

Indonesia: Noordin Top's Support Base

I. OVERVIEW

More than a month after the 17 July 2009 hotel bombings in Jakarta, Noordin Mohammed Top remains at large, but his network is proving to be larger and more sophisticated than previously thought. Not only was it responsible for coordinated bombings at two luxury hotels in the heart of Jakarta's business district, but it also was apparently contemplating a car bomb attack on President Yudhoyono's residence. As more information comes to light, it looks increasingly likely that Noordin sought and received Middle Eastern funding. While the extent of foreign involvement this time around remains unclear, recruitment in Indonesia has proved disturbingly easy. The salafi jihadi ideology that legitimises attacks on the U.S. and its allies, and Muslims who associate with them, remains confined to a tiny fringe, but that fringe includes disaffected factions of many different radical groups and impressionable youths with no history of violence.

Many elements of Noordin's support base are familiar. Although he broke away from the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) organisation around 2004, Noordin retains an inner circle of JI militants who have been with him for the last four or five years. He can rely on many more, including teachers at JI schools and their students, to provide hiding places or logistical aid as needed. He has made repeated attempts to tap into the leadership of jihadi groups, not just JI but smaller organisations as well. In some cases, militant jihadis who want more action than their leaders may seek him out, rather than vice versa. He often manages to bring in a few family members and neighbours of those who hide him. The more systematic recruitment of foot soldiers seems to be done more by the inner circle than by Noordin himself. They recruit new youths as needed through study sessions in local mosques, or pick up young men radicalised through earlier exposure to jihadi preachers but then left behind when those preachers move on or are arrested. In every one of his operations, the suicide bombers were identified first by Noordin's lieutenants and only afterwards met the man himself.

There are new elements and new faces in the July attacks. One family has emerged as pivotal, both to the execution of the 17 July plot and other planned attacks, as well as to the contacts with the Middle East. Two brothers, Syaifudin Jaelani and Mohamed Syahrir are on the

police wanted list as members of Noordin's team. One of their sisters married the man who brought the bomb into the Ritz-Carlton and who died in a police siege in Temanggung, Central Java, on 8 August. The other sister was briefly married to a man who booked the Marriott room used by the bombers and whose arrest broke the case open for the police. The network of this one family extends from Yemen, where Syaifudin studied for four years, to Indonesia's national airline, Garuda, where Mohamed Syahrir worked as a technician. Noordin may still be the commander, but he has some exceedingly well-connected lieutenants who made their debut in the hotel bombings.

Uncovering Noordin's network is not a question of tracking down a closed group with a defined membership. It seems to be a loosely organised, almost ad hoc collection of people, largely but not exclusively on Java, that can easily adapt to arrests or deaths of members. It relies on friends, friends of friends, families and co-workers, with each person involved a potential recruiter of others.

This briefing examines the linkages among the people Noordin drew on for the 17 July attacks in an effort to understand his support base. It is focused on the local network, mostly on Java, not on the overseas links, as those were still being uncovered as this went to press. It is not about the ongoing police investigation and does not draw on any privileged information from the men arrested since 17 July. It is necessarily an interim study, using the known pieces of the puzzle to help explain why Noordin and his network have not only survived in Indonesia, but in some senses thrived. It is based on press reports and interviews conducted in connection with the current investigation, and extensive reading of documents collected for previous Crisis Group reports.

II. THE STORY SO FAR

The story of the bombings begins with the arrest of a man named Saefuddin Zuhri alias Sabit in Cilacap, on the south coast of Central Java, on 21 June 2009. Police had been looking for him since 2008, when he served as the intermediary between Noordin and a radical group in Palembang that wanted to make bombs. Documents found in his house led police to the house of Sabit's uncle, Baharudin Latif alias Baridin, whose daughter Noordin

married in 2006. They then discovered a cache of explosives in Baridin's back garden. They arrested the daughter, but Noordin and Baridin were gone.

Sabit's role in the Jakarta plot remains unclear, but there is reason to believe that his arrest may have forced the bombers to move the attack forward. After the hotel bombings, police used CCTV footage and information from the hotel to identify and pursue the perpetrators. One of them was a man named Ibrohim (one name) who had applied to work in the flower shop at the Ritz-Carlton in 2005, leaving a higher-paid job at another hotel. Police now believe he may have been deliberately planted there by Noordin's group, suggesting an impressive long-term planning capacity.

On 26 July, a statement appeared on a blog purportedly from Noordin Top in the name of "al Qo'idah Indonesia" claiming responsibility for the bombings. Its authenticity was questioned because of some differences, including the spelling of his own name, with the claim he posted on the Internet in 2005 after the second Bali bombings. But while the message may not have been actually typed by Noordin, the arguments used rang true, and it could well have been posted by one of his associates.¹

On 5 August, police announced they had arrested a man named Amir Ibrahim alias Amir Abdillah, the man who booked Room 1808 in the Marriott hotel where the suicide bomber stayed. This room became the centre of the bombing operations. Shortly thereafter police arrested two men whose information led police to believe that Noordin was hiding in a house in Beji, Kedu village, Temanggung in Central Java. The house was owned by their uncle, Mujahri.

Two separate police operations then took place on 7-8 August. Thinking they might have trapped Noordin and two or three others, police surrounded Mujahri's house in Temanggung on the evening of 7 August and kept it under siege for seventeen hours. When the firing stopped the next day, police went in, only to find one body that was not Noordin's.

Early on the same day, 8 August, based on information from Amir Ibrahim, they raided a house in an upscale neighbourhood in Jatiasih, Bekasi, outside Jakarta. They shot and killed two inhabitants, Air Setyawan and Eko Joko Sarjono, who they said had resisted arrest and were planning to detonate a grenade. Air Setyawan was well known to police. He had been briefly arrested in July 2004, before the Australian embassy bombing, but was released after less than two months without charge.

Police found more than 500kg of explosives at the house and in a "box car", a small storage truck for short hauls. The embassy bombing was carried out with a box car; the one in Bekasi was reportedly to be used in an attack on President Yudhoyono's residence in Cikeas, Bogor, a hill town south of Jakarta, partly in retaliation for the execution of the three Bali bombers in November 2008. The only source for that information, however, appears to be Amir Ibrahim, and the details remain murky.

Amir Ibrahim also revealed to police that the two suicide bombers in the 17 July attacks were an 18-year-old youth named Dani Dwi Pertama, from Bogor, and Nana Ikhwan Maulana, from Pandeglang, Banten. Both had been recruited by a Yemen-educated religious teacher and Islamic healer named Syaifudin Jaelani – the brother-in-law of Ibrohim, the Ritz-Carlton florist. Amir Ibrahim also revealed that Noordin himself had taken part in planning meetings in Jakarta, and that Ibrohim was effectively acting as field coordinator for the hotel bombings.

On 12 August at a packed press conference, police revealed that DNA tests on the Temanggung body showed it was Ibrohim, who they said had been a JI member since 2000, although that information has not been confirmed.

There have been numerous arrests, as the police follow a variety of leads. Iwan Herdiansyah, 27, and Ali Muhammad, 51, both living in the Kuningan area of West Java (where Syaifudin Jaelani is from) were arrested on 17 and 18 August respectively, suspected of channelling funds for the bombings. Iwan, who worked in Saudi Arabia for four years as a migrant worker, was later released for lack of evidence. Ali was said to be a Saudi national from Riyadh.

