Islam and Violence in Malaysia

Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid

S. Rajaratnam School of international Studies
Singapore

23 February 2007

With Compliments

This Working Paper series presents papers in a preliminary form and serves to stimulate comment and discussion. The views expressed are entirely the author’s own and not that of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies.
The S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) was established in January 2007 as an autonomous School within the Nanyang Technological University. RSIS’s mission is to be a leading research and graduate teaching institution in strategic and international affairs in the Asia Pacific. To accomplish this mission, it will:

- Provide a rigorous professional graduate education in international affairs with a strong practical and area emphasis
- Conduct policy-relevant research in national security, defence and strategic studies, diplomacy and international relations
- Collaborate with like-minded schools of international affairs to form a global network of excellence

Graduate Training in International Affairs

RSIS offers an exacting graduate education in international affairs, taught by an international faculty of leading thinkers and practitioners. The Master of Science (MSc) degree programmes in Strategic Studies, International Relations, and International Political Economy are distinguished by their focus on the Asia Pacific, the professional practice of international affairs, and the cultivation of academic depth. Over 120 students, the majority from abroad, are enrolled in these programmes. A small, select Ph.D. programme caters to advanced students whose interests match those of specific faculty members. RSIS also runs a one-semester course on ‘The International Relations of the Asia Pacific’ for undergraduates in NTU.

Research

RSIS research is conducted by five constituent Institutes and Centres: the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS, founded 1996), the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR, 2002), the Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS, 2006), the Centre for the Advanced Study of Regionalism and Multilateralism (CASRM, 2007); and the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security Studies in ASIA (NTS-Asia, 2007). The focus of research is on issues relating to the security and stability of the Asia-Pacific region and their implications for Singapore and other countries in the region. The S. Rajaratnam Professorship in Strategic Studies brings distinguished scholars and practitioners to participate in the work of the Institute. Previous holders of the Chair include Professors Stephen Walt, Jack Snyder, Wang Jisi, Alastair Iain Johnston, John Mearsheimer, Raja Mohan, and Rosemary Foot.

International Collaboration

Collaboration with other professional Schools of international affairs to form a global network of excellence is a RSIS priority. RSIS will initiate links with other like-minded schools so as to enrich its research and teaching activities as well as adopt the best practices of successful schools.
ABSTRACT

In Malaysia, violence related to Islam has been the exception rather than the rule. Aversion towards violence among Malaysian Muslims traces its roots to a multi-religious polity. The state has, however, been driven a few times into coercive action by the occurrence of actual or threat of potential violence. This paper chronicles the few cases of violence which have intermittently driven a wedge between Islamists and the state, which harbours its own vision of a modern Islamic polity. It argues that there is thin evidence to support a posited relationship between Islam and violence. Despite recent security scares related in one way or another to imagined or actual Islamic groups in the ‘war against terrorism’ era, the possibility of an Islamic state emerging in Malaysia via militant means remains remote.

Dr. Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid (born 1969) is a senior lecturer in Political Science at the School of Distance Education (SDE), and a committee member of the Centre for International Studies (CIS), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Penang, Malaysia. He graduated from the University of Oxford (B.A. Hons. Philosophy, Politics and Economics), the University of Leeds (M.A. Politics of International Resources and Development) and the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom (Ph.D. Politics). An active contributor to the discourse on political Islam in Malaysia, Dr. Ahmad Fauzi’s writings have been featured in such leading journals as Indonesia and the Malay World (London), Islamic Culture (Hyderabad), The Islamic Quarterly (London), Islamic Studies (Islamabad), Asian Studies Review (Brisbane), Islam and the Modern Age (New Delhi) and Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs (Canberra), and in books published by Blackwell Publishing (Oxford) and the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (Singapore).
ISLAM AND VIOLENCE IN MALAYSIA

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the new millennium, there has been a remarkable rise in the use or threatened use of violence by terrorist groups in Southeast Asia, as a means to achieve their goals. The pattern of such terrorism has shifted from traditional terrorism - comprising armed political groups fighting for secession from a particular nation state or seeking an overthrow of its government and its forcible replacement by those who share similar ideological visions with the terrorists; to new or post-modern terrorism - consisting of transnational groups supporting wider religio-political aims. Post-modern terrorism is further distinguished by its perpetrators’ ability to exploit sophisticated advances in information and communications technology and economic globalisation to their own advantage, while simultaneously adopting fairly pre-modern orientations such as amorphous millenarianism and heartless approval of militant brutality.¹ The proliferation of new terrorism in Southeast Asia, especially evident since the commercial aeroplane hijacks and suicide attacks on the World Trade Centre (WTC) in New York and the Pentagon in the United States of America (USA) on 11th September 2001 (hereafter ‘9-11’), have arguably caught the region’s governments by surprise. Their complacency was generated by consecutively high rates of economic growth, a stout policy of non-interference in the affairs of fellow Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member’s affairs, and a false sense

of over-confidence in the capacity of Asian Values to inculcate a shared vision of regional harmony.²

Among Southeast Asian countries, Malaysia is arguably the least experienced in handling threats posed by terrorism, having undergone only one nationwide armed rebellion - that of the Communist Party of Malaya, from 1948 until 1989.³ In its display of peaceful methods and broad agreement to operate within the Malaysian state’s socio-political system, Islamic resurgence in Malaysia is distinguished from its corresponding Middle Eastern phenomenon, which has regularly experienced militant upsurges by myriad groups of Islamic rebels. Since its inception in the middle to late 1970s, the catchphrase to describe Islamic resurgence in Malaysia has been *dakwah* – implying the peaceful propagation of the message of Islam as *din al-hayah* (The Way of Life) to fellow Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

Until fairly recently, Islamic-related violence in Malaysia has been relatively rare. Whatever violence that has occurred has been the exception rather than the rule. The machinations of the groups involved in the violence, moreover, far from reflect a systematic attempt at armed insurrection bearing realistic hopes of success. This was proven by the security forces’ swift crackdown on the two main violent uprisings of the post-Islamic resurgence era, viz, the Memali incident of November 1985 and the Al-Ma’unah affair of July 2000. These cases, and their doctrinal origins, will be discussed later in the paper. Both the Memali and Al-Ma’unah rebels were among the twelve militant groups identified by the Home Ministry as having attempted or planned a violent takeover of the country’s administration since 1967.⁴

---

Despite such incidences, only just before 9-11 has Malaysia seriously awakened to the possibility of a large-scale terrorist uprising. What seemed a remote possibility was transformed into a real one with the discovery in 2001 of revolutionary cells run by the the *Mujahidin* Group of Malaysia (*KMM* – *Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia*, or otherwise popularly sensationalised in the media as *Kumpulan Militan Malaysia*), followed by a crackdown on Malaysian cells of the *Jamaah Islamiah* (JI), *KMM*’s Southeast Asian equivalent. Both *KMM* and JI, in turn, allegedly operated links with the Al-Qaeda international terrorist network. The sense of urgency to monitor potential terrorist groups has been heightened by revelations that the USA maintains close interest on the terrorist threat emanating from Southeast Asia,\(^5\) and has even included Malaysian groups in its list of undesirable terrorists.\(^6\) Partly in response to such concerns, Malaysia has initiated anti-terrorist measures which have focused on identifying and addressing the deep-seated causes of terrorism, rather than relying on military strikes against suspected terrorists and countries accused of harbouring terrorism. Strongly believing in multilateral cooperation among Southeast Asian countries, Malaysia has since late 2003 hosted the Southeast Asian Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), which actively organises seminars and workshops on combating terrorism. It is important that such measures are seen to be effective by Western nations who, it is feared, may choose to interfere in the domestic affairs of Southeast Asian countries should their anti-terrorist defence mechanisms prove ineffectual.\(^7\)

---


7 cf. ‘Britain hormati pendekatan Malaysia perangi keganasan’, *Utusan Malaysia*, 11 January 2003; ‘Cara Malaysia perangi keganasan disokong’, *Utusan Malaysia*, 14 January 2003; ‘AS puji Malaysia
Malaysia’s success in maintaining peace and stability, amidst the simmering Islamic resurgence of the 1970s-1990s, was the result of effective state-designed manoeuvres by Dr. Mahathir Mohamad’s administration, intended to neutralise rather than punish resurgent Muslims. The challenges posed by such Islamic movements as the Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia (ABIM – *Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia*), the opposition Islamic Party of Malaysia (PAS – *Parti Islam SeMalaysia*), and the Islamic Representative Council (IRC) which later evolved into the Organisation for Islamic Reformation (JIM – *Jemaah Islah Malaysia*), were managed by a shrewd policy of Islamisation and cooptation of Islamists combined with controlled repression. Rather than being shunned and having their views dismissed, resurgent Muslims were accommodated via limited opportunities to air demands and grievances. Short of playing into their hands, the state cooperated with them where possible, but maintained control of the overall situation. In contrast, the emergence of terrorist cells in the heartlands of the Muslim world could in part be located to the state’s uncompromising response, sometimes unnatural and out of proportion, to resurgent Muslims who demanded a say in the running of society. Intolerance breeds perangi keganasan’, *Utusan Malaysia*, 6 February 2004; ‘SEARCCCT berjaya tangani keganasan’, *Utusan Malaysia*, 2 June 2004; ‘Amerika yakin keupayaan Malaysia tangani keganasan’, *Berita Harian*, 22 June 2004; ‘PM ajak ikut cara Malaysia menangani keganasan’, *Berita Harian*, 1 April 2005.


violence, which invites even harsher repercussions from the authorities. Society and politics are then stuck in a culture of fear and constant threats of reprisal by both the state and Muslim insurgents.

