

**Weekly Country Report**  
**Indonesia**  
**28 April – 4 May 2008**

- Terrorism

Java

This week saw an increase in counter-terrorism activity in Java. Suspected terrorists were nabbed by the police and ongoing court proceedings ended with punishments meted out to terrorists.

Yassir Andil Bar, alias Fais, was arrested in Purworejo, Central Java, on 28 April 2008. The Indonesian authorities would not reveal where he was being detained. They were busy conducting an investigation in an attempt to foil the suspect's network and to take preventive actions. Yassir was a former student of an Islamic boarding school in Boyolali. He is suspected to have information on the terrorist network in the country and on Noordin M. Top.<sup>1</sup>

Two Muslim activists were sentenced to eight years in prison on 28 April 2008 for aiding Abu Dujana, a top leader of the South-East Asian militant group Jemaah Islamiah (JI). Arif Syaifudin was found guilty of making eight money transfers from 2005 to 2006 to a training camp in the southern Philippines run by Jemaah Islamiah (JI). In a separate trial, Aris Widodo was found guilty of aiding those involved in terrorism by sending four coded emails to fellow militants in the southern Philippines in 2006. He was jailed for 15 years for weapons possession and harbouring fugitives but was not charged with any specific attacks.<sup>2</sup>

Although several key strategists and bomb experts in JI have been captured or killed, JI and its splinter groups still have the capacity to launch attacks. JI has been blamed for the 2002 Bali bombings in which more than 200 people were killed, including 88 Australians, as well as several other attacks in Indonesia.

Between 28 and 30 April 2008, 17 people were arrested at two housing complexes -- Bumi Cihanjuang in Parongpong, Bandung regency, and Bumi Asri in Cihanjuang, Cimahi. Most of the arrested had recently arrived in Bandung from nearby cities like Bogor, Sukabumi, Subang and Sumedang. The arrests were made after police were contacted by residents who were suspicious about the gathering of so many outsiders at the two complexes.

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<sup>1</sup> "Terror suspect network probed", *The Jakarta Post*, 28 April 2008. Available online: <http://www.thejakartapost.com/node/167477>

<sup>2</sup> See "Indonesian court jails two militants", *smh.com.au*, 28 April 2008. Available online: <http://news.smh.com.au/indonesian-court-jails-two-militants/20080428-294z.html> and "Indonesia Jails Man over Jemaah Islamiyah Funding", *Bloomberg.com*, 28 April 2008. Available online: <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601081&sid=al0Lv98AYu04>

The West Java Police are investigating a possible link between the suspects and the Indonesian Islamic State (NII) movement by monitoring where the funds from the NII movement go as each new recruit is reportedly asked to give money. They are also investigating any links between the suspects and the Ma'had Az Zaytun boardinghouse in Indramayu, West Java, after police found posters carrying mentions of the house during the arrest of the suspects.<sup>3</sup>

The police's focus on the NII began after several former movement members alerted the West Java Police about the activities of the group. They asked the police to investigate the group, which they warned was a "deviant" movement that sought to establish an Islamic state. According to Ahmad Dede, one of the former NII members, the police's efforts to break up the movement should be supported by all levels of society. He also said that the movement members were obliged to give monthly "contribution", which supposedly is used to buy a "plot in heaven". Many new NII members are forced to commit crimes like stealing or cheating to get the money.

Noting an increase in radicalisation among the Indonesian population, hundreds of protesters had set fire to an Indonesian mosque in West Java Province belonging to the Ahmadiyah, which is a Muslim sect claimed to be heretical, on 28 April 2008. Calls have been mounting for the group to be formally banned. No one was injured in the early-morning blaze at the mosque, and several suspects were taken in for questioning.<sup>4</sup>

The Ahmadiyah sect, part of the Sufi strain of Islam, refuses to accept Muhammad as Islam's final prophet. The group claims its founder to be a prophet and messiah. Ahmadiyah, believed to have 200,000 followers in Indonesia, has also faced persecution in other Muslim countries. Hard-liners claim that the sect, founded in 1889 in Pakistan, was devised by British colonialists to divide Muslims.

Prior to this, on 16 April 2008, a team of prosecutors, religious scholars and government officials stated that the sect "had deviated from Islamic principles" and recommended it be outlawed. Four Ahmadiyah mosques have been destroyed in Indonesia since that announcement, and the sect has been subject to other acts of vandalism.

On a lighter note, Amrozi, the convicted Bali bomber whose execution is imminent, announced his intention, on 30 April 2008, to take a second wife. The wedding reception would be held at the prison island where he is being detained on 10 May 2008.<sup>5</sup>

Amrozi does not know the bride personally. The woman will be introduced to Amrozi several days ahead of the wedding.

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<sup>3</sup> "Police probe suspects over link to NII", *The Jakarta Post*, 30 April 2008. Available online: <<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/04/30/police-probe-suspects-over-link-nii.html>>

<sup>4</sup> "Mosque belonging to sect burned by protestors in Indonesia", *International Herald Tribune*, 28 April 2008. Available online: <<http://www.iht.com/articles/2008/04/28/asia/indo.php>>

<sup>5</sup> "Bali bomber I death row to take second wife", *Bernama.com.*, 30 April 2008. Available online: <[http://web7.bernama.com/bernama/v3/news\\_world.php?id=329908](http://web7.bernama.com/bernama/v3/news_world.php?id=329908)>

## Aceh

Seven Chinese workers, and an Indonesian citizen, who worked for a mining firm in Gayo Lues district of Aceh province were kidnapped by gunmen on 27 April 2008. On Sunday evening, two Chinese hostages have been released to deliver their demand for a ransom of 300 million rupiah (32,633 US dollars). The remaining five were freed unharmed and without any ransom paid on 29 April 2008.<sup>6</sup>

The police still have no information on the identity of the kidnappers, who had fled the area. According to witnesses, the kidnappers were armed with rifles and wearing masks. Both the military and police were deployed to hunt down the seven kidnappers in the forest area bordering with East Aceh. It is believed that the kidnappers probably became afraid after learning that a big force was looking for the foreigners, and abandoned their hostages at the last minute.

Aceh had been a zone of armed conflict between Free Aceh Movement (GAM) separatists and government forces for nearly three decades until a peace pact was signed in 2005. GAM dropped its demand for independence in return for broader autonomy for the region. The presence of firearms left over from the conflict could present a security threat in the region.

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<sup>6</sup> See “5 Chinese nationals kidnapped in Indonesia”, *People’s Daily Online*, 29 April 2008. Available online: <<http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90777/90851/6401024.html>> and “Seven foreigners released after being kidnapped by armed group in Aceh”, *Antara News*, 30 April 2008. Available online: <<http://www.antara.co.id/en/arc/2008/4/30/seven-foreigners-released-after-being-kidnapped-by-armed-group-in-aceh/>>