On 20 August, police announced that four other men were on the wanted list, one of whom was Jaelani. The second

¹The statement appeared on <http://mediaislam-bushro.blogspot.com> on 26 July, although it may have been prepared earlier. It was signed by "Abu Mu'awwidz Nur Din bin Muhammad Top" (Mu'awwidz is the name of his eldest son). The 2005 statement was signed by "Abu Mu'awwidz Noor Din Muhammad Top" as head of "Tandzim Qoedatul-Jihad untuk Gugusan Kepulauan Melayu" (the al-Qaeda jihad organisation for the Malay archipelago). The 2009 statement said that the hotel bombings were undertaken to avenge the killings of Muslims around the world by America and its allies; destroy the latter's power base in Indonesia and expel them from the country; teach a lesson to Muslims about loyalty and enmity (*wala' wa baro'*) especially with respect to the Manchester United football team (that was booked into the Ritz-Carlton) because they were Christians deserving of enmity, not adulation; give a tonic to oppressed Muslims in the form of a martyrdom operation; and give incentive to Muslims around the world to fulfill their obligation to wage jihad as the surest way to reestablish the caliphate.

was his elder brother, Mohamad Sjahrir, a technician for Garuda airlines, who apparently was known to the police from the 2004 Australian embassy bombing. A third was Mistam Husamudin alias Ario Sudarso alias Aji, from Purbalingga, Central Java. In 2007, he had been sent by Noordin to teach bomb-making to a radical group in Palembang, South Sumatra, all of whose members were arrested in 2008.² The fourth, a man named Bagus Budi Pranoto alias Urwah, had been one of Noordin's closest associates in the lead-up to the embassy bombing. He was arrested two months before it took place, sentenced to three and a half years, released in April 2007 and seems to have almost immediately reestablished contact with Noordin.

On 25 August, police arrested Mohamad Jibril, owner of a jihadi publishing company Ar-Rahmah Media, on suspicion of having helped arrange funding for the 17 July bombings.

Noordin himself remained at the top of the growing list of people being sought in connection with the attack. Reports in late August suggested he might have made his way to East Kalimantan, and search operations were being stepped up along the Indonesian-Malaysian border. While the investigation is far from complete and Noordin himself remains at large, the individuals arrested, killed or still at large provide a glimpse into the variety of recruiting pools Noordin can draw on.

III. THE URWAH CONNECTION

Bagus Budi Pranoto alias Urwah is a typical member of Noordin's inner circle: a product of JI schools, strong ties to the JI media industry, and well-connected to a variety of other militant Muslim groups in Central Java. His commitment to the al-Qaeda approach to jihad extends back to at least 2003 and perhaps further.

Born in Kudus on 2 November 1978, Urwah attended the JI-affiliated boarding school (*pesantren*) called Al-Muttaqien in Jepara, Central Java from 1990 to 1996, drawing him into the heart of the JI organisation in Central Java. He went on to teach, probably as part of a practice teaching program, in the Purwokerto-Cilacap area of southern Central Java.³ There, in 1999, he was

part of the same JI division as Baharudin Latif, later to become Noordin's father-in-law.

From 2000 to 2003 Urwah attended and then taught at the JI school Mahad Aly in Solo, where some of the most hardline members of JI were based. It was here that he met one of the leaders of Ring Banten, the West Java-based radical faction of Darul Islam (DI) whose members became the field operatives for the 2004 Australian embassy bombing. He also became best friends with a man named Lutfi Hudaeroh alias Ubeid, from Magetan, East Java. Some time during 2000-2003 he underwent a week of military training in Poso, Central Sulawesi but the exact dates are unclear.⁴

In 2004, together with Ubeid and Ubeid's brother, Umar Burhanuddin, Urwah helped coordinate the training for the embassy bombing team in West Java and provided other logistical assistance. During his three years in prison in Jakarta, he refused to cooperate with police. Shortly before his release, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir arranged a marriage for him with a young woman from a JI-linked school for girls in Bekasi.⁵

Urwah went back to Solo and immediately started a home-based company called Muqowama, producing cheaply packaged al-Qaeda videos with Indonesian subtitles. By August 2007, these videos were being advertised in the JI magazine *an-Najah* and by November, agents were getting them to book vendors in Poso, Palu, Bandung, Banten, Batam, Medan, Solo, Lampung and Lombok.⁶ Urwah also reestablished contact with JI members in Cilacap after his release and became an important mentor for them.

In 2008 Urwah was rumoured to be training a small force of some twelve to fifteen people as a new special forces unit variously referred to Laskar Ababil or Laskar Arofah.⁷ It was never clear who this group reported to, if it

men and women tapped for possible membership in the organisation, and their practice teaching is observed by more senior JI members to assess their leadership skills. The practice teaching program is also used as a way of providing existing JI schools with extra teachers or bringing schools that seem receptive to JI teachings into the fold.

⁴ Interrogation deposition of Bagus Budi Pranoto in case dossier of Umar Burhanuddin, 1 February 2006.

⁵ The school is Pesantren Maratus Sholeh in Bekasi. Rina, Urwah's wife, also attended Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's pesantren in Ngruki, Solo; her father was involved in the 1980s with a radical group linked to Darul Islam known as Komando Jihad.

⁶ In some areas the local vendors are bookstores or kiosks selling other products like herbal medicines. In some cases the videos go to JI members who sell them out of their house.

⁷ This Laskar Ababil should not be confused with an organisation of the same name that is a youth wing of the United

² See Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°92, *Indonesia: Radicalisation of the "Palembang Group"*, 20 May 2009.

³ The standard teacher training program in most *pesantrens* and Muslim high schools is called Kuliyatul Mu'alimin Islamiyah (KMI), an abbreviation which carries no ideological connotations. Most graduates then do practice teaching, or *wiyata bhakti* for six months or a year. In JI-affiliated schools, however, the KMI program usually has included the young

in fact existed. In April 2008, police arrested an Arabic linguist and former classmate of Urwah's named Parmin alias Aslam because they found a letter Noordin had sent him via Urwah asking him to translate some jihadi texts. Urwah dropped out of sight temporarily after Parmin's arrest, although he soon resurfaced in the Solo area. By early 2009, he was said to have closed down his Muqowama operations but to suddenly have come into some money.

Urwah and Ubeid had only worked with Noordin intensively for about four months in 2004 before they were arrested in Solo, together with Air Setyawan – who unlike the other two was not a JI member. Evidence of Air's involvement with Noordin was not sufficient for prosecution, so he was eventually released; his death in the raid on the Bekasi house in August 2009 suggests either that his role may have been more important, or that as a former supporter, he could be recalled by Noordin as needed.

This raises questions about some of Noordin's other close associates in 2004, mostly from East Java, who were also briefly detained. Three of them, including Ubeid, are now working with Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT), an above-ground organisation founded by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir in September 2008. If Noordin could call on Urwah and Air Setyawan, he might as easily be able to call on these three, each of whom has his own personal networks of JI friends and family, and could probably find safehouses for Noordin to stay. As the investigation proceeds it may turn out that Ubeid and his JAT colleagues stayed on the right side of the law and that Urwah crossed it. But the connections in the past among these men were so close that that at least the possibility of collaboration needs to be examined.

If JAT is one network that Urwah, through Ubeid, could tap into to help Noordin, there are at least two others. One is his circle of friends from Mahad Aly, the college he attended in Solo from 2000 to 2003 – the period covering the worst of the violence in the communal conflicts in Maluku and Poso, 9/11 and its aftermath, and the invasion of Iraq. Parmin, his classmate, talks about how Urwah and Ubeid convinced him of the need to take a more militant approach to jihad. Another person in the same class, Deni, also ended up helping Noordin in 2004, and there are undoubtedly others who were radicalised at the same time.⁸

Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan), a Muslim political party.