In terms of actual Islamic-related violence in Malaysia, the number of incidents is small. The eruption of sporadic violence did not originate from the mainstream efforts of the major dakwah movements, but was rather associated with fifth-column activities of fringe Islamic groups, whose ideological outlook was invariably extremist and theologically suspect. By the late 1970s, the government was expressing serious concern that undesirable foreign elements, allegedly from the Indian sub-continent and Libya, were successfully misleading young Malay-Muslims into embracing extremist forms of Islam which were intolerant of other religions. As early as 1976, Finance Minister Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah had warned of foreign powers which used missionary organisations as "tools to penetrate the Malay community" and "ultimately lead them to communism." Prior to assuming the Premiership in July 1981, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad had reportedly warned of “Malay religious opportunists” seeking to topple the government via violent means. Government spokesmen also accused the communists, operating through front organisations such as the Muslim Brotherhood Association (PAPERI: Persatuan Persaudaraan Islam) supposedly active in Kelantan, as the elusive nemesis constantly prepared to exploit foreign-induced divisions among the Malays. According to Musa Ahmad, the former Communist

---

13 Simon Barraclough, ‘Managing the Challenges of Islamic Revival in Malaysia: A Regime Perspective’, p. 961. It must be mentioned, however, that apart from confessions made under duress, the government has presented little, if any, concrete evidence that mainstream Islamic movements had been subject to communist infiltration, as its exaggerated propaganda consistently implied. See also Simon Barraclough, 'The Dynamics of Coercion in the Malaysian Political Process', Modern Asian Studies, vol. 19, no. 4 (1985), p. 803.
Party of Malaya (CPM) chairman who surrendered to the authorities in 1981, the CPM had resolved since 1961 that religion provided the best avenue of obtaining mass support. As such, the CPM had sought to infiltrate religious organisations through highly trained cadres who would use leadership positions to spread communism, under the guise of religious extremism, among rank and file members. Musa also disclosed CPM's tactics of playing up religious and nationalistic sentiments to attract Malay intellectuals.14

Since 1979, state rhetoric against alleged foreign involvement in Islamic movements has focused upon Iran's conscious attempt to export its revolution abroad. The manifest excitement surrounding Islamists of all persuasions after the February revolution prompted the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Mohamad Nasir, to declare: "The struggle of the Iranian people has nothing to do with our country."15 ABIM's decision to observe a 'Solidarity Day' in conjunction with the liberation of Iran and its leader Anwar Ibrahim's cordial visits to Khomeini's Iran and 'fundamentalist' Pakistan under Zia ul-Haq seemed to vindicate accusations of ABIM's predilection for a revolutionary Islamic government.16 During the 1980 and 1981 General Assemblies of the ruling coalition's chief Malay component party, UMNO (United Malays’ National Organisation), vociferous attacks against groups "attempting to import the Iranian revolutionary ideology" were followed by specific demands by some delegates to proscribe ABIM altogether.17 Also alleged to have links with Gadhaffi's Libya,

ABIM nevertheless denied receiving finance from abroad.\textsuperscript{18} The question of funding aside, it was ABIM's aggressive commitment to Islamic internationalism and success in winning praise from Muslim countries and international Islamic bodies, as signified by Anwar Ibrahim's appointment as the Asia-Pacific representative to the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY), that made it a cause for legitimate concern.\textsuperscript{19}

As for PAS, Iranian influence was discernible in the language of its post-1982 rhetoric, for instance the portrayal of its struggle as representing the mustazaffin (oppressed) as against the mustakbirin (oppressors).\textsuperscript{20} PAS-sponsored schools were known to have sent their graduates to Iranian universities for further studies.\textsuperscript{21} But contrary to the government’s claims, no evidence exists to indicate that PAS-Iran relations ever went beyond ideological and educational aspects. Charges of Iranian interference in Malaysian politics peaked at the height of the government's coercive measures against PAS in the mid-1980s. In his 1984 National Day address, Dr. Mahathir harped upon the theme of groups aiming to forcibly establish a "government by mullahs" and on another occasion, claimed to have seen evidence of PAS’s plans of setting up 'suicide squads' for whom "the shedding of UMNO blood [wa]s halal."\textsuperscript{22}

The government attempted to reduce movements' international links not only through

\textsuperscript{19} John Funston, 'Malaysia', p. 176; Mohamad Abu Bakar, 'Islamic Revivalism and the Political Process in Malaysia', p. 1048.
\textsuperscript{21} 'Fundamentalism on trial', Far Eastern Economic Review, 8 May 1986.
\textsuperscript{22} 'They shall not Pas: Unno challenges the opposition over who is more Islamic than whom', Far Eastern Economic Review, 18 October 1984.
closer supervision, but also by sowing contacts with countries suspected of assisting them, such that funds to promote the cause of *dakwah* were channeled only through government-approved outlets.23 Malaysia took definite steps to rival *dakwah* movements' international Islamic credentials by improving economic and cultural ties with the Islamic world.24 That Iran appeared to accept the danger that close ties with radical Islamic elements posed to its diplomatic relations with Malaysia, as reported in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* (9 August 1984), was testimony to the success of the state's strategy of neutralising the international influence of *dakwah* movements.

The state's surveillance of activities of fringe Islamic extremists intensified after bloody incidents in Kerling, Selangor in 1978 and Batu Pahat, Johore in 1980. In the former case, temple vigilantes butchered five young Malay-Muslims, only one of whom survived, who were a self-professed mission to desecrate Hindu shrines. In the latter event, a police station was viciously attacked by twenty sword-brandishing religious zealots, eight of whom were killed in the ensuing confrontation, and had reportedly planned a violent takeover of the country.25 In March 1980, the Internal Security Act (ISA)26 was used to arrest several Kedah PAS leaders accused of

---

26 The ISA (1960) authorises the Home Minister to detain anybody who "has acted or is about to act or is likely to act in any manner prejudicial to the security of Malaysia;" see ALIRAN, *ISA dan Keselamatan Negara* (Penang: Aliran Kesedaran Negara, 1988), p. 24. The situation has been made worse since June 1989, when an amendment barred judicial review of ministerial or regal actions in the exercise of their discretionary powers under the ISA, hence effectively divesting detainees of their legal right to challenge their detention through *habeas corpus* applications. For purposes of investigation, the detainee is held for a preliminary period of sixty days, which may be followed by a two-year confirmed detention, renewable indefinitely on a two-yearly basis, subject to recommendations from the Special Branch and an appointed Advisory Board. This Board undertakes reviews of cases on a half-yearly basis and, in the absence of a proper legal trial, listens to appeals from detainees. It has, however, been criticised as a superficial measure designed to give a semblance of legitimacy to the system; its recommendations are often ignored, it does not guarantee the right to representation by a counsel, and even when such a right is granted, the rule of confidentiality between lawyers and clients has been openly flouted; see John A. Lent, ‘Human Rights in Malaysia’, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, vol. 14, no. 4 (1984), pp. 443-444. Upon release, detainees may be further imposed with a restriction order,
mobilising thousands of paddy farmers in mass demonstrations demanding rises in the
price of rice and payments of subsidies in cash. Despite the obvious economic
overtones of the unrest, the government insisted that it was masterminded by a
clandestine organisation, Pertubuhan Angkatan Sabilullah (Organisation of the
Soldiers of God), intent upon erecting an Islamic government by revolutionary means;
an allegation apparently corroborated by the confession of one of the detainees after
weeks of interrogation.  

