

The arrest of Abu Dujana and its significance for Jemaah Islamiyah

Indonesian authorities, headed by Detachment 88, have confirmed their capture of Abu Dujana, Indonesia's most wanted terrorist and alleged Jemaah Islamiyah's military commander. He is believed to be behind 2002 Bali bombings, 2003 bombings of Jakarta's JW Marriott hotel and having a role in explosions in Poso, Central Sulawesi.

Abu Dujana was arrested on 9 June 2007, along with seven other members of the Al Qaeda-linked group in Banyumas, Central Java. Dujana was shot in the leg as he tried to flee on a motorcycle. His capture was confirmed on 12 June 2007 only after the police verified his identity through fingerprints and DNA checks. His family helped the police to identify Dujana from his pictures taken during the capture.

Dujana is now likely to face charges including possession of weapons and explosives, sheltering terror suspects and conspiring in terrorist attacks.



Profile of Abu Dujana

At the time of arrest, Abu Dujana was using the assumed identity of Yusron Mahmudi. Even the name 'Abu Dujana' is believed to be a nom de guerre, taken from the name of a legendary warrior that fought alongside the Prophet Mohammed in the Battle of Uhud. His birth name is Ainul Bahri. He is also believed to have a host of other aliases like Pak Guru, Mas Hud, Sohrim, Sobirin and Dedi.



Inset: (Above) Pictures of Abu Dujana
 (Left) The location that Abu Dujana was captured from.

Historical background

Dujana was born in Cianjur, West Java, Indonesia circa 1969 or 1970. He is the 8th son of 9 siblings, born to Tamami and Sariah. His mother passed away in February 2007. Dujana is also known as the most intelligent one among his siblings. West Java was the traditional stronghold of the underground Darul Islam (DI) movement. Just like most of JI members, Dujana appears to have close family connections to the DI movement. His family is well-respected in his village. His father, Tamami, is a businessman and is known to be religious. One of his sisters, Iis, manages a religious school – Yayasan pendidikan Islam As-Syifa – located in Darussalam mosque which lies in front of their parents’ house. The mosque was built by Dujana’s great grandparents. Ade, his other sister, runs a convention management company in Cisadang. He is married twice. His second marriage was in 1998 to Sri Mardiyati, 35 years old. He has three children from his second marriage.

He was educated by Dadang Hafidz, a militant Islamist with deep ties to the DI organization. After years of Quranic tutorial, Dujana was selected to undergo advanced training in Pakistan. He studied there for a few years before joining the mujahideen and leaving to fight in Afghanistan between 1988 and 1991. There, he underwent basic training at the Afghanistan Mujahideen Military Academy. This experience and his fluency in Arabic, rare for a Southeast Asian terrorist, resulted in close high-level contacts with the current al-Qaeda leadership. He is known to have met Osama bin Laden personally and trained with Ridwan Isamuddin (aka Hambali) in Pakistan.

It was in Pakistan in 1986 that Dujana first met Abu Rusdan, who would go on to lead JI in 2002, when the both of them were studying in the mujahideen training camp there. Dujana was trained in small arms, tactics and bomb-making. In Afghanistan, he came into close contact and developed a deep friendship with Zulkarnaen, who would become the head of JI's military operations.

Dujana returned to Southeast Asia in the early 1990s. However, there is little information about what he did in this period. JI was founded in 1992-1993 by Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, and many of the Afghan veterans who were frustrated with DI's passivity became the core of JI's leadership, committed to waging an armed jihad against the Indonesian state. Cells were patiently established and recruiters began working as JI-controlled madrassas were established throughout the Indonesian archipelago and into Malaysia. Dujana spent a period of time as a teacher at one of those schools, the Luqmanul Hakiem School, outside of Johor, Malaysia, which was run by the leader of the Bali attacks, Mukhlas.

There were also speculations that, after 1996, Dujana spent time in the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) camps in the southern Philippines, conducting training for JI and MILF members along with al-Qaeda instructors.

