

THE IMPACT OF THE TALIBAN VICTORY ON INDONESIA'S JEMAAH ISLAMIYAH

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CONTENTS

I.	Introduction.....	1
II.	Goals and Strategy.....	2
	A. What Is JI's Attitude Toward Terrorism (Amaliyah) in Indonesia?.....	2
	B. Who does JI see as the enemy?.....	2
	C. What is JI's ultimate goal? Is the focus Indonesia or a caliphate? How has that goal changed over time?.....	3
	D. What is JI's short-term and long-term strategy and how has that changed with the wave of arrests?.....	3
	E. How does JI view coalition-building with other organisations? (JAT, JAS, JAK, MMI, FPI, Salafis etc).....	4
III.	Ji Size and Structure.....	6
	A. How big is JI?.....	6
	B. What is JI's structure? How did it maintain centralised control?.....	6
	C. Where are JI strongholds?.....	7
	D. Who is the current amir of JI?.....	7
	E. How does/did JI recruit new members? What is/was the role of JI schools? Does Ngruki still play a role?.....	8
	F. How does JI regard women?.....	9
	G. How does JI regard Abu Bakar Ba'asyir?.....	9
IV.	Ji's Transnational Links and Opposition to ISIS.....	9
	A. What are JI's transnational links, in the Middle East, Afghanistan and Mindanao, including to al-Qaeda?.....	9
	B. How did JI become anti-ISIS?.....	10
V.	Ji's Economic Base.....	11
	A. How has JI raised funds? How did this change over time?.....	11
	B. How Important Was Online Fund-Raising for JI?.....	12
	C. How Will JI Survive Economically After the Wave of Arrests?.....	13
VI.	Ji's Military Capacity and Risk of Violence.....	13
	A. How many men did JI send to Syria and toward what end?.....	13
	B. What kind of training did JI members receive in Syria?.....	13
	C. What about military training for JI in Indonesia?.....	14
	D. What is the biggest risk from JI in 2021-22?.....	14
VII.	Resilience, Rebuilding and Regeneration in JI.....	14
	A. How does JI rebuild after 200 arrests?.....	14
	B. How do political developments in Indonesia affect JI's ability to rebuild?.....	15
VIII.	Ji Reactions to the Taliban Victory.....	15
	A. How have JI supporters viewed this victory? Does it change their view of the utility of military strategy?.....	15
	B. Does this mean that JI will be inspired to take up armed struggle in Indonesia?.....	16
	C. How will recent events affect the rivalry between ISIS and JI in Indonesia?.....	16
IX.	Conclusions.....	16
	Appendix : Structure of Jemaah Islamiyah under Para Widjayanto.....	17

I. INTRODUCTION

The collapse of the U.S.-backed government in Afghanistan, the return of the Taliban to power in August 2021, and the ISIS suicide bombings at Kabul airport have raised fears of new terrorist threats in Southeast Asia. Many in the region are worried that the Taliban could again give safe haven to al-Qaeda and allow Afghanistan to become an international terrorist training centre as it was in the 1990s. The airport bombings show that ISIS, hostile toward the Taliban, may inspire its supporters around the world to conduct new attacks in a deadly new round of extremist one-upmanship.

The risk from al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Southeast Asia, at least in the short term, is fairly low. The risk from ISIS remnants could be higher, especially since they have been the primary perpetrators of terrorist attacks in Indonesia and the Philippines since 2014.

The extremist organization with the closest ties to Afghanistan and al-Qaeda in the past is Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), the group responsible for the 2002 Bali bombing and other terrorist attacks in Indonesia and the Philippines, as well as foiled plots in Singapore. JI was never structurally part of al-Qaeda, but it took money and training from al-Qaeda, including for the Bali bombs, worked with some of its key operatives and accepted its basic ideological precepts. The operational relationship effectively ended with the 2003 capture in Thailand of Indonesian JI member Hambali, who became the only Indonesian detained in Guantanamo. Before his arrest, however, he secured additional funds from al-Qaeda that were channelled to a militant JI splinter led by Malaysian Noordin Top, responsible for major attacks in Indonesia in 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2009, even as much of the JI leadership moved away from violence.

JI then seemed to fade from view, especially as ISIS came to dominate the terrorist landscape. In fact, it was systematically rebuilding, with a program focused on religious outreach (*dakwah*) and education. When the Syria conflict broke out, JI's leader or *amir* saw an opportunity for rebuilding military capacity and began a program to recruit and send men to train with different militias, including those linked to both ISIS and al-Qaeda. The lesson it had learned from the first Taliban government in Afghanistan was that it fell because it did not have the wherewithal to defend itself against the American onslaught. Military capacity was therefore necessary for defence as well as eventual expansion.