Throughout the 1980s, several fringe groups suspected of para-military activities, bearing such names as the Islamic Revolutionary Forces, the Spiritual Group and the Crypto were uncovered and their leaders arrested under the ISA. 

Actual outbursts of violence, or evidence of intended attempts, provided justification for the government's tightening of security measures and enabled it to discredit the mainstream dakwah movements by lumping Islamists together as 'fanatics', 'deviant extremists' and proponents of dakwah songsang.


which effectively confines their movements within a designated locality and circumscribes their public role; see Simon Barraclough, 'The Dynamics of Coercion in the Malaysian Political Process', p. 808. The ISA has been regularly used in conjunction the Essential (Security Cases) Regulations (ESCAR) (1975), which enables the government to circumvent established judicial procedures for cases involving national security, and whose enactment prompted the Malaysian Bar Council to call on lawyers to boycott trials held under 'oppressive' regulations which flagrantly flouted the rule of law; see John A. Lent, 'Human Rights in Malaysia', p. 445, and Gordon P. Means, Malaysian Politics: The Second Generation (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 143.


Ibid.; Syed Ahmad Hussein, Islam and Politics in Malaysia 1969-82: The Dynamics of Competing Traditions, pp. 185-188.

The term dakwah songsang literally means 'upside-down dakwah' and is used by the authorities to refer to false or deviant forms of Islamic activities. Cf. Mohamad Abu Bakar, 'Islamic Revivalism and the Political Process in Malaysia', p. 1052; Syed Ahmad Hussein, Islam and Politics in Malaysia 1969-82: The Dynamics of Competing Traditions, pp. 188-189.
Kafir-mengkafir refers to the trading of accusations of one another’s infidelity between different groups of Malay-Muslims, each holding adamantly to its own conception of Islam. In Malaysian politics, the conflicting parties involved were PAS and UMNO. The issue had its beginnings in PAS’s animosity towards UMNO’s cooperation with non-Muslim partners, the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) and the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC), in the governing coalition. By forming a multi-religious administration, UMNO was alleged to have been committing the forbidden act of appointing non-Muslim leaders to rule over Muslims. Such a stance had arisen since the mid-1960s, but was temporarily suspended during PAS’s brief stint in the ruling National Front (BN – Barisan Nasional) coalition (1973-77).

Kafir-mengkafir resurfaced in line with the exertion of influence of the Middle Eastern-influenced Young Turks in PAS – a development which would culminate in the deposition of Mohamad Asri Muda from PAS’s leadership in 1982. The earliest post-coalition PAS’s public branding of UMNO as kafir may be located to November 1979, when Mustapha Abu Bakar, Deputy Chairman of PAS’s Commissioner Committee of Kelantan (1979-81), in a lecture in Ulu Besut, Terengganu, labeled UMNO members as apostates. As such, UMNO members were allegedly unfit to lead congregational prayers, unqualified to slaughter livestock for consumption and incapable of solemnising marriages. The religious acts, if continued to be led by UMNO members, were pronounced to become null and void. For example, a marriage formalised by an UMNO imam (head of congregation) was deemed to be illegal, such that any offspring produced was considered to be illegitimate. Mustapha was eventually convicted in the syariah court for delivering a religious lecture without

tauliah (formal letter of authority), and issuing a fatwa without tauliah and which went against religious law.31

Unperturbed by the court ruling, in September 1980, PAS’s Ulama Council published a book, Islam dan Politik: Hasil Kajian Ilmiah Ulama PAS (Islam and Politics: Results of Scholarly Research by PAS’s Ulama), which declared as apostates Muslims who condoned the separation of religion from politics and those who rejected God’s laws in preference for man-made laws.32 Kafir-mengkafir was crystallised as a national issue by the controversial speech delivered in April 1981 by Haji Abdul Hadi Awang, then PAS State Commissioner for Terengganu and PAS President since September 2003, in Banggol Peradong, Terengganu. This speech, infamously called Amanat Haji Hadi, outlined three major principles which governed PAS’s fight against UMNO. First, PAS opposed UMNO and BN not because their names were as such, but because they had retained the colonial or infidel constitution that they inherited. Second, since the struggle, speeches and financial contribution of PAS members were all jihad (holy war), their deaths in the course of fighting UMNO members were as honourable martyrs. Third, one need not officially convert to other religions to become a kafir, instead, one could be thrown into infidelity by simply separating between religion and politics.33

The impact of Amanat Haji Hadi was to polarise Malay society into PAS and UMNO camps. The situation was particularly acute in the rural Malay heartlands of Kelantan, Terengganu and Kedah. Families broke up, marriages were dissolved, religious feasts were boycotted, annual zakat (almsgiving) were paid not through official channels, and rival congregations simultaneously offered the same prayers in

32 Ibid.: 383.
33 Ibid.: 385.
mosques. Burgeoning audiences at PAS-organised lectures prompted the government to step up security measures against it. Following detentions under the ISA of three PAS Youth leaders, viz. Abu Bakar Chik, Bunyamin Yaakob and Muhammad Sabu, and amidst rumours that PAS members were preparing themselves for a military jihad, a ban was imposed in August 1984 on PAS gatherings in its four stronghold states. A live television debate, scheduled for 11th November 1984, would have pitted three UMNO leaders against three PAS stalwarts on the kafir-mengkafir issue, but was eventually cancelled by the intervention of the Yang diPertuan Agong (king). Following this, the government issued a White Paper entitled The Threat to Muslim Unity and National Security, which implicated PAS members in the subversive activities of extremist Islamic groups, and created the spectre of the communists manipulating PAS-inspired rifts to achieve their anti-democratic aims.

In 1985, two bloody incidents astounded PAS members and the public alike into realising how far the government was prepared to resort to physical repression. Firstly, a PAS supporter was killed when UMNO-paid thugs attacked a PAS pre-by-election gathering in Lubok Merbau, Kedah. PAS’s legal advisor, Suhaimi Said, who wrote a pamphlet disclosing the event was consequently held under the ISA and

expelled to district confinement. On 19th November, 1985, in the rural village of Memali near Baling, Kedah, police stormed upon a community of inadequately armed PAS villagers resisting the arrest of their leader, Ibrahim Mahmood – popularly known as Ibrahim Libya, who was accused of abusing Islam and inciting rebellion against the state. In the ensuing showdown, four policemen and fourteen villagers including Ibrahim lost their lives. Notwithstanding the heavy casualties on his side and their manifest ill-preparedness for armed combat, Ibrahim’s followers were alleged to have started hostilities by threatening and behaving aggressively towards the police. The official version of events traced the police operations, including previously abortive ones, to provocative preparations made by Ibrahim Libya to topple the government by the use of force, via the setting up of a clandestine Islamic Revolutionary Movement which drew inspiration from similar movements in the Middle East.

The polemic surrounding events of the ‘Memali tragedy’ has never really ended. The official explanation of the ‘Memali tragedy’ directly linked the violence with Amanat Haji Hadi’s advocacy of militant jihad against UMNO members. Physical confrontation against the state was said to be passionately pursued by the PAS members, who earnestly believed they were fighting an infidel government. Although the resort towards violence may have been reflected Ibrahim Libya’s personal instruction under intense pressure rather than an execution of party policy, its relation to the kafir-mengkafir issue was arguably more than accidental. This message

has been constantly hammered through the state-controlled media. The recorded confession of Muhamad Yusof Husin, a PAS activist detained following the Memali violence, has been the government’s favourite evidence. PAS, on the other hand, has been consistently commemorating, to the government's displeasure, the day of the Memali tragedy as 'Martyrdom Day'. It has openly declared disagreement with the official *fatwa* that Ibrahim Libya and his companions who perished in Memali were not martyrs, but rather were treacherous rebels (*bugah*). PAS has claimed that Muhamad Yusof Husin’s confession following the Memali tragedy was extracted under torture.

Since the Memali tragedy, PAS has never really retracted from its position of defending the contents and implications of *Amanat Haji Hadi*. This intransigence has been related to the heavy influence among PAS leaders of Middle Eastern Islamist trends, which, under incessant state repression, have developed strong tendencies to excommunicate fellow Muslims who are willing to compromise with unIslamic rulership. Despite embracing such extreme positions, PAS registered massive gains in the November 1999 general elections by capitalising on the *Reformasi* euphoria engulfing the Malays, still disgruntled at the government’s humiliating treatment of Anwar Ibrahim, whom Dr. Mahathir sacked as Deputy Prime Minister and Deputy President of UMNO in September 1998. For the first time, PAS led the opposition in

---

Parliament. At the state level, PAS retained Kelantan, captured Terengganu, and made significant inroads into Kedah, Perlis, Pahang, Perak and Selangor.