When Suharto fell from Presidency in May 1998, sectarian conflict erupted in parts off the archipelago. Although not started by JI, the organization was quick to take advantage of the situation. Senior JI members Abu Jibril and Agus Dwikarna established paramilitaries in the Malukus and Central Sulawesi, respectively. Owing to his afghan experience, Dujana spent some time in these conflict zones and helped to coordinate JI's efforts from 1998 – 2001. His former mentor, Hafidz, was himself a key supporter and procurer of weapons for JI's sectarian strife.

It was in this period that Abu Dujana rose swiftly through JI's Mantiqi II division . By 2000, he was already the secretary of Mantiqi II. One year later, he was attending almost every key meeting of JI's leadership that was held in Indonesia. Top JI members who have been arrested all cite his presence at key strategy sessions and leadership appointments. Dujana was among the top 10 leaders present when Nasir bin Abbas was elected to head Mantiqi III in April 2001. In October 2002, following Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's arrest, Dujana and Zulkarnaen, Mukhlas, and Sulaiman met to elect Abu Rusdan as JI's new Emir. Rusdan, however, was arrested soon thereafter and Indonesian officials believe that Dujana became the acting Emir, though he is not a religious leader.

Dujana assisted a number of JI suspects who had fled the dragnet in Singapore in late 2001. In 2002, he turned his sights on executing Hambali's line of attacking Western targets. Dujana was among the plotters of the October 2002 Bali bombings, and met with Zulkarnaen, JI's military chief, and Mukhlas in Bali days before the attack. The ICG reports that Azhari bin Husin and Noordin Mohammad Top consulted with him before the August 2003 bombing of the JW Marriott in Jakarta. Following the attack, Dujana was placed on the government's 10 most wanted list.

Links to Jemaah Islamiyah

Abu Dujana is believed to be the current leader of JI. With the death of JI's master bomb-maker, Azhari bin Husin, there has been intense speculation over JI's current leadership, in particular the position of Emir (spiritual leader), which has been vacant since 2003. Indonesian authorities believed that Dujana took command of JI terrorism operations after the 2003 capture of Riduan Isamuddin (also known as Hambali) in central Thailand. Indonesia police had since then made his arrest their priority.

At only thirty-eight, Dujana is considered quite young for a JI leader. However, he is a capable one. His former instructor in Afghanistan, Nasir Abas, has stated that Dujana is a smart, diligent and creative person. He had also been touted as an excellent leader, willing to take initiative and someone who can inspire loyalty from his men.

Roles in terrorist acts

Abu Dujana had always protected Noordin M. Top and Azahari from being caught by the Indonesian authorities. He arranged the escapes of Noordin M. Top and Azahari after the Marriott hotel bombing in 2003 from Jakarta, Yogyakarta and Solo in Central Java. In 2003, he moved Noordin and Azahari to Surabaya and Blitar. By end 2003, he harbored Noordin in Solo after Noordin escaped from the police's effort to arrest him on KEbon Kembang Street in Bandung. He was also the key person to recruit new members for the group and is believed to be an expert in making bombs, just like Azahari. Dujana is the main person who gives instructions to execute bombings in Indonesia. He was involved in the Bali bombing incident in 2002, the 2003 JW Marriott hotel bombing in Jakarta and the Kuningan area bombing in South Jakarta in 2005. Indonesia police claimed that explosives found during a raid in Sukoharjo in February 2007 belonged to Dujana as well.

Profiles of other arrests

Seven other people were arrested alongside Abu Dujana. They are believed to be Dujana's close networks and were newly recruited when Abu Dujana became the head of Jemaah Islamiyah. The arrests of these seven members were made in Yogyakarta, Central Java and Eastern Java.

- Adi Saputro a.k.a Adi Kusumo, 29 years old
 - Arrested in Rejodani Market, Sleman, Yogyakarta on 9 June 2007.
 - Born in Dusun Donolayan, Desa Donoharjo, Ngaglik, Sleman.
 - Occupation: Bread –seller

- Suhariyanto, 34 years old
 - Arrested in Dusun Kayungan, Donoharjo, Sleman on 9 June 2007.
 - Born in Dusun Watugedeg, Desa Donoharjo, Ngaglik, Sleman (about 3 kilometers from Adi Saputro's residence.