⁸The classes of 2000-2003 at Mahad Aly, also known as Universitas an-Nur, then the nerve centre for JI in Solo, could prove to be a particularly important recruiting ground for

The second network that can constitute a support base for Noordin is the JI publishing industry, to which both Urwah and Ubeid are closely connected. It is not so much the message of the books and videos that is the problem. Rather, the translators and publishers of jihadi materials constitute a closely-knit network of their own, bound by family and school ties, which means if one member decides to help Noordin, the others can probably be counted on to at least remain silent.

Urwah's reappearance on the police wanted list is being treated as evidence that terrorists who have served their sentences and been released are a major security threat. This is an exaggeration, since most of the more than 200 men released have not returned to violence (and many of them played peripheral roles from the outset). But the hardcore ideologues were always going to be a problem, and Urwah is a prime example. The important lesson to draw is not so much that released prisoners are dangerous – although in Urwah's case, it is true – but rather that one well-connected person joining Noordin's network can significantly boost its size and scope.

IV. THE CILACAP CONNECTION

The Cilacap link is an example of how one family member exposed to Noordin can draw in others and build a local base. It became clear after a series of police raids in Cilacap in June and July 2009 that Noordin Top had been living there at least since 2006 – and it may have been Urwah who led him there.⁹ Noordin's four main confederates in Cilacap were:

- ❑ Saefuddin Zuhri alias Sabit alias Abu Lubaba, one of the "Afghan alumni" and long-term JI members, arrested on 21 June 2009;
- ❑ Sabit's uncle, Baharudin Latif alias Baridin, 58, who founded Pesantren al-Muaddib and is now on the police most wanted list;

Noordin's group, just as the class of 1995 at Ngruki was earlier. It has been possible to map the involvement of the Ngruki class because of the existence of a yearbook that gives biographical data on all members. A similar mapping for Mahad Aly could reveal important linkages. The school has since moved from its campus in Gading, Solo, to a village in Sukoharjo, Solo, and does not appear to be playing the same role in producing violent extremists that it was five years ago. Police operations in Poso, Central Sulawesi, in January 2007 that killed more than a dozen "mujahidin" reportedly enraged some of the Mahad Aly teachers, leading to demands for retaliation.

⁹The precise site was Mlela hamlet, Pasuruhan village, Binangun subdistrict, Cilacap.

- Baridin's daughter Arina, 24, who married a man named Ade Abdul Halim, now believed to be Noordin, in 2006 and has two children by him, aged two and a half and one;¹⁰ and
- Agus Mujiono, 32, a teacher at al-Muaddib and electronics repairman who is believed to have buried a cache of explosives in Baridin's backyard that police found on 23 June 2009. He is now on the wanted list.

As noted above, the connection to Urwah goes back to 1999. At the time JI was at its height of strength and influence, and its central Java *wakalah* or division was one of the largest. The *wakalah* was subdivided into units called *katibah*, one of which covered the Cilacap-Purwokerto area. A document from June 1999 lists the teachers and preachers for that *katibah*; Urwah appears as a teacher (*mu'alim*), Baridin as both a teacher and preacher (*da'i*). A foundation called Yayasan Muaddib is listed as the fundraising arm of the *katibah*.¹¹ A decade later, Baridin was still its director.

If Urwah knew Baridin from teaching in Cilacap, he almost certainly would have known his nephew, Saefuddin Zuhri alias Sabit, and could have introduced him to Noordin sometime in 2004. However they met, by November-December 2004, just after the Australian embassy bombing, Sabit was already advocating global jihad, to the consternation of some of his JI colleagues – meaning he was almost certainly already within Noordin's circle.

Ani Sugandi, director of a JI school in South Sumatra recalls that in late 2004, Sabit came for a visit, with a clear mission:

Sabit tried to influence me to join his group, that is to wage jihad, but I refused in a polite way because I didn't agree with his thinking. About two months later I went home to Purbalingga, Central Java and then went on to Kudus where I met my superior [in the JI organisation], Mas Taufiq. Mas Taufiq said that Sabit had already left our group [JI].¹²

Sabit returned to Sumatra in 2005, this time establishing links with a group of men later known as the Palembang group.

After the second Bali bombing, two members of Noordin's inner circle arrived in Cilacap. They were Bahrudin Soleh alias Abdul Hadi and Parmin – Urwah's classmate – whom Noordin assigned to wage "jihad by the pen", translating material from Arab jihadis and writing justifications for jihad for Indonesian readers.¹³ Sometime during the third week of October 2005, Abdul Hadi introduced Parmin to an *ikhwan* – literally "brother" but used to refer to someone from a like-minded group.

Parmin later told police:

The *ikhwan*, about 35 years old, big, took me to his house in a kampong about seven to ten km from the main Buntu-Kebumen road [in Cilacap]. He sold honey and herbal remedies and had a little library in his house. I stayed there three nights. From our conversations, I learned he had undergone military training (*tadrib askari*) in Mindanao. He was in charge of sports and physical fitness for the local *ikhwan* but also was known as someone who could give a good lecture. He also said he was considered not obedient to the Central Java *wakalah* because he was inclined to accept the idea of international jihad. I once expressed surprise that he could still be attracted at a time when everyone suspected of involvement in Bali II was being sought by police. He said calmly that jihad was an obligation, and since so many Muslims were neglecting it, who was left to wage jihad if not us? I remember thinking how courageous he was. Every afternoon before maghrib prayers, I was invited to give advice (*tausiyah*) to a study group of ten to twelve *ikhwan*, mostly 35 years or older but including two or three high school-age youths. The group met at a kindergarten about three to four km away from where I was staying, run by Yayasan al-Muaddib.¹⁴

Those "high school-age youths" to whom Parmin was giving "advice" are exactly the kind of men Noordin finds for foot soldiers.

In April 2006, police raided a safehouse in Wonosobo, not far from Cilacap, in which not only Abdul Hadi but another trusted Noordin lieutenant, Gempur Budi Angkoro alias Jabir, were killed.¹⁵ Noordin must have made

¹⁰"Kisah Noordin Yang Berhasil Pikat Hati 4 Wanita", *Sumat Pos*, 9 August 2009; and "Arina Akui Suami Mirip Noordin M Top", *Solo Pos*, 29 July 2009.

¹¹"Laporan Perkembangan Da'wah wal Irsyad", Wakalah Jawa Wustho, Robi'ul Awwal 1420H, June 1999. The foundation was set up in 1994. It runs a boarding school, called Pesantren Muaddib, headed by Baridin's son Mahfudz.

¹²Testimony of Ani Sugandi, 15 September 2008, in case dossier of Fajar Taslim, Berkas Perkara BP/05/IX/2008/Densus.

¹³One of Parmin's assignments was to complete a book that Ubeid had started before his arrest called *Sowing Jihad, Reaping Terror*.

¹⁴Interrogation deposition of Parmin alias Yasir Abdul Baar alias Aslam, 25 April 2008.

¹⁵Hundreds turned out for the burials of these "martyrs" and a video of the burials was in wide circulation among radical groups. Jabir was the cousin of the legendary Fathurrahman al-Ghozi, killed in Mindanao in October 2003 after a dramatic escape from a maximum security prison in Manila. Both were

his way to Cilacap some time shortly thereafter. He married Arina in 2006 but was away from the village more often than not, because in late 2006 at the end of Ramadan, when extended families come together to celebrate, Sabit asked another man to impersonate Arina's absent husband, apparently so the neighbours would not think anything amiss.