Faced with PAS’s resurgent influence among upwardly mobile young Malays, UMNO’s legitimacy as the prime representative of the Malays was apparently put into question. Hence, since its 1999 electoral successes, PAS has been put on the defensive for failing to disavow *Amanat Haji Hadi*, which bore the blame for creating fissures within the Malay community. While PAS claimed that there was never any clear-cut promulgation of *Amanat Haji Hadi*’s deviation from Islamic teachings, the state insisted otherwise. PAS was rebuked for failing to unambiguously withdraw *Amanat Haji Hadi* together with its *kafir-mengkafir* implications, which have been officially pronounced by the state as contradictory to Islamic faith and law.

PAS tried instead to divorce *Amanat Haji Hadi* from its *kafir-mengkafir* implications. In response to doubts of PAS’s sincerity in planning to open its door to non-Muslims for associate membership and electoral candidacy, PAS’s *Musryid al-‘Am* (General Guide)-cum-Chief Minister of Kelantan, Nik Aziz Nik Mat, retorted that the PAS leadership had never adopted the practice of *kafir-mengkafir*, which was instead instigated by extremist camps within the party. In defence, Haji Hadi Awang, by now PAS Deputy President and Chief Minister of Terengganu, pleaded that *Amanat Haji Hadi* not be cited in parts and the sensitive parts duly taken out of context. He claimed that read as a whole, *Amanat Haji Hadi* was a document

47 See the special report by Sangwon Suh and Santha Oorjitham, ‘Battle for Islam: UMNO and Pas are locked in a struggle for the Malay soul. The outcome may irrevocably change Malaysian society’, *AsiaWeek*, 16 June 2000.
outlining the boundaries separating between faith and infidelity, without pin-pointing any group or individual deemed to have gone out of the fold of Islam.\textsuperscript{52} Haji Hadi claimed that his speech was manipulated by PAS’s machinery who, despite once ardently presenting \textit{Amanat Haji Hadi} as lucid evidence of UMNO’s infidelity, had now themselves joined UMNO.\textsuperscript{53} For similar reasons, other PAS leaders such as Nik Aziz, party President Fadzil Noor and deputy President Mustafa Ali regarded the \textit{Amanat Haji Hadi} issue played up by UMNO as anachronistic and outdated.\textsuperscript{54} PAS was adamant that \textit{Amanat Haji Hadi} was Islamically justifiable and was not guilty for bringing about Malay disunity. Public calls upon PAS leaders to repudiate \textit{Amanat Haji Hadi} fell on deaf ears.\textsuperscript{55} As in 1985, a planned \textit{muzakarah} (discussion) to resolve the UMNO-PAS dispute pertaining to \textit{Amanat Haji Hadi} and revolving issues of Malay unity, never materialised despite initially promising efforts by moderating organisations.\textsuperscript{56}

PAS’s shattering electoral reversals in the 2004 elections, losing Terengganu and having its representation in the federal Parliament and state legislatures heavily reduced, were due to a combination of internal weaknesses of the opposition front and the ruling coalition’s astute capitalisation of post-Mahathir political variables.\textsuperscript{57} Not confronted with extraordinary circumstances and buoyed by the feel-good sentiment

\textsuperscript{52} See the interview with Haji Hadi Awang, “’Bukan saya kafirkan UMNO’ - Hadi Awang jelaskan isu perpecahan akibat amanatnya’, \textit{Mingguan Malaysia}, 13 August 2000.
surrounding a new Prime Minister and his successful projection of Islam Hadhari,\textsuperscript{58} the majority of Malays returned to voting UMNO.\textsuperscript{59} PAS’s inability to shift its doctrinal position with regard to the kafir-mengkafir issue and Amanat Haji Hadi has lent credence to the state’s allegations that PAS bore sympathies, or at least tacitly colluded with probable or actual attempts at violent insurrection to install an Islamic administration in Malaysia.

For example, it never escaped the attention of the mainstream media that activists arrested for involvement in the Mujahidin Group of Malaysia (KMM) and the Jemaah Islamiah (JI), were former or active PAS members. This included a son of Nik Aziz Nik Mat, PAS’s Chief Minister of Kelantan, Nik Adli Nik Aziz, who was detained under the ISA together with nine others in the first wave of KMM arrests in early August 2001.\textsuperscript{60} KMM was alleged to have launched attacks on a police station, on non-Muslim religious sites and assassinated Dr. Joe Fernandez, a Kedah BN state legislative assembly member notorious for his evangelising activities among Malay-Muslim youths.\textsuperscript{61} In another case of actual violence, Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir pointed out that most of the Al-Ma’unah rebels who had participated in the

\textsuperscript{58} Officially translated as ‘civilisational Islam’, Islam Hadhari may be understood as a progressive form of Islam which espouses a joining of forces between the ulama and professional technocrats, a rational acquisition of knowledge, a balance between spiritual and material development, and religious tolerance. As opposed to Islam Siasi (Political Islam), which emphasises the acquisition of political power a pre-requisite to a comprehensive practice of Islam, Islam Hadhari merely calls for values and principles of a state to be compatible with Islam, without necessarily forging a state which incorporates the Islamic legal framework. In his inaugural presidential address at the 55th UMNO General Assembly on 23rd September 2004, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi outlined ten fundamental principles of Islam Hadhari, viz. faith and piety in God, a just and trustworthy government, free and independent people, a vigorous mastery of knowledge, a balanced and comprehensive economic development, a good quality of life, protection of the rights of minority groups and women, cultural and moral integrity, conservation of the environment and strong defence capabilities. For the state’s official conception of Islam Hadhari, see Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, ‘Menuju kecemerlangan’, keynote address at the 55th UMNO General Assembly, Utusan Malaysia, 24 September 2004; http://www.islam.gov.my/islamhadhari/ (accessed 21 February 2007).

\textsuperscript{59} ‘Perubahan sikap Melayu bantu kemenangan BN’, Utusan Malaysia, 23 March 2004.


commando-style arms heist and illegal military training in Grik, Perak, in July 2000, 
had at one time been PAS members. UMNO Secretary-General, Khalil Yaakob, 
further linked the Al-Ma’unah rebellion to a PAS-style militancy which had derived 
inspiration directly from Amanat Haji Hadi.

Following 9-11 and the American incursion into Afghanistan, emotional 
outbursts of sympathy for the Taliban and Osama bin Laden’s Al-Qaeda network 
shown by PAS’s leadership easily fell prey to the mainstream media. Added to this 
were PAS-orchestrated anti-USA demonstrations, briefly recreating the tumultuous 
scenes surrounding the Reformasi agitations of 1998-99. Throughout January to 
February 2002, the country’s premier television channel, Radio Televisyen Malaysia 
(RTM), repeatedly played video clips of the Memali tragedy in an attempt to establish 
PAS as guilty of extremism and fanaticism (taksub), which were conducive to 
militancy. Criticisms that the government was engaging in blatant propaganda did 
not stop it in following years from occasionally airing clips of past extremist-related 
violece. In 2003, the media made a big issue out of Haji Abdul Hadi Awang’s 
presence at an Islamic congress in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia in October 
2000, since participants at the congress had included prominent Indonesian militants 
such as JI leader Abu Bakar Basyir and Laskar Jundullah leader Agus Dwikarna. 
PAS retorted that Abdul Hadi had attended the congress upon invitations from 
Hasanuddin University and Indonesian NGOs in his capacity as leader of the 
Terengganu state government, and had merely spoken of the implementation of

62 ‘Ramai anggota kumpulan Al-Ma’unah ahli Pas: PM’, Berita Harian, 21 July 2000. The Al-Ma’unah affair is dealt with in the following section of this paper.
Islamic administration and laws in Terengganu and Kelantan.\textsuperscript{68} Such publicity was meant more to derive political benefit for UMNO than to remind the masses of the dangers of fanaticism, but insofar as it prompted PAS into stoutly defending its doctrinal positions with regard to its participation in extremist-like activities and confrontations with the authorities, UMNO had achieved its aim of linking PAS with violence and terrorism.