The arrest and deportation from Turkey of one group of JI members in December 2017 brought the training program in Syria, and the scope of the revitalized JI, to the attention of Indonesian police. After an extended period of surveillance, a crackdown began, and police since mid-2019 have rounded up and brought to trial some 200 JI suspects, including the *amir*, Para Widjayanto. The organization has been decimated and does not have the capacity to exploit a Taliban victory in Afghanistan, even if it were so inclined.

JI, however, has always shown an aptitude for forward thinking and long-term strategy and even in its weakened position, no one should rule it out. This report answers the most pressing questions about JI's current status and how its members might react to the Taliban's success. It looks at past and present contacts with al-Qaeda, as well as its aspirations and chosen tactics through 2019-20 when most of the top leadership was arrested. It examines how JI positioned itself with respect to the enmity between al-Qaeda and ISIS and whether any reconciliation is possible between JI and pro-ISIS groups in Indonesia.

As always, it is important to stress that nothing is static. A new, more militant JI amir could emerge with a more aggressive approach than his predecessor. A splinter group, angry at the Indonesian government over the arrests, could find inspiration in the Taliban victory for renewed jihad operations. New pro-Taliban cells could arise in JI schools. Vigilance is therefore essential, even if ISIS-linked groups remain the higher short-term threat.

II. GOALS AND STRATEGY

A. What Is JI's Attitude Toward Terrorism (*Amaliyah*) in Indonesia?

Under Para Widjayanto, JI forbade members to undertake *amaliyah*, or acts of terrorism, in Indonesia. It would only allow them as a prelude to seize power, and Para knew this was a long way off. Toward this end, JI would have to pass through two stages (*marhala*): preparation of forces, including logistics and personnel (*nuqthah inthilâq*) and “victory of concepts” (*tamkin risalah*). The latter was aimed at undermining the authority of the enemy through dakwah and an information war. JI would only use force when these two stages were complete, and it was ready to enter into the next two stages: *nikayah wal inhak* (sapping the energy of the enemy) and *idaratut tawahusy* (managing chaos). JI's reference manual for these last two stages was the book, *Management of Savagery* by Abu Bakr Naji that had been the inspiration for Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in Iraq and has inspired many al-Qaeda commanders.

It is not clear if there has been a change in strategy since the arrest of Para Widjayanto in July 2019 and the arrests that have followed. Any change will depend on who is chosen to replace Para as amir, and as of August 2021, it was unclear if any selection been made. The new amir could choose to continue the current strategy, in which case JI would not endorse any terrorist actions. But a new amir could also decide that a defensive jihad was the only way to confront the government and sustain itself in the face of the enemy.

B. Who does JI see as the enemy?

JI sees two enemies: the *far enemy* like America and its allies, and the *near enemy*, namely the Indonesian government, for its refusal to apply Islamic law. JI has always stressed the need to understand the local context before deciding on which to prioritise. It has repeatedly stressed that attacks in Indonesia are counterproductive as long as the country is not under attack and there is no public support for violence (contrasting this with countries under occupation).

JI never accepted the ISIS caliphate as legitimate but nevertheless believed that a true caliphate would eventually be established in Syria. Whenever that happened, at some point in the future, it would inevitably come under attack by the U.S. and its allies. At that point, JI would give the “far enemy” priority. Its method of attack might be to undertake jihad operations against American economic assets – leaders on several occasions discussed the giant Freeport mine in Papua as a potential target. The existence of Islamic State and the Western coalition's attacks against it were not sufficient for JI to decide to target the West in Indonesia. It would also likely be impervious to calls for attacks on the West from extremist groups in Afghanistan following the Taliban victory.

C. What is JI's ultimate goal? Is the focus Indonesia or a caliphate? How has that goal changed over time?

JI from the beginning wanted to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia. But its ambition did not stop there—once a *negara Islam* or *daulah Islamiyah* was set up at home, JI would continue the effort to form a caliphate through military expansion. That caliphate could well begin in Indonesia and branch outwards to elsewhere in the region.

This view changed after Para Widjayanto took over leadership (2008-2019).¹ JI became convinced that the caliphate would not be established in Indonesia for two reasons. First, beginning around 2011-2012 its leaders came to believe the world was about to end. Many Muslim sources state that the end of time would witness the establishment of a Caliphate of the Prophet in Syria, not in Indonesia or other areas. The Syria conflict heightened the likelihood that this caliphate, backed by the forces of the Imam Mahdi or Islamic saviour, would appear there as foretold.² It is hard to overemphasize how important or deeply held these apocalyptic beliefs were, even among the pragmatic management circles of Para Widjayanto.³

The focus on Syria did not mean that JI had abandoned its goal of an Islamic state in Indonesia, only that the Indonesian state would give its support to the larger caliphate in Syria, providing logistical support, personnel, and territory for carrying out jihad operations against the caliphate's enemies.