- Sigit a.k.a Yurnanto, 32 years old
 - Arrested together with Suhariyanto. Sigit's leg was shot while trying to flee.
 - Arrested in Dusun Dusun Kayungan, Donoharjo, Sleman on 9 June 2007.

- Nur Afifudin, 33 years old
 - Arrested in Ngaglik, Sleman on 9 June 2007.
 - Born in Dusun Kayungan, Donoharjo, Sleman.
 - Close relative to Anif Solchanudin (one of the terrorists tried for 2002 Bali bombings).

- Aris Widodo, 31 years old
 - Arrested on 10 June 2007.
 - Born in Pingu RT 2RW 4, Desa Tegalgede, Karanganyar.
 - Close relative to Abdul Ghoni (one of the terrorists tried for 2002 Bali bombings).
 - Occupation: Typist

- Taqwimbillah
 - Arrested but escaped from raid on 10 June 2007.
 - Born in Dusun Tangkil Baru RT 2 RW 7, Kelurahan Manang, Grogol, Sukoharjo.
 - Believed to be involved in Abu Dujana's terrorist network.

- Arief Syarifuddin, 29 years old
 - Arrested in Surabaya on 11 June 2007.
 - Residing in Jalan Wonokromo 302, Surabaya.
 - Occupation: Sell bike parts and accessories

Significance of Abu Dujana's arrests for Jemaah Islamiyah

With the arrest of Abu Dujana, the Indonesia authorities were able to foil other planned attacks. Police claimed that the network had been planning and preparing for major bomb attacks in several places in Indonesia, including a 3rd Bali bombing. This is evidential from the documents found in Sutarjo's (one of the seven others arrested) house in Sukoharjo and Sarwo Edi's house in Magelang.

The arrest is regarded as having a major blow to JI since Abud Dujana is seen as the most important figure within this organization. Jemaah Islamiyah is helf responsible for the bomb attacks in Bali in 2002 and 2004, and the attacks on the Marriott Hotel and the Australian embassy.

The Indonesian police have been engaged in a large-scale hunt for members of the group for almost two years now, and are receiving help from a number of sources, including US and Australian socialists and foreign technology. This hunt had already yielded a number of successes. One of the leaders of the Bali attacks, Dr. Azahari, has been killed and hundreds of members and accomplices of the group have been captured.

In March 2007, police broke up a new Jemaah Islamiyah group in Java. At that time weapons were found as well as bomb-making materials. Those arrested confessed that they reported to Abu Dujana. This focused the full attention of police on the man who had always remained in the background. Dujana was once mentioned as being the possible 'emir' (supreme leader) of Jemaah Islamiyah. It is also known that the perpetrators of the bomb attack on Bali had consulted him.

Dujana was, therefore, undoubtedly an important figure in the organization, but his precise role was not clear. According to the police, it is now been established that Abu Dujana – who was trained in Afghanistan and Pakistan – was in total command of all the 'military' operations carried out by JI.

Sidney Jones, of the International Crisis Group, warned that the significance of Abu Dujana's arrest should not be underestimated. He knows everything about JI. He knows how the organization is structured, the members' identities, the funding sources, the plans and the international contacts for JI. With Abu Dujana's capture, it could be the end of Jemaah Islamiyah as well.

The threat still lingers: Noordin M. Top

However, the capture of the leader of an organization does not mean the threat of terrorist attacks in Indonesia has been removed. Noordin M. Top, the second of the two organizers of the attacks on Bali in 2002, is still at large. He had split from JI and is now leading his splinter group. Noordin has already managed to escape capture by the police on numerous occasions. He has been reported to be planning new attacks, but it is unclear whether foreigners in Indonesian are likely to again be the object of such attacks or whether he has chosen another target.

Both Noordin M. Top and Jemaah Islamiyah are fighting for the creation of an Islamic state in Southeast Asia which would encompass both Indonesia and Malaysia. Although it is once linked to Al-Qaeda, JI is now a purely Indonesia group.

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