On the whole, the impact of 9-11 and in particular the UMNO and the government’s manipulation of the event, by inciting renewed fear of Islamic extremism, was to reinforce the frightening impression that non-Muslims and liberal Muslims had of PAS.\textsuperscript{69} For the vast majority of Malay-Muslims, this impression has been seemingly confirmed by PAS’s sweeping rejection of the concept of *Islam Hadhari*, which has proven to be an immensely popular catchphrase, even if its implementation is still in early stages. Such uncompromising repudiation of *Islam Hadhari* is best exemplified by Haji Abdul Hadi Awang himself, who, in his book *Hadharah Islamiyyah bukan Islam Hadhari* (Islamic Civilisation, not Civilisational Islam), rebukes *Islam Hadhari* as a hybrid religion which allows the practice of a compartmentalised Islam alongside unIslamic elements, and therefore a *bid’ah* (religious innovation) with deviationist potential.\textsuperscript{70} *Hadharah Islamiyyah bukan Islam Hadhari* has been put under scrutiny by JAKIM for fear of its leading to public confusion over the *Islam Hadhari* concept,\textsuperscript{71} but has as yet escaped a ban despite calls to that effect from UMNO politicians. Kelantan Chief Minister Nik Aziz Nik Mat, on


\textsuperscript{70} Abdul Hadi Awang, *Hadharah Islamiyyah bukan Islam Hadhari* (Kuala Lumpur: Nufair Street, 2005), pp. 24-34, 50, 90, 130, 196.

\textsuperscript{71} JPM edar buku Islam Hadhari melalui JAKIM’, *Berita Minggu*, 13 March 2005.
the other hand, defends Hadharah Islamiyyah bukan Islam Hadhari as a more authentic explication of Islam than the state’s official explanation of Islam Hadhari.⁷² In fact, he shuns UMNO’s Islam Hadhari project as a measure of UMNO’s desire to imitate PAS’s implementation of Islam in Kelantan.⁷³


The Al-Ma’unah affair started dramatically with an arms heist by members of a hitherto obscure Al-Ma’unah movement on an army post and camp in the rustic district of Grik, Perak, during the wee hours of 2nd July 2000. The whole nation was initially stunned by the efficiency and magnitude of the operation, which exposed serious loopholes in security procedures at army bases. Dangerous weapons in huge quantities were transported via three four-wheel drive vehicles to the jungles of Bukit Jenalik near the small town of Sauk. There, the rebels allegedly engaged in military training as preparations for an uprising to install an Islamic government by force of arms. During negotiations with the security forces, among the demands of Al-Ma’unah leader Mohd. Amin Mohd. Razali were the resignation of the Prime Minister, his replacement with an Islamic scholar, the overthrow of the presently tyrannical government and the implementation of Islamic law.⁷⁴

By the time of Al-Ma’unah’s eventual surrender on the evening of 6th July, one rebel and two members of the security forces who had been held hostage within

the rebels’ jungle sanctuary, had lost their lives.\textsuperscript{75} Significantly, the two murder victims, known as Trooper Mathew and Corporal Sagadevan, were non-Muslims. Outside the jungles, Al-Ma’unah members also launched attacks, albeit in vain, to damage what they perceived as abominable non-Muslim symbols such as the Hindu temple in Batu Caves, and multinational breweries around industrial estates in Selangor.\textsuperscript{76} The attacks were supposedly meant to create chaos and ignite a rebellious climate around areas near Kuala Lumpur.\textsuperscript{77} Consequently, Al-Ma’unah members around the country were rounded up and interrogated; some were eventually detained under the ISA, as had their comrades who had based themselves in Bukit Jenalik. These nineteen insurgents were later tried in the high court and found guilty under section 121 of the Penal Code of waging war against the Yang diPertuan Agong – the first ever usage of this law. The three main Al-Ma’unah leaders, viz. Mohd. Amin Mohd. Razali, Zahit Muslim and Jamaludin Darus, received the death penalty, while their sixteen accomplices were sentenced to life imprisonment.\textsuperscript{78} Later, Jemari Jusoh, one of the sixteen initially handed over the life sentence, was meted out the death penalty for actively taking part in the killing of Trooper Mathew.\textsuperscript{79}

A detailed analysis of the Al-Ma’unah affair has been elusive due to the relative obscurity of Al-Ma’unah and contradictory facts contained in journalistic reporting of the astonishing events of July 2000.\textsuperscript{80} However, the lack of accuracy of information on Al-Ma’unah has been alleviated by the publication in 2003 of

\textsuperscript{75} ‘Perompak senjata serah diri - Peristiwa berakhir dengan mengorbankan hanya tiga nyawa’, \textit{Utusan Malaysia}, 7 July 2000.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid.: 236, 239, 245, 250.
\textsuperscript{78} ‘3 termasuk Amin dihukum mati - 16 lagi anggota Al-Ma’unah dipenjara sepanjang hayat’, \textit{Utusan Malaysia}, 29 December 2001.
\textsuperscript{80} For a sample of these contradictory reports, sometimes by the same newspaper on the same day, see D.L. Daun, ‘Paranormal Shootings in Sauk’, \textit{Aliran Monthly} 20 (5), 2000, pp. 21-23.
Maunah: Kebenaran Yang Sebenar – The Naked Truth, by Zabidi Mohamed, the
defence counsel for two leading Al-Ma’unah insurgents, Zahit Muslim and Jamaludin
Darus. In this book, to which the following exposition of Al-Ma’unah is factually
indebted, many of the Al-Ma’unah rebels were depicted as unknowing victims of their
leader, Mohd. Amin Mohd. Razali (hereafter ‘Amin’). They had no intention of
rebelling against the state, and had innocently been at Bukit Jenalik as a participant of
Al-Ma’unah’s regular courses on spirituality. The arms heist and consequent shooting
practice in the jungles were thought to be a joint training session fully condoned by
the military. By the time they realised that Amin was really fighting a physical war,
they had grown so fearful of the severe punishment as threatened by Amin, should
they be caught trying to escape. Furthermore, they were unsure as to who among them
were or were not Amin loyalists. They also suffered from the delusion that Amin
possessed the mystical capacity of foretelling any bad intentions harbouring against
him, that might be lurking in the minds and hearts of his followers.

The founding of Al-Ma’unah is attributed to Amin’s fascination with the
Malay martial arts, silat, which he combined with occultism and theosophical
interpretations of Islam. He claimed to have inherited his silat abilities from the
Indonesian guru of Al-Ma’unah - an organisation known to have conducted joint-
training with Indonesia’s military - the Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia
(ABRI). Amin imported the name ’Al-Ma’unah’ from Indonesia but refashioned its
Malaysian namesake into a movement he totally dominated. As news spread of
Amin’s supernatural abilities and willingness to bequeath knowledge of his ‘inner

---

81 Following the eruption of the Al-Ma’unah affair, this Indonesian guru, Ibnu Abbas, disowned Amin. Ibnu Abbas explained that the name ’Al-Ma’unah’ was derived from a Quranic phrase meaning ‘the help from God’. Al-Ma’unah was an art of self-defence which harnessed inner powers in strengthening the mind, the Islamic faith, and acknowledging the greatness of God. In Indonesia, Al-Ma’unah was used by the state to help defend the country, rather than challenging the state. See Ibnu Abbas’ media interview, as reproduced in Zabidi Mohamed, Maunah: Kebenaran Yang Sebenar – The Naked Truth, chapter 11.
energy’ via devoted spiritual exercises, his followers increased in number. In April 1999, Al-Ma’unah was legally registered with Amin as President and Zahit Muslim as Deputy President. Its activities were advertised in Malay magazines, in Harakah – PAS’s official mouthpiece, and via a website. Al-Ma’unah became briefly well-known for its successful practice of traditional healing and free services offered at its clinics. By July 2000, Al-Ma’unah’s membership had grown to 1700, comprising of aficionados of silat and traditional medicinal techniques from all over the country and Brunei.82

Notwithstanding Amin’s charisma at a young age,83 it still perplexes readers of Zabidi’s account of Al-Ma’unah that Amin’s rebellious instincts could have escaped the attention of his followers until their impending apprehension by the authorities. At certain times during the various Al-Ma’unah spiritual courses, he did not conceal his abhorrence of the present Malaysian government for its neglect of Islamic law. Whilst portraying himself as intensively spiritual, his references when lecturing on the obligation of jihad were to the situations in Bosnia, Chechnya, Afghanistan and Ambon. Spiritual jihad i.e. jihad against the nafs (desires), as enjoined by honourable masters of Sufism – the legitimate discipline of Islamic spirituality which focuses on purifying the heart, did not seem to be on Amin’s agenda. Instead, he was overheard as having expressed intention to send his followers abroad to fight enemies who were victimising Muslims. His background as a former military spy did not invite suspicion from his followers. Neither did Amin’s proud admission that as an adolescent student at Ibrahim Libya’s madrasah (religious school), he witnessed the horrific scenes during the police raid at Memali in 1985.