D. What is JI's short-term and long-term strategy and how has that changed with the wave of arrests?

JI under its current leadership aims at both political and military victory. It believes that a government structure for an Islamic state is not enough unless supported by a strong military force.

JI's grand strategy is still to use a combination of dakwah and jihad to achieve victory. But in the new strategy developed under Para Widjayanto after 2008, jihad as physical battle had to be subordinated to dakwah. In doing so, the concept of an elitist jihad was transformed into a popular jihad. The only way to invite the Muslim faithful more generally to assume the burden of jihad was through religious outreach.

JI relied on three kinds of dakwah. The first took the form of preaching and religious broadcasts: the goal in addition to recruitment was to make the ummah aware of the importance of jihad. JI accordingly set up various dakwah institutes such as MADINA, an acronym for the Indonesian Islamic Dakwah Council (Majelis Dakwah Islam Indonesia), on 25 November 2013 to train its own scholars in how to attract an audience. It consciously modelled the institute after a dakwah body, Ikatan Dai Indonesia, run by the Islamist political party PKS which was said to have been instrumental in PKS recruitment of almost two million people at a grassroots level. While JI could not hope to achieve such numbers, the scholars it assembled to teach included some of the best-known names in extremist preaching. These included Farid Okbah, known for his anti-Shi'a focus, and Lukman Hakim Syuhada, better known as El-Hakimi, a young intellectual and author of "Reflections on the Aceh Jihad" (Refleksi Jihad Aceh), a critique of the extremist movement's lack of long-term goals. MADINA continues to be JI's largest dakwah body, with branches around the country.

1 He took charge after the arrest of Zarkasih and Abu Dujana in 2007 but was only formally elected in 2009.

2 For background see IPAC, "The Evolution of ISIS in Indonesia," Report No.13, 24 September 2014."

3 For a useful assessment of how widespread these views are, see Greg Fealy, "Apocalyptic Thought, Conspiracism and Jihad in Indonesia," *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, No.41, No.1, (2019), pp.63-85.

The second form of dakwah was through social and humanitarian assistance, such as donations to the poor, free medical services, disaster relief and the like. To this end JI set up several aid organisations such as Abdurrahman bin Auf, One Care, and Syam Organizer. This social services program was much inspired by the group Ansharul Syariah in Libya (ASL), which used assistance to broaden its support base.⁴ Its priority was dakwah first, jihad later.

The third form of dakwah was an information war designed to undermine the legitimacy of the government. It aimed at dehumanizing the enemy and thus destroying its hegemony, so the ummah would be emboldened to rebel. This form of dakwah was to be undertaken through several websites such as www.kiblat.net, www.lasdipo.net, www.sketsanews.com and others. In 2019, sketsanews.com became very active in spreading anti-Chinese propaganda, including the fake news that China was planning to send troops to Indonesia if ethnic Chinese in Indonesia were targeted. For Para Widjayanto, this information war, which he called *tamkin risalah*, was a crucial stage in the strategy to achieve political victory and necessarily preceded the use of jihad.

Even as it emphasized dakwah, JI did not neglect jihad. It had a program for training military cadres at home and in Syria and preparing logistical support for war by producing crude homemade weapons. It did not intend these weapons for imminent use. Indeed, JI forbade any jihad operations in Indonesia until a critical precondition could be met: polarization between the Muslim community and Islam's enemies – notably the Indonesia government – had to reach the boiling point first.

The jihad strategy followed by JI is outlined in the book *The Management of Savagery (Idaratu Tawahusi)* by Abu Bakar Najdi. This manual became famous as the main reference for Abu Musab Al Zarkawi in Iraq, later seen as the progenitor of ISIS.⁵ In Najdi's concept, mujahidin would first weaken the enemy and sap its energy through repeated attacks on economic and military centres. Then it would create chaos by undertaking acts of terror so that the security situation would spiral out of control. JI's variation on this was to hold off on attacks until the enemy's authority could be undermined through other methods. JI would then come in as chaos was unfolding, exploit it with all means at its disposal including violence, and restore order as it prepared to establish an Islamic state.

The mass arrests of JI members by Indonesian police, since mid-2019, disrupted these plans. By August 2021, most of the top leadership was in detention. Gun factories and explosive caches had been seized and fund-raising efforts such as Syam Organizer shut down. JI's activities were almost totally frozen. After an earlier crackdown in 2007, it took about three years for dakwah activities to slowly resume. With far more members arrested in the 2019-2021 crackdown, it could take longer for JI to rebuild.