Sabit continued to be in contact with the Palembang group, providing them with bomb-making supplies and an instructor who gave them a month's training in 2007. The bomb-making instructor, Mistam Husamudin alias Ario Sudarso alias Aji, from Purbalingga, near Cilacap, is now one of the men being sought in connection with the 17 July bombings. Even after the group was exposed and its members arrested in July and August 2008, Noordin continued to operate out of the Cilacap area until police operations there in June 2009. But both he and Sabit were travelling frequently, including, apparently, to Jakarta.¹⁶

Noordin's Cilacap connection was built around one family and two schools. The family is Baridin Latif's. The schools are his Pesantren al-Muaddib in Cilacap and a much larger school, Pesantren Nurul Huda, in the same village in Purbalingga where the Mistam, the bomb instructor lived.¹⁷ As with other such schools, the majority of Nurul Huda's staff and students are undoubtedly law-abiding citizens. But once even one or two teachers are brought over to Noordin's side, the chance that others will be recruited is high.

V. THE KUNINGAN CONNECTION

Another example of a family connection comes from Kuningan, West Java, not far from the better-known coastal town of Cirebon. Four of the principal suspects in the hotel bombings are part of a single family based in Sampora village, Cilimus district, Kuningan, headed by Ahmad Jaelani, a moderate Muslim who himself has no involvement in the crimes. Ibrohim, the florist who smuggled the bombs into the hotel and died in the siege in Temanggung, was married to Ahmad's daughter, Sucihani. Amir Ibrahim alias Amir Abdillah, the man arrested in Jakarta on 5 August whose information led to the discovery of the plot against President Yudhoyono,

graduates of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's pesantren in Ngruki; Jabir had gone on to the JI school Darusyahadah.

¹⁶ "Regular trips to Jakarta point to bomb suspect", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 July 2009.

¹⁷ A man named Abdul Aziz, identified as the director of Nurul Huda, figures prominently in the testimonies of those arrested in Palembang as a friend of Sabit.

was married to another of Ahmad's daughters, Ery, although they later divorced. Ahmad's son Syaifudin Jaelani, still at large, is the religious teacher who recruited the suicide bombers for the two hotels and several other youths as well and almost certainly had direct contact with al-Qaeda.¹⁸ His brother, Mohamed Syahrir, was a Garuda technician who may have also worked briefly for a Middle Eastern airline.¹⁹ Syahrir is the only member of the family who was known to the police before the July bombings.

Syaifudin was radicalised during his study in Yemen from about 1995 to 2000. He reportedly made contact with JI on his return. During the last year of his study, he may have had communication with some young JI members from Indonesia and Malaysia studying in Karachi, Pakistan, and known as the "al-Ghuraba" group. Their study in Pakistan was arranged by Hambali, the only Indonesian detained in Guantanamo and the JI member then with the closest connections to al-Qaeda; their leader was Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's son, Abdul Rohim. The group, which was in contact with Khalid Sheikh Muhammad and other al-Qaeda members, consisted of the sons and younger brothers of senior JI members, including Hambali's brother Gun-gun.²⁰ At its height, the group had about twenty members, some of whom went to Kashmir for training with Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT), and some to Camp al-Faruq in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Most arrived in Pakistan in 2000 and studied either at the Abu Bakar Institute in Karachi or the Jamiah ad-Dirosat, an LeT school. A second batch of Indonesians arrived in 2003; they were deported after only a few months.

¹⁸ His full name is Syaifudin Zuhri bin Ahmad Jaelani. His identity card lists his name as Syaifudin Zuhri and states that he was born in Jakarta on 13 February 1977. The Indonesian press frequently spells his name as Saefuddin or Saefudin. Because another key Noordin associate in Cilacap has the same name, it is easier to refer to the Kuningan man as Syaifudin Jaelani and the Cilacap man as Saefuddin Zuhri.

¹⁹ "Pernah Jadi Mekanik Garuda, Ikut Pengajian Khusus", *Sumut Pos*, 20 August 2009, at www.hariansumutpos.com/2009/08/pernah-jadi-mekanik-garuda-ikut-pengajian-%E2%80%98%E2%80%99.html.

²⁰ Other members of the group included Arifin, son of Zulkarnaen; Muh Ikhwan; Muh Aqil; Muh Tarmizi, son of Muh Nurdin; Zubeir; Muh. Fakri; Murobit; Abidzar, son of Haji Jaafar Anwarul; Syahrul Nisam; Radhi (all of the above are Malaysians, many of them with fathers previously detained under Malaysia's Internal Security Act); Muh Arief and Muh Amien, both Singaporeans; Ahmad Firdaus; Ahmad Isrofil; Faiz Hasan; Muh Khaidar; Ahmad Muaz; David Pintarto; Furqon Abdullah, alias Haman Abdulrahman; Ilham Sopandi alias Husni Rijal; Moh. Anwar Siddiqi; and Muh Saifudin. The latter five are Indonesians who came later, in 2003.

Two other members of al-Ghuraba were Mohamad Jibril, the publisher arrested on 25 August, and his brother Ahmad Isrofil. It is not clear yet how or through whom Syaifudin met Jibril or if the Yemeni contacts of the al-Ghuraba members played any role.²¹ We also do not yet know how or through whom he met Ali Muhammad, the Saudi arrested on 17 August, who is believed to have been living in a rented house in Kuningan, near the Jaelani family house. But Jibril, Syaifudin and Ali are believed to have sought funds for Noordin's operations through contacts in Saudi Arabia.

The Kuningan-Cirebon area would be fertile recruiting ground for the radicals in the Jaelani family because it is an old Darul Islam stronghold and is home to several radical schools. The most important of these is the JI-affiliated boarding school (*pesantren*) al-Muttaqien in Beber, Cirebon, one of whose teachers in 2003 was the head of JI's West Java *wakalah*. Two other JI-affiliated schools around Cirebon also were known as having particularly hardline teachers. One, Pesantren al-Hussain in Indramayu, now no longer in JI hands, produced a top figure in JI's military wing, Saiful Anam alias Mujadid alias Brekele, now in prison. It was Brekele who first recruited several men who were helping Noordin after the 2009 hotel bombings, as noted below. Ubeid, Noordin's lieutenant, was also a frequent visitor in 2003-2004. The school was eventually taken back by its Muhammadiyah founders, and the radical teachers, forced out, founded a new school not far away called Nurul Hadid.²²

VI. THE LAWEYAN CONNECTION

Another example of Noordin's support base comes from Solo area, home to more than a dozen radical groups. One of the men killed in the Bekasi raid on 8 August 2009, Air (sometimes written Aher) Setyawan was a member of the "Laweyan group", named after a sub-district near Solo and known as being closer to the organisation KOMPAK and the Solo-based Laskar Jundullah

than to JI.²³ Its leader is Joko Tri Priyanto alias Joko Gondrong, another released prisoner, who is said to be close to Urwah, Ubeid and Ubeid's brother, Umar Burhanuddin.²⁴

Widely referred to in the press as a recidivist or as a released criminal, Air in fact never went through Indonesia's prison system, and as noted, was held for less than two months. He was arrested in July 2004, then freed on 16 September 2004, a week after the Australian embassy bombing. Within the radical network he was known as having such close ties to the West Java-based Ring Banten that he was considered by some to be a member.²⁵ His high school classmate Eko Joko Sarjono alias Eko Peyang, another member of the group, was also killed in the Bekasi raid.