82 In the wake of the Al-Ma’unah affair, twenty-seven members of Al-Ma’unah’s branch in Brunei were arrested under the country’s ISA in order to assist in Malaysian police investigations; see ‘Brunei tahan 27 ahli Ma’unah - Bagi membantu siasatan berhubung kes rompakan senjata api di Gerik’, Utusan Malaysia, 14 July 2000.
83 Amin was thirty years old during the Al-Ma’unah affair.
Only after the killings at Bukit Jenalik, executed at the behest of Amin himself, did his followers realise that Amin was intent upon avenging the ‘cruelty’ perpetrated by the authorities on the Memali insurgents of 1985.84

In the opinion of the present author, Zabidi’s account of the Al-Ma’unah affair is influenced by his desire to divest his clients from the ultimate responsibility of having carried out the gruesome killings at Bukit Jenalik. To him, the Al-Ma’unah rebels at Bukit Jenalik were a motley group, not all of whom sanctioned the violence that occurred. This goes against the version of events as presented by the police and the prosecutors: that all the Al-Ma’unah rebels had purposely and knowingly participated in a military jihad designed to overthrow the government by militant force.85 Towards the end of his book, however, Zabidi revealed his aghast at having discovered, through frank conversations with two convicted Al-Ma’unah members in prison, that they had indeed advocated Amin’s rebellious plot in early July 2000, without exhibiting any remorse of the violence that had transpired at Bukit Jenalik.86

5. BRIEF COMPARISONS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this paper, we have focused on cases of actual violence in Malaysia. By Southeast Asian standards, they are comparatively meagre and shallow. The threat of

84 In the wake of the discovery of KMM cells in August 2001, Deputy Interior Minister, Zainal Abidin Zin, stressed that there existed continuity between the Memali incident in 1985 and the establishment of KMM, and in turn, between KMM and Al-Ma’unah. Al-Ma’unah’s origins can thus be traced to state brutality in Memali, which elicited negative reaction among the younger generation and would be manifested in later years, should the opportunity arise. This shows that state violence may breed a similarly violent response from the people, although not necessarily immediately. See ‘Anak Nik Aziz ketua Mujahidin Malaysia’, Utusan Malaysia, 09 August 2001.
uprising posed by Malaysia’s Islamic radicals comes nowhere near the dangers to constitutional rule brought by, for example, the Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines, Laskar Jundullah and the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI – Front Pembela Islam) in Indonesia, and the multiple Malay-Muslim irredentist groups instigating pandemonium in the southern Thai provinces of Pattani, Narathiwat, Yala and occasionally, Songkhla.  

Yet, transnational linkages operated by terrorist networks in the age of globalisation expose Malaysia to a real possibility of terrorist-related upheavals within its borders. The possibility is raised by revelations that Malaysian nationals have been involved in JI bombing campaigns in Indonesia.  

While it is imperative that the Malaysian state takes pre-emptive measures to stem probable or threatened violence, it needs to maintain credibility in the eyes of the Malay-Muslim population by not lumping together all Islamic groups as bearing terrorist potential. It need not go overboard and discredit itself by sweepingly branding Islamic movements as ‘extremist’. This happened, for example, when the state clamped down upon the Darul Arqam movement in 1994 after accusing it of operating suicide army training camps in Thailand; an allegation that was never proven in court. Using the state-controlled media, the ruling elites hammered through the idea that Darul Arqam’s sufistic and messianic teachings, would somehow motivate its followers towards violence in the manner of previous outbursts of extremist paramilitary activities. Such propaganda went against the peaceful history of Darul Arqam, notwithstanding some controversial aspects with regard to its religious teachings and 


88 ‘More than 100 marriages involve key JI members’, The Star, 7 September 2004; ‘One big terrorist family’, Straits Times (Singapore), 8 September 2004.
practices. But in Malaysia, constitutional freedom of religion applies only with respect to Islam *vis-à-vis* other religions, and not among different interpretations of Islam. The Malaysian government, as represented by its religious bureaucracy, considers its version of religious orthodoxy as infallibly applicable upon the Malay-Muslim population, although legitimate evidence indicates that contravening positions, as adopted for instance by Darul Arqam, had been tolerated within the framework of acceptable differences of opinion in the Islamic intellectual tradition. Refusal to acknowledge religious pluralism in Malaysia developed out of a peculiar Islamic administrative structure which overrules diversity between Islamic traditions and organisations, and from an obsessive desire of Malay ruling elites to ward off any signs of Malay-Muslim disunity in the wake of maintaining the delicate political balance between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Lacking evidence of Darul Arqam’s alleged propensity towards violence, the state postulated a necessary correlation between deviant forms of Islam, fanaticism and violence – these together constituted ‘extremism’. Darul Arqam eventually disbanded following large-scale arrests of leaders under the ISA and massive raids on its settlements.89 Even after its demise, there have been occasional scares of a Darul Arqam revival, not least during the eruption of the Al-Ma’unah affair.90 The state’s concern may have been prompted by disclosures under investigation that some Al-


Ma’unah leaders had had the experience of studying under and joining Darul Arqam.\textsuperscript{91} Therefore, while the main strand of Darul Arqam never approved or engaged in violence, some of its former members reportedly have. As further examples, former Darul Arqam members were implicated in the temple desecration incident in Kerling, Selangor, in 1978.\textsuperscript{92} More recently, Imam Samudra, the JI activist eventually found guilty for the bombings in Bali, Indonesia in October 2002, was said to have confessed to investigators that he was active in Darul Arqam during his residency in Malaysia.\textsuperscript{93}

One undeniable fact is that by linking Islamic movements and parties with terrorism and violence, thus sweepingly categorising them as extremists, the ruling elites gain political mileage as fear is installed into the minds of the moderately inclined Malay-Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The state has done this successfully to ward off the challenge from its competitors for the mantle of legitimate defender of Islam. Its serious rivals were independent Islamic movements such as Darul Arqam and Islamic political parties, particularly PAS. In the midst of the Al-Ma’unah affair, for example, Al-Ma’unah members were openly identified as PAS supporters, by virtue of the discovery of PAS’s paraphernalia during raids on Al-Ma’unah’s centres.\textsuperscript{94} Despite PAS spokesmen’s denials of links between PAS and Al-Ma’unah, PAS could not deny the fact that its black and white Islamic state ideology had influenced the Al-Ma’unah rebels. PAS further discredited itself by persistently


\textsuperscript{94} See the respective statements by the Prime Minister and Defence Minister in ‘Hampir semua sokong Pas - Perdana Menteri dedahkan identiti kumpulan Al-Ma'unah’, \textit{Utusan Malaysia}, 21 July 2000; and ‘We Are Concerned’ about the educated members, says Najib’, \textit{Asiaweek}, 21 July 2000.
claiming that the Al-Ma’unah affair had been stage-managed by the government in an effort to tarnish the reputation of Islamic groups.95

The present author is inclined to disagree with any necessary connection postulated between particular interpretations or understandings of Islamic doctrine, and violence. The Malaysian state’s positing a causal relationship linking deviationism, fanaticism and violence, is heavily conditioned by the nature of its political competition with independent Islamic groups for influence among the Malay-Muslim masses. Both perpetrators of actual violence outlined in this paper, viz. the Memali insurgents and the Al-Ma’unah rebels, embraced different Islamic doctrinal orientations respectively. The former were influenced by Middle Eastern radical revivalist doctrines as allegedly disseminated by PAS leaders, whereas the latter embraced theosophical interpretations which had strong roots in the syncretic nature of Islam in the Malay-Indonesian world. The lawyer Zabidi Mohamed’s attempt to equate the deviationism of Al-Ma’unah with that of Darul Arqam is highly questionable. Al-Ma’unah’s occultism was in no way similar to Darul Arqam’s Sufism, which, unlike Al-Ma’unah’s teachings, did not neglect the learning and practice of the essentials of Islam.96 Moreover, Darul Arqam’s version of Sufism integrated traditional spiritualism, which encouraged a culture of tolerance and accommodation, with the intellectual pragmatism of progressive Islamic reformists.97

In this paper, we have not included elaborate discussions of cases of probable and threatened violence, such as revelations about KMM and JI cells operating in