E. How does JI view coalition-building with other organisations? (JAT, JAS, JAK, MMI, FPI, Salafis etc)

As noted, Para Widjayanto shifted the concept of jihad from an elite to a mass undertaking, a significant change in thinking. Only with support of the masses could JI secure a political victory. This meant building coalitions (*tansiq*) with other like-minded organisations, but only if they were Ahlul Sunnah wal Jamaah.

4 ASL and its humanitarian relief program were the subject of intense discussions among the JI leadership in 2012, with Para Widjayanto and Abu Rusdan reportedly in attendance. The book that was the basis of the discussion was an Arabic tract, transliterated as *Hurub al ishabat as siyasiyah* by Abdullah Muhammad.

5 Naji, Abu Bakar, 2004 "The Management of Savagery: The Most Critical Stage Through Which the Umma Will Pass," translated by William McCants, John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies.

Under earlier amirs, JI had never worked with other organisations, fearing this would compromise its clandestine nature. Under Para, it became more interested in alliances. This was partly because it became increasingly focused on the need for political victory and building a broad base of support. But after the debacle of the 2010 Aceh training camp, when a poorly planned military training camp led to massive arrests and the deaths of dozens of fugitives at the hands of police, some JI intellectuals became convinced that non-violent advocacy had actually done more to advance the establishment of Islamic law than had violence.

In a widely disseminated tract titled *Refleksi Jihad Aceh*, one JI member argued that it was foolhardy to wage jihad when there was virtually no public support.

Only if the reality were comparable to Iraq or Afghanistan, where a *kafir* enemy was attacking Muslims, would it be worthwhile to take up arms against the coloniser. Are people really going to give up their professions to join? The better strategy would be to work out a blueprint of who can contribute what over time to jihad in the path of Allah. No such plan has ever been drawn up that takes account of all different streams of Islam and different kinds of expertise. *Dakwah* institutes of all kinds must be protected. For example, the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) focuses on vice; LPPI on challenging deviant sects; FAKTA on Christian conversion of Muslims. All have a role to play.⁶

In 2013, JI showed its willingness to join the Solo-based coalition called Shari'a Council of Surakarta City (Dewan Syariat Kota Surakarta, DSKS). JI even allowed one of its cadres, Tengku Azhar, to serve as secretary general. It also took an active role in the mass anti-Ahok rallies in November and December 2016.

For JI, these events were important tests of their capacity to mobilise their supporters. They urged their members, participants in their *pengajian* and students in their schools to get involved in the protests together with other organisations. As a big rally on 4 November 2016 (known as Aksi 411) approached, JI also issued a fatwa entitled "Peaceful Demonstrations and the Jihad Movement, Can They Work Together?" This fatwa criticized the view that arose in jihadi circles that sought to exploit a peaceful movement to undertake acts of violence. Proponents of that view believed that there was no way a non-violent movement could advance the cause of applying Islamic law; this could only be done through jihad. A rumour arose that one group of jihadis was going to try and use the anti-Ahok rally as a way of inciting conflict for opening the door to jihad. JI disputed this view and stressed, as it had many times before, that jihad was a means, not an end. More importantly, the fatwa supported the idea of peaceful demonstrations, seeing them as a form of "jihad through words", sometimes known as *jihad kalimat* or *jihad lisan*.

JI also saw the benefits of coalition building when a rising cadre within the organization named Siyono died in police custody after his arrest in March 2016. JI worked with DSKS, Muhammadiyah and other Muslim organisations to campaign for the dissolution of Detachment 88, whose officers were believed to have used excessive force against the suspect under circumstances which remain unclear. As a result of the pressure, Muhammadiyah doctors were able to conduct an independent autopsy and conclude that Siyono died from broken bones in his chest, trauma that occurred when he was inside the police vehicle.⁷

6 "Refleksi Jihad Aceh (bag 3)", 20 April 2010, <https://elhakimi.wordpress.com/2010/04/20/refleksi-jihad-aceh-2010-bag-3/>.

7 "Kontroversi Hasil Otopsi dan Misteri Kematian Siyono," Kompas.com, 12 April 2016.

III. JI SIZE AND STRUCTURE

A. How big is JI?

The number of JI members stood at about 6,000 at the time Para Widjayanto was arrested in July 2019. The organization was entirely based in Indonesia, having lost its bases in Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, and Australia just before or just after the 2002 Bali bombing.

With 6,000, JI was three times larger than the biggest pro-ISIS organization in Indonesia, the coalition founded by radical cleric Aman Abdurrahman in Malang, East Java, in November 2015 that became known as Jamaah Anshorud Daulah (JAD). That coalition, however, was only one of dozens of pro-ISIS groups that sprung up after the declaration of the caliphate in June 2014.

