Lukman al-Hakiem was JI's headquarters from its founding in 1993 until its leaders returned to Indonesia in 1999. It subsequently became the headquarters of Mantiqi I, the regional division covering Malaysia and Singapore.

27 Paul Cruickshank, "A View from the CT Foxhole: An Interview with Alain Grignard, Brussels Federak Police", *CTC Sentinel*, Vol.8, Issue 8, August 2015.

IX. CONCLUSION

Looking at a list of releases and planned releases is like going back in time. It is a reminder of the issues that were current when these men and women were arrested and how the organisations they were involved with have evolved.

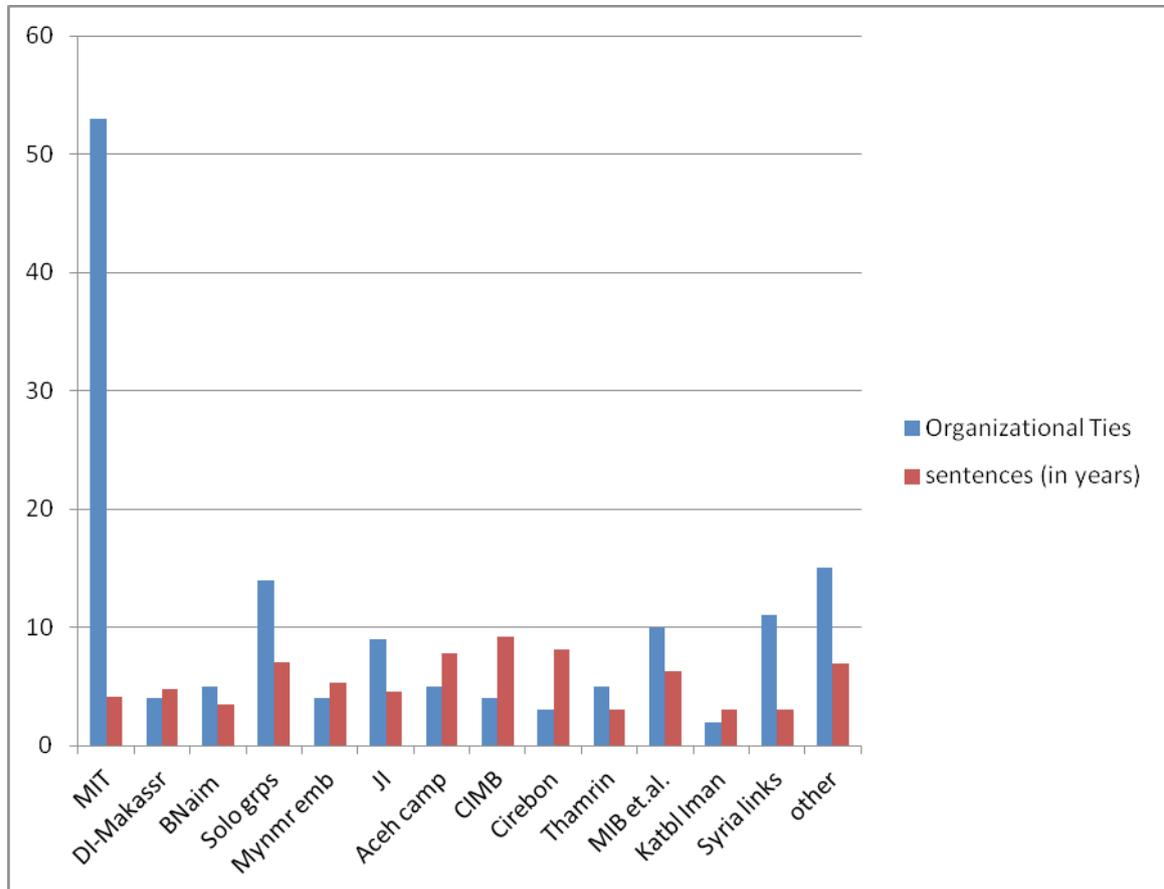
The challenges for the Indonesian government that these releases reinforce are the need:

1. To understand the implications of a sharp increase in arrest of terrorist suspects on the rest of the criminal justice infrastructure, particularly pre-trial detention centres and post-trial prisons; the prosecution service; and the courts.
2. To prepare now for an extremist prisoner population that may be more dominated by militant *takfiris* than the men and women represented in this group.
3. To re-examine in-prison and post-release rehabilitation programs, including ensuring that there are programs especially designed for extremist women inmates.
4. To re-think how the Sentul Deradicalisation Centre should be used.
5. To look beyond JAD and the issue of returning foreign fighters and look at how to address the groups with strong territorial bases whose roots go back generations.

In addition to the utility of planning for the releases of particular groups and individuals, it might be worth having an annual exercise for the counter-terrorism police, BNPT and correction officials to take a list of scheduled releases for the coming year and ask themselves what that list reveals about where Indonesian extremism has been in the recent past. It could well illuminate where the extremist movement is headed.

APPENDIX I

CLUSTERS OF PRISONERS RELEASED OR SCHEDULED FOR RELEASE BETWEEN JANUARY 2017 AND DECEMBER 2019



The clusters and average sentences are as follows:

MIT: 50 men, 3 women; 4.09 yrs

Darul Islam-Makassar: 4 men, 4.75 yrs

Bahrn Naim network: 5 men, 3.5 yrs

Solo groups: 14 men, 7 yrs (Badri Hartono and Abu Hanifah grps; Tim Hisbah not linked to Bahrn Naim; Laweyan group)

Plot to attack Myanmar embassy: 4 men, 5.3 yrs

Jemaah Islamiyah: 9 men, 4.5 yrs

Aceh camp: 5 men, 7.8 yrs

CIMB bank robbery: 4 men, 9.25 yrs

Cirebon mosque attack: 3 men, 8.1 yrs

Thamrin bombings: 4 men (including one minor); 3 yrs

MIB, Abu Roban, Abu Umar: 10 men, 6.25 yrs

Katibul Iman: 2 men, 3 yrs

Syria links: 11 men, 3.04 yrs

Other: 15 men, 6.9 yrs

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