95 See the respective statements by then PAS Secretary-General Nasharuddin Mat Isa, Deputy President Abdul Hadi Awang and Vice-President Mustafa Ali: ‘Pas enggan minta maaf - Masih anggap peristiwa rompak senjata di Sauk sandiwara’, Utusan Malaysia, 6 January 2002; ‘Setiausaha Pas akan didakwa - Jabatan Peguam Negara sedang teltiti tuduhan menghasut dan hina mahkamah’, Utusan Malaysia, 9 January 2002; and ‘Pas dakwa hanya rompak senjata sandiwara’, Utusan Malaysia, 11 January 2002.
Malaysia. The suspects’ treacherous plots and inclinations to invoke violence have not been proven in a court of law. Their ideological underpinnings and militant interpretations of jihad are inadequate evidence to prove their allegedly violent tendencies. Yet, this has been the state’s justification in detaining them under the ISA.\(^{98}\) We have to be wary of accepting at will information coming the state’s sources. As reminded by John Sidel,\(^{99}\) a lot of information pertaining to the terrorist movement in Indonesia were extracted under torture, hence downgrading their reliability. Such a scenario is likely to exist with respect to ISA detentions in Malaysia as well. Malaysia’s religious bureaucracy’s endeavour in disseminating anti-militant explanations of jihad and of peace and security in Islam are commendable,\(^{100}\) but they may be rendered futile by the state’s own exaggerated violence on citizens implicated with violence, or the state’s unwarranted strikes on unproven conspiracies. The causes of violence are as much political as they are grounded in some religious doctrine prejudicially interpreted. It is apt here to quote from several theses on religion and violence put forward by Bruce Lincoln:

> Those who are interested in undertaking violence can always find arguments and precedents that sanctify their purpose, but selective reading and tendentious interpretation are an important part of this process…. Religious considerations are never the sole determining factor and there is no necessary relation between religion and violence. In most instances, religious considerations probably help to inhibit violence…. Just as the use of violence tends to elicit a violent riposte, so the religious valorization of violence prompts its victims to frame their violent responses in religious terms.\(^{101}\)


\(^{99}\) John Sidel, Riots, Pogroms, Jihad: Shifting Patterns of Religious Violence in Indonesia, seminar paper presented at the Centre of International Studies (CIS), School of Social Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Penang, Malaysia, 17 February 2005. John Sidel is Sir Patrick Gillam Professor of International and Comparative Politics at the London School of Economics (LSE).


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDSS Working Paper Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Vietnam-China Relations Since The End of The Cold War  
*Ang Cheng Guan*  
(1998) |
*Desmond Ball*  
(1999) |
| 3. Reordering Asia: “Cooperative Security” or Concert of Powers?  
*Amitav Acharya*  
(1999) |
| 4. The South China Sea Dispute re-visited  
*Ang Cheng Guan*  
(1999) |
*Joseph Liow Chin Yong*  
(1999) |
| 6. ‘Humanitarian Intervention in Kosovo’ as Justified, Executed and Mediated by NATO: Strategic Lessons for Singapore  
*Kumar Ramakrishna*  
(2000) |
| 7. Taiwan’s Future: Mongolia or Tibet?  
*Chien-peng (C.P.) Chung*  
(2001) |
| 8. Asia-Pacific Diplomacies: Reading Discontinuity in Late-Modern Diplomatic Practice  
*Tan See Seng*  
(2001) |
| 9. Framing “South Asia”: Whose Imagined Region?  
*Sinderpal Singh*  
(2001) |
| 10. Explaining Indonesia's Relations with Singapore During the New Order Period: The Case of Regime Maintenance and Foreign Policy  
*Terence Lee Chek Liang*  
(2001) |
| 11. Human Security: Discourse, Statecraft, Emancipation  
*Tan See Seng*  
(2001) |
*Nguyen Phuong Binh*  
(2001) |
| 13. Framework for Autonomy in Southeast Asia’s Plural Societies  
*Miriam Coronel Ferrer*  
(2001) |
*Ananda Rajah*  
(2001) |
| 15. Natural Resources Management and Environmental Security in Southeast Asia: Case Study of Clean Water Supplies in Singapore  
*Kog Yue Choong*  
(2001) |
| 16. Crisis and Transformation: ASEAN in the New Era  
*Etel Solingen*  
(2001) |
| 17. Human Security: East Versus West?  
*Amitav Acharya*  
(2001) |
| 18. Asian Developing Countries and the Next Round of WTO Negotiations  
*Barry Desker*  
(2001) |
19. Multilateralism, Neo-liberalism and Security in Asia: The Role of the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation Forum  
   *Ian Taylor*  
   (2001)

20. Humanitarian Intervention and Peacekeeping as Issues for Asia-Pacific Security  
   *Derek McDougall*  
   (2001)

21. Comprehensive Security: The South Asian Case  
   *S.D. Muni*  
   (2002)

   *You Ji*  
   (2002)

23. The Concept of Security Before and After September 11  
   a. The Contested Concept of Security  
      *Steve Smith*  
   b. Security and Security Studies After September 11: Some Preliminary Reflections  
      *Amitav Acharya*  
   (2002)

24. Democratisation In South Korea And Taiwan: The Effect Of Social Division On Inter-Korean and Cross-Strait Relations  
   *Chien-peng (C.P.) Chung*  
   (2002)

25. Understanding Financial Globalisation  
   *Andrew Walter*  
   (2002)

26. 911, American Praetorian Unilateralism and the Impact on State-Society Relations in Southeast Asia  
   *Kumar Ramakrishna*  
   (2002)

27. Great Power Politics in Contemporary East Asia: Negotiating Multipolarity or Hegemony?  
   *Tan See Seng*  
   (2002)

28. What Fear Hath Wrought: Missile Hysteria and The Writing of “America”  
   *Tan See Seng*  
   (2002)

29. International Responses to Terrorism: The Limits and Possibilities of Legal Control of Terrorism by Regional Arrangement with Particular Reference to ASEAN  
   *Ong Yen Nee*  
   (2002)

30. Reconceptualizing the PLA Navy in Post-Mao China: Functions, Warfare, Arms, and Organization  
   *Nan Li*  
   (2002)

   *Helen E S Nesadurai*  
   (2002)

32. 11 September and China: Opportunities, Challenges, and Warfighting  
   *Nan Li*  
   (2002)

33. Islam and Society in Southeast Asia after September 11  
   *Barry Desker*  
   (2002)

34. Hegemonic Constraints: The Implications of September 11 For American Power  
   *Evelyn Goh*  
   (2002)

35. Not Yet All Aboard…But Already All At Sea Over Container Security Initiative  
   *Irvin Lim*  
   (2002)
36. Financial Liberalization and Prudential Regulation in East Asia: Still Perverse?
   Andrew Walter (2002)

37. Indonesia and The Washington Consensus
   Premjith Sadasivan (2002)

38. The Political Economy of FDI Location: Why Don’t Political Checks and Balances and Treaty Constraints Matter?
   Andrew Walter (2002)

39. The Securitization of Transnational Crime in ASEAN
   Ralf Emmers (2002)

40. Liquidity Support and The Financial Crisis: The Indonesian Experience
   J Soedradjad Djiwandono (2002)

41. A UK Perspective on Defence Equipment Acquisition

42. Regionalisation of Peace in Asia: Experiences and Prospects of ASEAN, ARF and UN Partnership
   Mely C. Anthony (2003)

43. The WTO In 2003: Structural Shifts, State-Of-Play And Prospects For The Doha Round
   Razeen Sally (2003)

44. Seeking Security In The Dragon’s Shadow: China and Southeast Asia In The Emerging Asian Order
   Amitav Acharya (2003)