JI's growth had taken place under Para's leadership. Its active membership had plummeted after the Bali bombing, mostly due to arrests. (By 2007, some 400 JI members had been arrested in Indonesia alone, not counting the many arrested in Malaysia and Singapore.) Another factor in the decline was competition from other organisations. In 2008, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, who had been released from prison that year and was free to travel around the country, created Jamaah Anshor Tauhid (JAT) as a pro-shari'a advocacy organisation. Initially one could be a member of both JI and JAT but after Para Widjayanto formally became amir in early 2009, he forbade members to join other organisations. This policy of "monoloyalty" led several senior JI members to follow Ba'asyir and leave JI.⁸

JI in 2008 was in crisis. Its members were dropping out or being hunted by police. A court decision in April that year to declare JI a "banned corporate entity" gave police more leeway to make arrests.⁹ Para Widjayanto, however, managed to steer the organization through this difficult time, and JI slowly began to revive, through a quiet focus on outreach and education. From 2016 onwards, it grew more rapidly as it began to work more openly with like-minded organisations while maintaining the policy of "monoloyalty".

B. What is JI's structure? How did it maintain centralised control?

JI's hierarchical structure, as amended by Para Widjayanto and in operation from 2009 until his arrest in 2019, enabled relatively tight central control (for an organizational chart, see Appendix). The amir and four deputies sat at the top of a structure that was guided by a *markaziyah*, or central command. The deputies served as a buffer to minimize the contact between the amir and JI branch leaders, so that fewer knew the identity and whereabouts of the top leader.

The *tajhiz* or support division oversaw a branch structure that below the province level looked very much like JI's old territorial divisions but with new names. Instead of four regions called *mantiqi* covering five countries, as at the time of the Bali bombing, JI by 2009 was reduced to two main regions in Indonesia, East and West. These were called *qodimah*, and they were further subdivided into progressively smaller units, down to the level of two to three-person cells.

The Western Qodimah covered the Yogyakarta region and the Central Javanese cities of Kebumen, Cilacap, Semarang, Klaten, and Salatiga. It also included West Java, Banten and the greater Jakarta area, known as Jabodetabek, as well as Sumatra (Lampung, Riau, West Sumatra,

⁸ They included Abu Tholut, Afif Abdul Madjid, Muzayin Atiek and others, especially those in Central Java or with a long history of teaching at Ba'asyir's "Al-Mukmin" boarding school (*pesantren*) in Ngruki, outside Solo.

⁹ The ruling came at the end of the trial of then-amir Zarkasih (Zuhroni) and military commander Abu Dujana. Until then, the government had maintained that it could not ban JI because it had no legal existence and was not registered anywhere as an organization.

South Sumatra, North Sumatra and Aceh). The Eastern Qodimah included the old JI heartland of Solo and Sukoharjo, where the Ngruki pesantren is located, as well as neighbouring Wonogiri, Karanganyar and Sragen. It also included East Java (Surabaya, Lamongan, Magetan); West Nusa Tenggara and Sulawesi, including Poso.

As in the original JI structure, the *markaziyah*, led by the amir, was responsible for setting broad strategy and security policy. Each subdivision was free to amend the broad policy guidelines to meet local needs, but the amir tasked his deputies with supervising the different divisions to ensure that the policies were being carried out effectively. The *markaziyah* also had its own religious police, known as Tim Hisbah, to ensure that the behaviour of members was in accordance with Islamic principles and impose punishments for violations.

Para Widjayanto ran JI like a corporate business. He instituted a system to give incentives to all managers to work fulltime, from the *markaziyah* to section heads. They received a monthly salary (*mukafaah*) and an office car. Para himself received a monthly salary of between Rp.15 to 25 million [USD 1,000 to 1,700], a rented house, and an official car and driver.

C. *Where are JI strongholds?*

As of mid-2021, Central Java was still JI's main stronghold, where its governing council, the *markaziyah*, and more than half the total membership of JI was based. Central Java also had the largest concentration of JI schools that served as a major source of recruitment. In the original JI structure, Central Java had been divided into two, *wakalah* Solo and *wakalah* Central Java, because of the large number of members. The new structure addressed the same issue by dividing Central Java between the Western and Eastern Qodimah.

The second largest concentration of members was in Lampung, where the leadership of the Western Qodimah was based. Lampung was also the centre for managing JI assets such as smallholder palm oil. JI held shares in the largest bread factory in Lampung. It also oversaw a range of charitable organizations that were active in raising funds from the public. One of these was a foundation called Yayasan Abdurrahman bin Auf which thanks to a system of charity boxes described below helped the Lampung branch raise more funds than any other branch.