The Laweyan group is one of several small, territorially-based radical networks that Noordin can draw on. Several of these are loosely associated with a national – but largely Java-based – coalition called Communications Forum for Mosque Activists (Forum Komunikasi Aktivis Mesjid, FKAM). Many radical discussion groups from Jakarta to Lombok take place in the name of FKAM. In Sragen, its website (<http://addakwah-fkamsragen.blogspot.com>) has links to a number of jihadi sites. Its Solo branch sent 50 members to Lamongan as moral support in the days before the Bali bombers were executed. It has sponsored book launches of JI books and protest actions against "deviant" groups and suspected places of vice.²⁶

²¹ Muhammad Rais, a JI member who was first a student, then an instructor at Camp al-Faruq in 1999 and 2000, and taught three members of the al-Ghuraba group, travelled there from Quetta with two Yemenis, Umar and Usamah. He remembers training with Abu 'Atho (Yemen), Ashim (Yemen), Maslamah (Saudi), Abu Bakar (Yemen), Firos (Yemen), Hasan (Saudi), Muhsin (Yemen), Abu Fida' (Yemen), Salim (Saudi), Haidarah (Yemen) and Abu Anas (Palestine). See his unpublished autobiography, *Perjalanan Spiritual* (Spiritual Journey), written in Jakarta in 2005.

²² Crisis Group Briefing N°63, *Indonesia: Jemaah Islamiyah's Current Status*, 3 May 2007.

²³ The Solo-based Jundullah (no relation to the Makassar group of the same name) is led by Mohammed Kalono who also heads the Communications Forum for Mosque Activists (Forum Komunikasi Aktivis Mesjid, FKAM). Reference to Air Setyawan's membership in the Solo group appears in "Kebanyakan Anggota KOMPAK Poso", *Radar Sulteng*, 10 August 2009, and Crisis Group sources confirmed this.

²⁴ In 1999, Joko Gondrong also joined the Solo-based Laskar Jundullah and later fought in Ambon. He was close to Noordin follower Ahmad Rofiq Ridho alias Ali Zein, just released from prison on 17 August 2009. Joko was arrested in July 2005 for helping hide Noordin in the aftermath of the Australian embassy bombing. He was sentenced to three years and was released from Cipinang Prison, Jakarta, in December 2007, almost as unreconstructed as he went in. He went almost immediately to visit the three Bali bombers in Nusakambangan, near Cilacap, before their execution; he said it was the first time he had met them but he wanted to pay his respects and believed they would die as martyrs. See "Joko Gondrong, Alumnus Terpidana Terorisme tentang Amrozi Cs", *Radar Solo*, 2 November 2008.

²⁵ Crisis Group interview, Jakarta, 12 August 2009.

²⁶ The FKAM branch in Dompu, Sumbawa, campaigned against a Valentine's Day concert in a local shopping complex, arguing that it could ruin the morals of the younger generation. See

On 13 August 2009, when the bodies of the two Laweyan men were returned to their families for burial, hundreds of their supporters met them, carrying a banner saying "Welcome Heroes of Islam, the Martyrs Air Setiwan and Eko Joko Sarjono, Jihad Still Continue [sic]". The last three words were in English, as if a message to the Westerners seen as the enemy. Radical websites such as www.arahmah.com and www.muslimdaily.net pointed to the fact that blood was still flowing from their wounds as if they were still alive, proof of their martyrdom. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir presided over their burials, claiming they were true fighters, even if misguided ones.²⁷ The hundreds who attended their funerals, like the thousands who showed up for the burials of the Bali bombers in November 2008, are evidence of the breadth of Noordin's support network, even if few would actually join a "martyrdom" operation.

VII. THE TEMANGGUNG CONNECTION

The Temanggung connection illustrates how JI activity prepared the groundwork for Noordin to move in. The key figure for Noordin's connections in this district is a JI fighter named Saiful Anam alias Mujadid alias Brekele. It is not clear if Brekele ever met Noordin face to face, but the men around him in 2006-2007 included several who helped Noordin on the run. Now in prison, Brekele was a one-man communications hub before his arrest, in direct communication with JI's military wing; with men who fought in Poso; with alumni of some particularly militant JI schools; and with the family whose house in Temanggung became the focus of the siege on 8 August 2009. In fact, Brekele used the same house as a hiding place for more than a year before he was captured in March 2007, and expressed surprise to the media that anyone would go back to that house because it was so well known to the police.²⁸

Brekele joined JI in 2000 after graduating from Pesantren al-Hussein, the JI-affiliated school in Indramayu, Cirebon.²⁹ He did his practice teaching first in Lombok, then in Bali under the direction of the head of JI's West Nusatenggara *wakalah*. He went to Ambon with JI in

2001, then to Central Sulawesi in 2002 where he ran a small training camp for fighters going to Poso.³⁰

Sometime in 2004, he provided the gun that was used in one of the training sessions that Urwah and Ubeid conducted in Banten prior to the Australian embassy bombing.³¹ After the May 2005 market bombing in Tentena, outside Poso, in which 21 people were killed, Brekele, who was one of the perpetrators, fled back to Java shortly thereafter and became part of JI's military wing, led by Abu Dujana.³²

From this point on he was based mostly in Temanggung, running training courses for JI members in the nearby hills and in the local sports stadium.³³ In September 2006, he ran a sharp-shooting course with an M-16, in a secluded area along the Javanese coast. One of the participants was later shot by police during a raid in the Yogyakarta area that led to the arrest of several others in the military wing; anger over the killing could have sent others to Noordin.³⁴

In February 2007, JI leaders held a meeting in Parakan, Temanggung, to discuss whether they should mount a retaliatory action against police operations in Poso in which fourteen Muslim fighters were killed.³⁵ The acting *amir* (commander) at the time said the group had to focus on rebuilding JI as an organisation; he did not think JI should undertake an operation for another fifteen years.³⁶ This do-nothing stance also may have pushed additional JI members toward Noordin.

³⁰The camp was in Pendolo, near the border between Central and South Sulawesi provinces.

³¹The reference to the provision of the gun comes from the interrogation deposition of Mahfudz Qomari alias Sutarjo alias Ayyasi on 27 March 2007. Mahfudz recalls the date of the training as late 2005 but since Urwah and Ubeid were arrested in July 2004, the training has to be earlier. He says that on Abu Dujana's instructions, Brekele gave the gun to Kang Jaja, head of the Banten group, who was then in Poso.

³²Technically he was under Isobah II, the Semarang-based subdivision, led by Sarwo Edi. Sarwo Edi reported to Abu Dujana as head of the military wing, called *sariyah*.

³³Interrogation deposition of Saiful Anam alias Brekele, 27 March 2007, in case dossier of Suparjo alias Sarwo Edi Nugroho, No. BP/36/VI/2007/Kamtrannas.

³⁴The participant was Agus Suryanto, who reportedly had studied bomb-making with Dr Azhari. He was killed in a police raid in Sleman, Yogyakarta, on 20 March 2007. Agus Suryanto in turn was reportedly the man who instructed a leading Poso fugitive, Taufik Bulaga alias Upik Lawang, how to make bombs.

³⁵See Crisis Group Asia Report N°127, *Jihadism in Indonesia: Poso on the Edge*, 24 January 2007.

³⁶Interrogation deposition of Saiful Anam alias Brekele, op. cit.

"FKAM Sesalkan Perayaan 'Happy Valentine' di Dompu", *Suara NTB*, 18 February 2009.

²⁷"Ada Yg Menolak Air dan Eko dikuburkan di pemakaman Muslim", *Tempo*, 13 August 2009.

²⁸"I am confused: why go there again?" *Tempo* (English edition), 17 August 2009.

²⁹The school is Pesantren al-Hussein, and it is the only JI school that has since been "taken back" by its original Muhammadiyah directors. The radical *ustadz* (teachers) left, only to found a new *pesantren* not far away called Pesantren Nurul Hadid.