45. Deconstructing Political Islam In Malaysia: UMNO’S Response To PAS’ Religio-Political Dialectic

46. The War On Terror And The Future of Indonesian Democracy

47. Examining The Role of Foreign Assistance in Security Sector Reforms: The Indonesian Case
   Eduardo Lachica (2003)

48. Sovereignty and The Politics of Identity in International Relations
   Adrian Kuah (2003)

49. Deconstructing Jihad; Southeast Asia Contexts
   Patricia Martinez (2003)

50. The Correlates of Nationalism in Beijing Public Opinion

51. In Search of Suitable Positions’ in the Asia Pacific: Negotiating the US-China Relationship and Regional Security

52. American Unilaterism, Foreign Economic Policy and the ‘Securitisation’ of Globalisation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>54.</td>
<td>Revisiting Responses To Power Preponderance: Going Beyond The Balancing-Bandwagoning Dichotomy</td>
<td>Chong Ja Ian</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55.</td>
<td>Pre-emption and Prevention: An Ethical and Legal Critique of the Bush Doctrine and Anticipatory Use of Force In Defence of the State</td>
<td>Malcolm Brailey</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56.</td>
<td>The Indo-Chinese Enlargement of ASEAN: Implications for Regional Economic Integration</td>
<td>Helen E S Nesadurai</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57.</td>
<td>The Advent of a New Way of War: Theory and Practice of Effects Based Operation</td>
<td>Joshua Ho</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59.</td>
<td>Force Modernisation Trends in Southeast Asia</td>
<td>Andrew Tan</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60.</td>
<td>Testing Alternative Responses to Power Preponderance: Buffering, Binding, Bonding and Beleaguering in the Real World</td>
<td>Chong Ja Ian</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63.</td>
<td>Outlook for Malaysia’s 11th General Election</td>
<td>Joseph Liow</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64.</td>
<td>Not Many Jobs Take a Whole Army: Special Operations Forces and The Revolution in Military Affairs.</td>
<td>Malcolm Brailey</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65.</td>
<td>Technological Globalisation and Regional Security in East Asia</td>
<td>J.D. Kenneth Boutin</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66.</td>
<td>UAVs/UCAVS – Missions, Challenges, and Strategic Implications for Small and Medium Powers</td>
<td>Manjeet Singh Pardesi</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67.</td>
<td>Singapore’s Reaction to Rising China: Deep Engagement and Strategic Adjustment</td>
<td>Evelyn Goh</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68.</td>
<td>The Shifting Of Maritime Power And The Implications For Maritime Security In East Asia</td>
<td>Joshua Ho</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 70. | Examining the Defence Industrialization-Economic Growth Relationship: The Case of Singapore  
*Adrian Kuah and Bernard Loo*  
(2004) |
| 71. | “Constructing” The Jemaah Islamiyah Terrorist: A Preliminary Inquiry  
*Kumar Ramakrishna*  
(2004) |
| 72. | Malaysia and The United States: Rejecting Dominance, Embracing Engagement  
*Helen E S Nesadurai*  
(2004) |
| 73. | The Indonesian Military as a Professional Organization: Criteria and Ramifications for Reform  
*John Bradford*  
(2005) |
| 74. | Maritime Terrorism in Southeast Asia: A Risk Assessment  
*Catherine Zara Raymond*  
(2005) |
| 75. | Southeast Asian Maritime Security In The Age Of Terror: Threats, Opportunity, And Charting The Course Forward  
*John Bradford*  
(2005) |
| 76. | Deducing India’s Grand Strategy of Regional Hegemony from Historical and Conceptual Perspectives  
*Manjeet Singh Pardesi*  
(2005) |
| 77. | Towards Better Peace Processes: A Comparative Study of Attempts to Broker Peace with MNLF and GAM  
*S P Harish*  
(2005) |
| 78. | Multilateralism, Sovereignty and Normative Change in World Politics  
*Amitav Acharya*  
(2005) |
| 79. | The State and Religious Institutions in Muslim Societies  
*Riaz Hassan*  
(2005) |
| 80. | On Being Religious: Patterns of Religious Commitment in Muslim Societies  
*Riaz Hassan*  
(2005) |
| 81. | The Security of Regional Sea Lanes  
*Joshua Ho*  
(2005) |
| 82. | Civil-Military Relationship and Reform in the Defence Industry  
*Arthur S Ding*  
(2005) |
| 83. | How Bargaining Alters Outcomes: Bilateral Trade Negotiations and Bargaining Strategies  
*Deborah Elms*  
(2005) |
| 84. | Great Powers and Southeast Asian Regional Security Strategies: Omni-enmeshment, Balancing and Hierarchical Order  
*Evelyn Goh*  
(2005) |
| 85. | Global Jihad, Sectarianism and The Madrassahs in Pakistan  
*Ali Riaz*  
(2005) |
| 86. | Autobiography, Politics and Ideology in Sayyid Qutb’s Reading of the Qur’an  
*Umej Bhattia*  
(2005) |
| 87. | Maritime Disputes in the South China Sea: Strategic and Diplomatic Status Quo  
*Ralf Emmers*  
(2005) |
88. China’s Political Commissars and Commanders: Trends & Dynamics
   Srikanth Kondapalli (2005)
89. Piracy in Southeast Asia New Trends, Issues and Responses
   Catherine Zara Raymond (2005)
90. Geopolitics, Grand Strategy and the Bush Doctrine
   Simon Dalby (2005)
91. Local Elections and Democracy in Indonesia: The Case of the Riau Archipelago
   Nankyung Choi (2005)
92. The Impact of RMA on Conventional Deterrence: A Theoretical Analysis
   Manjeet Singh Pardesi (2005)
93. Africa and the Challenge of Globalisation
   Jeffrey Herbst (2005)
94. The East Asian Experience: The Poverty of ‘Picking Winners
   Barry Desker and Deborah Elms (2005)
95. Bandung And The Political Economy Of North-South Relations: Sowing The Seeds For
   Revisioning International Society
   Helen E S Nesadurai (2005)
96. Re-conceptualising the Military-Industrial Complex: A General Systems Theory Approach
   Adrian Kuah (2005)
97. Food Security and the Threat From Within: Rice Policy Reforms in the Philippines
   Bruce Tolentino (2006)
98. Non-Traditional Security Issues: Securitisation of Transnational Crime in Asia
   James Laki (2006)
99. Securitizing/Desecuritizing the Filipinos’ ‘Outward Migration Issue’ in the Philippines’
   Relations with Other Asian Governments
   José N. Franco, Jr. (2006)
100. Securitization Of Illegal Migration of Bangladeshis To India
101. Environmental Management and Conflict in Southeast Asia – Land Reclamation and its
      Political Impact
      Kog Yue-Choong (2006)
102. Securitizing border-crossing: The case of marginalized stateless minorities in the Thai-
      Burma Borderlands
      Mika Toyota (2006)
103. The Incidence of Corruption in India: Is the Neglect of Governance
      Endangering Human Security in South Asia?
      Shabnam Mallick and Rajarshi Sen (2006)
104. The LTTE’s Online Network and its Implications for Regional Security
      Shyam Tekwani (2006)
105. The Korean War June-October 1950: Inchon and Stalin In The “Trigger Vs Justification”
      Debate
      Tan Kwoh Jack (2006)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>International Regime Building in Southeast Asia: ASEAN Cooperation against the Illicit</td>
<td>Ralf Emmers</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trafficking and Abuse of Drugs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Changing Conflict Identities: The case of the Southern Thailand Discord</td>
<td>S P Harish</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>TEMPORAL DOMINANCE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Military Transformation and the Time Dimension of Strategy</td>
<td>Edwin Seah</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110</td>
<td>Globalization and Military-Industrial Transformation in South Asia: An Historical</td>
<td>Emrys Chew</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>UNCLoS and its Limitations as the Foundation for a Regional Maritime Security Regime</td>
<td>Sam Bateman</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>Freedom and Control Networks in Military Environments</td>
<td>Paul T Mitchell</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>Rewriting Indonesian History The Future in Indonesia’s Past</td>
<td>Kwa Chong Guan</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114</td>
<td>Twelver Shi’ite Islam: Conceptual and Practical Aspects</td>
<td>Christoph Marcinkowski</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115</td>
<td>Islam, State and Modernity : Muslim Political Discourse in Late 19th and Early 20th century</td>
<td>Iqbal Singh Sevea</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>India</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>‘Voice of the Malayan Revolution’: The Communist Party of Malaya’s Struggle for Hearts</td>
<td>Ong Wei Chong</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and Minds in the ‘Second Malayan Emergency’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1969-1975)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>“From Counter-Society to Counter-State: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI”</td>
<td>Elena Pavlova</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>The Terrorist Threat to Singapore’s Land Transportation Infrastructure: A Preliminary</td>
<td>Adam Dolnik</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enquiry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119</td>
<td>The Many Faces of Political Islam</td>
<td>Mohammed Ayoob</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>Facets of Shi’ite Islam in Contemporary Southeast Asia (I): Thailand and Indonesia</td>
<td>Christoph Marcinkowski</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>Facets of Shi’ite Islam in Contemporary Southeast Asia (II): Malaysia and Singapore</td>
<td>Christoph Marcinkowski</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>Towards a History of Malaysian Ulama</td>
<td>Mohamed Nawab</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>