Lampung was also the place of refuge for wanted members, as was clear from the arrests of two long-term fugitives in November 2020, Upik Lawanga and Zulkarnaen. JI had sheltered and protected the two men for some fourteen years. The Lampung area resembled the old Mantiqi I, covering Malaysia and Singapore, in the sense that it was the economic and financial hub as well as the designated place of exile for JI leaders.

D. *Who is the current amir of JI?*

As of August 2021, it was unclear if a successor to Para Widjayanto had been appointed. After he was arrested, JI formed a committee to choose a new amir based on three formal criteria: strong religious credentials, military experience and managerial capacity.

The committee, known in Arabic as Tim Lajnah Ihtiar Linasbil Amir, was headed by Arif Siswanto, a long-time Ngruki teacher who was initially said to be a top candidate until his arrest in November 2020. He had the requisite religious credentials, experience on JI's executive council, and was a graduate of JI's Mindanao training program in 2000. Because prisoners and fugitives were automatically excluded from selection, however, Arif Siswanto fell out of the running. As of August 2021, it remained unclear whether a new amir had been chosen. One possibility was that the position would remain vacant as long as activities were frozen.

Apart from the formal criteria, there was also an unwritten requirement for the selection on an amir: the candidate had to have the blessing of JI's most important figure behind the scenes, Thoriquddin alias Abu Rusdan. Abu Rusdan was not a candidate for amir, having been imprisoned from 2003 to 2005 for sheltering one of the Bali bombers. He was, however, the most influential figure in JI as well as its public face – the man who took part in seminars and rallies, wrote articles, gave interviews and was generally considered one of the organisation's most accessible intellectuals. He worked closely with Para Widjayanto, who like him was from Kudus. Very little happened in JI without Abu Rusdan's guidance, and one can safely assume that he will play a major role in JI's rebuilding. One question is why, given the widespread crackdown and his influential role, Abu Rusdan managed to avoid arrest. It may well be that the police do not have the evidence that would hold up in court, even under the strengthened 2018 law. It also may be more useful to keep him under surveillance as a way of tracking JI's response to domestic and international developments.

E. How does/did JI recruit new members? What is/was the role of JI schools? Does Ngruki still play a role?

JI uses two forms of recruitment: dakwah and education, especially through its affiliated pesantrens. Under Para, it made a point of targeting university students, hoping to draw in engineers, chemists, computer technicians and linguists, including those fluent in Mandarin. A 2013 document found by police listed the professions it hoped to attract, with target numbers for each.¹⁰

For those recruited via dakwah, there is a lengthy multi-stage process that normally takes one to two years. A male recruit will be accepted as a member if he fulfils set criteria. He must understand JI's interpretation of Islam, be disciplined about worship, place loyalty to the organization above personal interests, carry out assignments as directed, be able to keep secrets and not have any family ties to members of the police or military.

To ensure that candidates meet these qualifications, the final stage of induction, called *tamhiz*, serves as a test. The candidates are given various field assignments to test everything from loyalty to security. JI also carries out a background check to look for any problematic family or romantic links and ensure that the candidate is clean. If the candidate passes these tests, he is then inducted with an oath of loyalty through a process known as *mu'ahadah*.

The second method of recruitment is aimed at students in JI-affiliated schools. As of 2021 there were some 40 schools affiliated with JI in several provinces under the coordination of the JI's Pesantren Communications Forum (Forum Komunikasi Pondok Pesantren, FKPP). Some of the larger of these schools were Ulul Albab in Lampung; Darus Syahadah in Boyolali, near Solo; Al Muttaqin in Jepara, Central Java and Al Ikhlas in Lamongan, East Java. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's well-known school, Pesantren Al Mukmin in Ngruki, near Solo, was not part of this forum, because it was seen as no longer controlled exclusively by JI. Its directors and teachers had affiliations to several other organisations. Ba'asyir's son Abdurrahim, for example, and a former JI leader, Muzayin Atiek alias Mustakim, were leading figures in Jamaah Anshor Syariah (JAS), a non-violent splinter of Ba'asyir's JAT. Some were closer to ISIS as was Ba'asyir himself.

Recruitment in the schools differed from recruitment through dakwah. Students who wished to be members did not have to go through the different stages of candidacy; the pesantren education was seen as sufficient, and the JI schools produced a distinct elite within the organisation. But not all students were drawn in; even impeccable family ties were not enough by themselves to ensure membership. Only those who were seen by their teachers to meet JI's criteria were invited to join.