Three young men from Temanggung who have come to police attention in connection with Noordin's activities had been drawn into Brekele's orbit after he arrived there from Poso. One of these was Tataq, son of Mujahri, the owner of the house where Brekele was staying. Brekele became the imam of the mosque near Mujahri's house, and Tataq joined his Quran study sessions becoming a "mosque activist", but not a JI member.³⁷ Two others who became close to Brekele during this period were Aris Susanto, 31, and Indra Arif Hermawan, 22, two brothers who are Mujahri's nephews.³⁸ Aris and Indra were arrested just before the 8 August siege; Tataq's status remains unclear.³⁹

Noordin's Temanggung network may thus be an example of how a visiting radical on the run, in this case Brekele, can radicalise young men around the local mosque, who then become ripe for the picking by other operatives.

VIII. THE BOGOR CONNECTION

The Bogor connection may prove to be one of the most interesting in this investigation. Syaifudin Jaelani, the Yemen-trained man originally from Kuningan, is known to have recruited the two suicide bombers while living there. He had been running an Islamic medical clinic there since 2007.⁴⁰ He also took youths on outward bound-style survival treks in the hills outside Bogor, including Dani Dwi Permana, the eighteen-year-old bomber.⁴¹

On 12 August bomb-making materials were discovered in Cimapar, Kecamatan Sukaraja, Bogor. As this report went to press, there was not yet a proven link to the Noordin group, although one villager told the press that the man who rented the warehouse where they were stored resembled Eko Joko Sarjono, one of the two Laweyan men shot by police in Bekasi.

There are several possibilities for why Syaifudin Jaelani ended up in Bogor. President Yudhoyono's residence is in Cikeas, Bogor, and if the group could plant a florist in a hotel three years before an operation, they might have considered Bogor a strategic area for a base.

Second, Bogor is unquestionably a fertile recruiting area. It may be coincidence, but Sukaraja is not far from Cijeruk which has two radical links in the recent past. In 1999, a Darul Islam splinter known as AMIN or the Abu Bakar Battalion lived there so they could train on the slopes of Gunung Salak, a nearby volcano. Some former AMIN members got additional training in Mindanao and in late 2008 were known to be frustrated by the lack of jihad opportunities in Indonesia – and so could constitute a potential recruitment pool for Noordin.

The second link to Cijeruk is to the late al-Qaeda operative Omar al-Faruq, who had been living in Cislada village there with his Indonesian wife, Mira Agustina, for more than a year when he was arrested in June 2002.⁴² It will be interesting to know if Syaifudin had any contact with al-Faruq during his Indonesia tenure.

Finally, the area around Bogor has a large Arab community, and the issue of men from the Gulf area coming during their summer holidays to make "contract marriages" with Indonesian women has been raised by women's organisations in Indonesia. Middle Eastern men coming and going attract less notice than they might in other areas.

The radical groups in Bogor are closer to Darul Islam and the salafi community than JI, and while many of the strict salafis see their jihadi brethren as heretics, there have been a few cases of crossover.⁴³ Syaifudin Jaelani's Yemeni education points to a possible salafi connection: very few JI members have studied in the Middle East,

³⁷ "I am confused: why go there again?", op. cit.

³⁸ Their uncle and Tataq's father, Mujahri, was arrested but released on 14 August 2009.

³⁹ There are several other links to Noordin in the Temanggung area. Aris Ma'ruf bin Soman, Gemawang subdistrict, Kabupaten Temanggung, escaped when police raided Noordin's safehouse in Wonosobo in April 2006. A graduate of two JI schools, al-Muttaqien in Jepara and Darul Manar, Kediri, he could have been recruited through either. One of the men who helped rent the Wonosobo safehouse was also from Temanggung. A student named Ragil, he had studied with one of Noordin's close associates at Darul Manar.

⁴⁰ "Seafuddin diyakini ipar Ibrahim", *Koran Tempo*, 15 August 2009.

⁴¹ Dani lived in a middle-class housing complex in Gugus Candraloka, Perumahan Telaga Kahuripan, Bogor.

⁴² Al-Faruq, an al-Qaeda operative variously reported as being of Kuwaiti or Iraqi nationality, who showed up in Ambon, Poso and Makassar, was arrested in Jakarta in June 2002, transferred to Bagram in Afghanistan from which he made a dramatic escape in July 2005, and was eventually killed in Iraq.

⁴³ One of the few is Oman Rochman alias Aman Abdurrachman alias Abu Sulaiman, a popular jihadi lecturer and Arab linguist who was arrested in 2004 for arranging a bomb-making class for his followers in Cimanggis, just outside Jakarta and who was released in 2008. He founded a group called Jamaah Tauhid wal Jihad and is said to have many followers in Jakarta, West Java, East Kalimantan and Lombok. He recently established a school in Pamulang, Bekasi.

whereas Indonesia's leading salafi scholars have strong ties to Yemeni *ulama* (scholars and religious authorities).⁴⁴

IX. THE BANTEN CONNECTION

The Darul Islam faction known as Ring Banten, under the leadership of Kang Jaja alias Aqdam, has longstanding links to Noordin, extensively documented in earlier Crisis Group reports.⁴⁵ Ring Banten members helped out in the first Bali bombing; they provided the field operatives and the suicide bomber for the 2004 embassy bombing. One of the strongholds of this group is in Pandeglang, Banten, home to Nana Ikhwan Maulana, the older suicide bomber in the 17 July operation.⁴⁶ It remains unclear whether Nana was a member, but given its past history, the group would be a logical partner for any operations taking place in Jakarta or West Java – and Syaifudin Jaelani could well have developed contacts of his own from Bogor. It is believed to have more than 100 members or sympathisers.

X. THE JI SCHOOL CONNECTION

The network of some 50 JI schools continues to be important as a source of recruits and supporters, less through the curriculum per se than through extracurricular activities and alumni ties. These schools also are a place where visiting extremists can have a radicalising effect with unforeseen consequences, and where association with Noordin, even at one step removed, can be the thrill of a lifetime for impressionable students.⁴⁷

1. Pesantren Al-Muttaqien, Jepara

One school that has fed Noordin's network is Pesantren al-Muttaqien in Jepara, not to be confused with the school of the same name in Cirebon, below. At one level, it represents the core of "mainstream" JI that rejects

Noordin's methods. The school's head, Sartono, is former head of the Central Java *wakalah*, and the man referred to as "Mas Taufik" above, who rejected Sabit's approach, also taught there. It is known primarily as a school for girls, one of its better known graduates being the wife of al-Qaeda operative Omar al-Faruq, but it also takes a limited number of boys.⁴⁸

If solidly anchored in the JI mainstream, al-Muttaqien has connections to the more militant stream as well. Urwah spent the six formative years there, from 1990 to 1996; his younger brother was enrolled there in 2005. Mas Selamat Kastari, the Singaporean JI member who escaped from a maximum security prison in Singapore in 2008, sent his child there. From 2004 to 2006, a teacher from al-Muttaqien named Helmi Hanafi, a Cilacap native, was sent to the JI school in South Sumatra to help out as it was just getting established – and he was sent on the recommendation of Sabit. Mustaghfirin, one of the men arrested after the 2006 Wonosobo raid for helping Noordin, was also an alumnus.

2. Al-Muttaqien, Beber, Cirebon

Salik Firdaus, one of the three suicide bombers in the 2005 Bali bombing, attended this school, and according to his neighbours, became much more hardline as a result.⁴⁹ Sholahuddin al-Ayubi, who was arrested in the police raid on the Wonosobo safehouse in April 2006, taught there, as did the second wife of Abu Husna, the senior JI leader arrested in Malaysia in early 2008 with a ticket to Damascus.⁵⁰ (While Abu Husna himself was reportedly opposed to Noordin's activities, some of his followers had fewer reservations.) Finally, there are unconfirmed reports that Ibrohim, the florist, reportedly had a daughter enrolled at as-Shobirin, the branch of al-Muttaqien for younger students.⁵¹

⁴⁴ See Crisis Group Asia Report N°83, *Indonesia Backgrounder: Why Salafism and Terrorism Mostly Don't Mix*, 13 September 2004.