10 See IPAC, "The Re-Emergence of Jemaah Islamiyah", Report No.36, 27 April 2017, pp.8-10.

The chosen students became cadres for JI's military training program, especially after contacts were established in Syria, or were tapped as future religious scholars (*ulama*). Those who went to Syria had to have a solid grounding in religious studies and ability to communicate in Arabic. The testing they went through was far more rigorous than for ordinary recruits, because as fighters, they would need to have both physical and mental strength. They had to pass tests in everything from long-distance swimming to survival skills in both urban and jungle settings. The urban test involved being left in an unfamiliar city without identity documents or money and having to live for several days there before moving on to a second town.

For those tapped to become JI ulama, students not only had to master Islamic studies and Arabic but had to continue their studies at JI's two tertiary institutes, Mahad Ali An-Nur in Gading, Sujoharjo or Mahad Ali Darul Qudus in Magetan, East Java.

F. How does JI regard women?

Women have no status except through their husbands. They do not swear loyalty oaths and are considered as members only as an extension of their spouses. That is, if a man is a member of JI, his wife is automatically assumed to be a loyal supporter – and often men are directed to JI schools for girls to select wives or have their marriages arranged by seniors in the organization as additional insurance that the network stays secure.

JI's conservative attitude to women did not change under Para Widjayanto's leadership. The main role of a woman was to be wife, mother and/or teacher of young children. The assumption was that except for teaching, women would be based at home, though the business activities of JI women often brought them outside more than JI doctrine acknowledged.

Women were not obliged to wage jihad as fighters, in JI's view. A woman's jihad was to give birth or make the haj and umroh (minor haj).¹¹ While in the past some JI women had been arrested on terrorism charges; none were involved in violence. They were rather arrested for withholding information about wanted fugitives – in some cases, their own husbands.

G. How does JI regard Abu Bakar Ba'asyir?

JI leaders regarded Abu Bakar Ba'asyir with some ambivalence, especially after he pledged allegiance to al-Baghdadi of ISIS. But as became clear after his release from prison in 2021, he was still seen as an elder statesman and revered by many within JI even though he had long ago ceased any role in the organization. When Ba'asyir set up JAT in 2008, the selection committee to choose an amir offered him the chance to return to lead JI. But Ba'asyir was not interested, and he never returned to an active JI role.

IV. JI'S TRANSNATIONAL LINKS AND OPPOSITION TO ISIS

A. What are JI's transnational links, in the Middle East, Afghanistan and Mindanao, including to al-Qaeda?

JI's links in Southeast Asia under Para Widjayanto were weak although it was actively trying to build up its international network at the time Para was arrested. The leadership had largely lost contact with old friends in Mindanao. From its founding until the aftermath of the Bali bombs,

¹¹ See IPAC discussion on JI's "Handbook of Womanhood" in "Mothers to Bombers", Report No.35, 31 January 2017.

JI had worked closely with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), building on a relationship forged in a training camp on the Pakistan-Afghan border in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

When JI wanted to build a new training facility in 1994, the MILF offered land and assistance for the construction of what became Camp Hudaibiyah. JI's top field operatives helped train MILF Special Forces and worked together with them on several deadly attacks. After the MILF expelled foreign jihadis in 2005 in the interests of pursuing peace talks with the government, the remaining handful of Indonesians either became inactive or turned to the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). As of mid-2021, seven Indonesian JI members remained in Mindanao, all alumni of either Camp Hudaibiyah or its successor, Jabal Quba, according to JI sources. As late as 2014 and possibly up to the present, they were receiving small monthly salaries authorised by the *markaziyah*, though they themselves appeared to be inactive.

In 2013, JI leaders attempted to re-establish communication with the MILF. They assigned two men to meet with an MILF official in Hong Kong, but he did not show up. This may have been because negotiations on autonomy were reaching a critical stage and the MILF did not want any suggestion that it was still in contact with a terrorist organization.

Links to al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan also lapsed, although occasional contact with al-Qaeda representatives took place. JI had sent cadres for training to al-Qaeda's Camp al-Faruq near Kandahar in the period 1999-2001; as noted, it also received funding for attacks, including \$35,000 for the Bali bombing and an additional \$50,000 in 2003 that Hambali channelled to Noordin Top.

Under Para Widjayanto, however, JI rejected an offer from al-Qaeda to fund attacks on the "far enemy" – that is, Western targets – in Indonesia. The offer was made through Dr. Salawi, al-Qaeda's representative for Southeast Asia, in a meeting with senior JI official Budi Trikaryanto in Bangkok in 2010. But JI had no interest in a partnership because its leaders believed that violence was not strategic and only endangered the organization.