⁴⁵ See Crisis Group Asia Reports N°114, *Terrorism in Indonesia: Noordin's Networks*, 5 May 2006; and N°92, *Recycling Militants in Indonesia: Darul Islam and the Australian Embassy Bombing*, 22 February 2005.

⁴⁶ Nana, son of Jubaedah, is the youngest of five children from Kebon Cawu, Labuan village, Pandeglang.

⁴⁷ One concrete example is the impact that a Singaporean JI member named Fajar Taslim and a fugitive KOMPAK leader named Ustad Arsyad alias Asadollah had when visiting a JI school outside Palembang. See Crisis Group Briefing, *Indonesia: Radicalisation of the "Palembang Group"*, op. cit.

⁴⁸ One of its graduates is Mira Agustina. Her father, a Darul Islam member active in Ambon, arranged her marriage to Omar al-Faruq.

⁴⁹ "Salik Pernah Menjadi Murid Lulusan Ponpes Ngruki", 2 November 2005, www.kapanlagi.com/newp/h/0000089477.html.

⁵⁰ Sholahuddin al-Ayyubi was charged in connection with the 2001 bombing of the Atrium mall in Jakarta, sentenced to seven years in 2006, had the sentence reduced on appeal and was released in October 2008. He was not prosecuted in connection with the Wonosobo raid.

⁵¹ As-Sobirin is mentioned in the website of yet another JI school, Baitussalam in Semarang, as a place where parents in the Cirebon area can pick up forms for enrolling their students. Baitussalam comes up repeatedly in the testimonies of the Bali II bombers from Semarang. See http://mtsbaitussalam.blogspot.com/2009_03_01_archive.html.

3. Pesantren Darusy-Syahada, Simo, Boyolali

After a rift developed within Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's *pesantren*, al-Mukmin in Ngruki, in 1995, many of the more radical teachers, including Abu Husna, left and joined other schools. Darusy-Syahada was one. The school is run by Ubeid's brother-in-law, Mustaqim. Urwah's friend Parmin and Noordin's late aide-de-camp, Jabir, were students there at the same time. Salik Firdaus, the Bali II suicide bomber, was in the same entering class with Ubeid's younger brother, Umar Burhanuddin. Umar graduated from the school in 2002 and taught there for the next two years; one of his fellow teachers was Bahruddin Soleh alias Abdul Hadi, another of Noordin's chief aides. Two of the al-Ghuraba group members studied there. In June 2009, a Singaporean JI fugitive, Husaini alias Hendrawan, was arrested while going to visit his two children studying there.⁵² In July 2009, the Indonesian press reported that police suspected that the explosives material found in Bekasi in August might have been transported through Simo, Boyolali and that the hotel bombs might have been partially constructed there.⁵³

4. Mahad Aly (Universitas an-Nur), Solo

As noted, this school was the place where Urwah, Ubeid and Parmin all became Noordin followers, and Noordin may still be able to draw on the informal alumni network. Abdullah Mudhofar alias Ustadz Hiban, one of the radical JI teachers in Poso killed by police in 2007, was an alumnus; his brother was a member of the al-Ghuraba group. At the time of its maximum influence over the extremist movement, the school was led by Abu Fida, who himself helped Noordin hide in 2004; he is now a member of the governing council of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's new organisation, JAT. The school moved to Waru village in Sukoharjo, Solo, around 2007 and does not seem to play the same role that it once did.

5. Pesantren Darul Fitrah, Sukoharjo, Solo

Heri Sigu Samboja, a young man who became a bomb-making apprentice in the lead-up to the Australian embassy bombing, was teaching here when he was recruited by Noordin in 2004. One of the men, Maruto Jati Sulistiono, on the police wanted list for helping Noordin in 2006 and perhaps still part of his team, was said to have been recently staying at Darul Fitrah.

6. Pesantren Darul Manar, Kepung, Kediri

In 2004, Umar Burhanuddin and Bahruddin Soleh alias Abdul Hadi met at Darul Manar, and Umar proceeded to teach for two weeks on Abdul Hadi's instructions.⁵⁴ In 2005, Dr Azhari Husin was believed to be staying here. In August 2005, Abdul Hadi and Parmin had a meeting here to discuss hiding Noordin. As noted above, the school produced two of the men involved in renting the Wonosobo safehouse, Aris Ma'ruf and Abdul Hadi's student, Ragil.

These are just a handful of the JI-affiliated schools that come up in connection with hiding Noordin or recruiting new members of his group. Others mentioned in connection with the 17 July attacks are Pesantren al-Muaddib in Cilacap and Nurul Huda in Purbalingga. The Indonesian government has come up with no systematic plan for addressing the problems posed by these schools, but the answer is not closing them down. It is monitoring them, engaging them and subjecting them to much more intensive oversight than currently is taking place.

While most of them use a system known as Islamic Education Method (Manhaj Tarbiyah Islam, MTI) for their older students, in which the writings of Abdullah Azzam and the importance of jihad figure prominently, the problem is not so much the curriculum as it is the small after-class religious study sessions where individual teachers can assess the potential of students and draw them into more extremist activity.

XI. REACHING OUT TO JIHADI LEADERS

Noordin repeatedly has shown an ability to recruit members of jihadi organisations like JI who are bored or frustrated by their leaders' inaction. A revealing exchange took place in between Noordin and one of Abu Dujana's men, Sarwo Edi, as recounted by the latter in his interrogation deposition:

I met Noordin in late 2003 or early 2004. He asked, "What [have] you and your friends done and what are you doing now?"

I said, "Not the same as what you are doing".

He asked, "What is the stance of your leaders to the fatwa of Osama bin Laden (about attacking the assets and people of America and its allies)?"

I said, "I don't have an official position from them".

⁵² <http://radarkarawang.blogspot.com/2009/07/menelusuri-jejak-hendrawan-teroris.html>, 25 July 2009.

⁵³ Lima Titik di Boyolali Lokasi Merakit Bom?", *Kompas*, 20 July 2009.

⁵⁴ Interrogation deposition of Umar Burhanuddin alias Daud Iskandar als Heri als Zaid bin Bukhori, 2 February 2006.

Then Noordin said, "So from the beginning, it's just preaching and education – when are you going to wage jihad?"

I said, "There are many problems..."

Noordin said, "That's precisely it, jihad is the way to overcome those problems".

Then the conversation broke off for a while and when it resumed, I said, "It isn't necessary to apply the bin Laden fatwa in all places, and anyway, JI isn't part of al-Qaeda. In making policies they have to take into consideration the local conditions in each place".

Then Noordin said the actions he was taking were with the *amir*'s permission.

I said, "What *amir*?"

He said, "Abdullah Sungkar [the founder of JI]".

I said that the *amir* had already changed [to Abu Bakar Ba'asyir].

Then Noordin said, "All right, then, what can you give us – do you have members ready to go or materials [explosives, ammunition] or money?"

I said "I can only give you prayers, I can't give you anything else because we have different chains of command, in addition to which our vision, mission and selection of targets is different".

Noordin said, "How so?"

I said, "Why not choose cleaner targets where the risk of hitting the wrong people is lessened? I mean you don't have to use bombs everywhere but by kidnapping or shooting, or using other methods, you are more likely to hit the right target. You have to consider whether an operation is productive or counterproductive in the interests of furthering religious outreach or generating more slander of the Muslim community".

Noordin said, "Okay, I'll take your suggestions into consideration. Thanks for your input".⁵⁵

The exchange, however, shows the way in which Noordin sends couriers – men who deliver messages rather than risk telephone communication – to known jihadi leaders, knowing that if he can bring them on board, significant resources, human and material, will follow. He approached Abdullah Sunata of KOMPAK and Taufiqurrahman alias Akram from Darul Islam in a similar fashion in 2004-2005, both unsuccessfully.⁵⁶ One of the questions in the July bombings is how the Jaelani brothers were drawn into Noordin's network – and whether

their collaboration was at Noordin's initiative or Syaifudin Jaelani's.

XII. ISLAMIC MEDICINE AND CLINICS

Several of the suspects in the hotel bombings, including Syaifudin Jaelani and Baridin Latif, were self-professed Islamic healers or sold Islamic remedies. *Thibbun nabawi* or "medicine of the prophet" has become a huge business in Indonesia, building on the lack of access of many to reasonably priced health care. It is particularly popular among radical groups, because clinics can serve as a place of recruitment; at the same time, the marketing of "medicines" can provide additional income for members of the group.

The three elements to Islamic medicine, as practiced in Indonesia, are herbal remedies, based on "black seed" (*hibbah as-saudah*, a form of nigella) and honey; *bekam*, or extraction of "dirty" blood through the use of suction cups; and exorcism of djinn (*rukhiya*). In the latter two, the healer, or *tabib*, can provide religious "advice" to the patient in the course of the treatment.

Sale of herbal remedies among radical groups, like jihadi publishing, provides both a way of inviting outsiders to join the group through the promise of economic gain, through becoming a supplier or retail agent, and a way of funding the group itself, by selling a particular brand to members. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's *pesantren* sponsors a brand of herbal medicines, al-Ghuraba. Many JI members sell the products of Naturaid, a perfectly respectable East Java company whose founder is an Afghan veteran from Darul Islam, simply because he is considered part of the "family". Hardline media routinely carry advertisements of herbal medicines, often sold by the same agents that distribute jihadi books and videos.

The herbal remedies also provide a potential link to the Middle East. One agent for Basmallah Foods in Bekasi, a company that produces its own line of *hibbah as-saudah* (and parenthetically frequently sponsors mass religious rallies with Ba'asyir and other hardline speakers, claimed in 2008 to get the basic ingredient from Yemen.

If up until now, most of the focus on jihadi economic activity has been on publishing, it may be time to focus more on Islamic clinics, such as the one Syaifudin Jaelani ran, as sources of funds and recruitment.

⁵⁵ Interrogation deposition of Suparjo alias Sarwo Edi Nugroho, 27 March 2007, p.7. These depositions are formal documents recorded by police interrogators and this should be considered more an approximation of a conversation rather than a verbatim transcript.

⁵⁶ Crisis Group Report, *Terrorism in Indonesia: Noordin's Networks*, op. cit.

XIII. CONCLUSIONS

The involvement of foreign funding in the 17 July attacks will make Indonesia's counter-terrorism efforts more complicated. Already there are calls for strengthened legislation, harsher sentences for convicted terrorists, and new structural arrangements in the security apparatus. None of that will have any positive impact – and could have a serious negative one – unless government agencies make a serious effort to understand and weaken the support base for terrorist activity.

Schools, mosques, publishing houses and clinics are all important. There are very few, if any, *JI* schools where the majority of teachers and students would go over to Noordin if given a chance, but likewise there are very few that lack a small core of sympathisers ready to join. If officials of the religious affairs ministry visit these schools, as they periodically do, and announce there is nothing amiss, it is because they are not looking in the right place. The curriculum is rarely the problem, although most of these schools use the *MTI* materials mentioned above. A more systematic look at the backgrounds of teachers – where they studied, whether they received military training abroad, for example – might be more revealing, but going abroad to wage jihad is no crime under Indonesian law. Requiring all Islamic schools, not just the *JI* network, to register, report teachers and students, record donations, and accept certain academic standards might be a way forward, but given that these schools are only 50 out of some 30,000, it would be a huge effort with little guarantee that those receiving the information in Jakarta would have any capacity to process and analyse it.

Any operational link to al-Qaeda would make the problem even more difficult. Indonesian embassies and consulates in the Middle East and South Asia need officials who understand international terrorist linkages and know the schools and other institutions where recruitment is known to take place. Pakistan and Yemen may be particularly important in this regard. These officials also need to know the extent of cooperation between jihadi media in Indonesia and the country in which they are stationed. Without further stigmatising the long-suffering migrant community, there also needs to be a better understanding of how terrorist groups exploit opportunities to recruit overseas workers and use their social and economic networks.

Community awareness is also essential. As with Brekele in Temanggung or Syaifudin Jaelani in Bogor and earlier, with some of the Bali II bombers, one extremist at a local mosque can bring a few young men into jihadi circles without anyone in the community, or indeed anyone else in the mosque, being aware of what is taking

place. An idea put forward by police to station officers in mosques to listen to what imams are saying is the wrong approach – and was withdrawn after a public outcry – but at least they are giving the problem some thought. Community leaders at the village and hamlet levels need to know not just what messages are being delivered but also to whom and in what context: a Friday sermon at a crowded mosque may be less dangerous than the same message delivered in a study group to a small group of teenagers. Those leaders also need to have the ability to distinguish between anger at the treatment of Muslims in Palestine, for example, and active incitement to violence.

Also, given the extent that radical preachers have relied on “nature training” and other excuses to take youth groups out to nearby hills for physical fitness training, there should probably be increased alertness on the part of parents to such programs. All this underscores the need for a carefully crafted public information program.

Any restructuring of government agencies needs to be very carefully thought through. Simply creating a new coordinating body or strengthening an existing one will not do the trick. It is true that information about known jihadis and their networks cannot stay compartmentalised in Jakarta. It needs to be shared, among security agencies; between police and prison authorities; between all of the above and local officials. Local police and community leaders in particular need to learn much more than they know now about the radical groups operating in their areas and what danger signs to look for. While there is a justification for greater information-sharing, there is none at all for giving more authority to the military or intelligence agencies to arrest or interrogate suspects. One of the great strengths of Indonesia's counter-terrorism program is that it is a civilian law enforcement effort, not a war, and it should stay that way. But the police need a greater research and analysis capacity than they have at present, not only in Jakarta but in the field.

Indonesia also needs to strengthen programs for monitoring convicted prisoners before and after their release. Authorities need to better gather and share information about convicted terrorists: who visits them, what materials they read, what kind of meetings they have with other prisoners. Prisons provide a wealth of intelligence-gathering opportunities that Indonesian authorities need to take more advantage of: establishing permanent police liaisons with key prisons could be a start. Monitoring released “high risk” prisoners like Urwah needs to be treated as an ongoing job that does not stop six months or even a year after the individual's release, and it needs to involve the community to which the prisoner returns as much as or more than the prison system.

When the police investigation into the hotel bombings is finally finished and the suspects tried, an outside evaluation of lessons learned would be useful. What went right, what went wrong, what could have been done better, what skills could be strengthened – all of that should be examined in a way that can strengthen the country's counter-terrorism capacity for the future. The immediate

task, however, is to capture Noordin, alive if possible; uncover and cut off his foreign support; and weaken his local support base.

Jakarta/Brussels, 27 August 2009

APPENDIX A

MAP OF CENTRAL JAVA





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Crisis Group also operates out of over 25 different locations in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and Latin America.

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