It was Syria where JI focused its energies and where it began sending cadres for training and combat experience in 2012. It worked particularly closely with the Salafi militia, Ahrar al-Sham and with Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), the successor to the al-Nusra Front after it severed ties to al-Qaeda. JI supported the break with al-Qaeda, understanding HTS's desire not to be branded a terrorist organization, and believed that the cost of cooperating with HTS would be less once the connection was broken.¹²

B. How did JI become anti-ISIS?

JI from the beginning was opposed to ISIS because of differences in religious methodology (*manhaj*) and strategy. JI considered ISIS to be extremist, branding it *neo-khawarij* after the name of a 7th-century sect. It believed ISIS was too quick to attack fellow Muslims by calling them infidels or idolaters, simply because they disagreed with some points of ISIS teachings. This was based in part on an encounter JI had with ISIS in Syria in 2014. JI had sent several cadres to Syria to train in an ISIS camp. The team aimed not only to train but to challenge ISIS on several points of its interpretation of Islamic law. After seeing ISIS brand fellow fighters in al-Nusra and Ahrar al-Sham as infidels and suggest they were legitimate targets to kill, JI decided to cease any further cooperation. It also believed that ISIS lacked any strategy and that it was simply exhorting supporters to do "just terror", whenever and wherever it could. This ran directly counter to JI's strategy of holding off on jihad in Indonesia while assessing the local context.

¹² IPAC interview, senior police officer, Jakarta, August 2021.

V. JI'S ECONOMIC BASE

A. How has JI raised funds? How did this change over time?

JI has raised funds from six sources.

- **Membership dues.** From the beginning members were required to contribute a small percentage of their monthly income to the organization – 5 per cent during the time of founder Abdullah Sungkar (1993-99). Under Para Widjayanto, there was no specific percentage assigned, but members were urged to contribute according to their means. In addition, members were required to pay alms for the poor in the amount of 2.5 percent of their annual income, which was handed over to whichever division they belonged to. Each division set its own fund-raising targets.
- **Contributions from wealthy members and sympathisers.** JI also relied on donations from factories and businesses, some run by JI members, others by sympathisers who were never inducted. These men were free from any structural duties as long as they contributed to the maximum of their abilities. Sujadi, who became JI's treasurer, ran a leather factory in Magetan around 2011; his brother, also in the leather business, became a donor as well.¹³ Other important contributors included Kresno, a non-member who believed in JI's efforts to apply Islamic law. He owned a bread factory in Lampung that every month turned over funds amounting to thousands of dollars to one JI school in Solo, Mahad Ali An-Nur.
- **Contributions to charities from members of the public.** JI conducted many different public fund-raising efforts, with many of the contributors likely unaware that they were contributing to a jihadi organization. In several areas, funds were collected via charity boxes set up by JI front organisations. In December 2020, police announced that JI had distributed 20,068 boxes around twelve provinces. The most (some 6,000) were in Lampung.¹⁴ The income from these boxes was huge. In 2018, for example, ABA managed to collect Rp.27 billion (USD 1.9 million) and in 2019, Rp.24 billion (1.6 million).¹⁵ JI ran other charities in addition to ABA that it used to raise funds from the public. Among these were Syam Organizer that sought help for Syrian and Palestinian refugees and One Care Indonesia that focused on disaster relief. Tempo magazine reported that Syam Organizer was able to transfer Rp.1.9 billion (USD 136,000) to JI through its refugee appeals.¹⁶
- **JI Businesses.** JI under Para Widjayanto sought to build up economic assets, such as plantations, food processing factories and electronics manufacturers. These companies were to be established and managed by JI members with the aim of using the profits to fund JI activities and personnel.

¹³ See trial dossier of Budi Trikaryanto alias Haidar, Verdict No.306/Pid.Sus/2020/PN Jkt Timur, 20 July 2020.

¹⁴ "Polisi Ungkap 20,068 Kotak Amal Yayasan diduga untuk Pendanaan Kelompok Teroris JI," Kompas.com, 17 December 2020.

¹⁵ As of 2015, ABA was officially registered with the Ministry of Religious Affairs and BAZNAS, the official government agency for collecting alms (*zakat*) and other Islamic charitable contributions and began raising funds both online and offline. BAZNAS, which aimed to be a professional organization with good managerial and audit procedures, required its member organisations to deposit income in BAZNAS savings accounts and report regularly on amounts raised and distributed. ABA, however, simply deducted some of the cash raised in its charity boxes before it deposited the rest, thereby recording a lower income in its account while still ostensibly meeting reporting requirements. In this way ABA and its charity boxes help fund a wide range of JI activities. In 2019, ABA turned over Rp.330,000 million (USD 23,000) to Perisai Nusantara a JI advocacy organization. It channelled Rp.150 million (USD 11,000) for the operational costs of the Tajhiz section.

¹⁶ Raymundus Rikang, "Untuk al-Qaidah Berkedok Palestina," Tempo, www.majalah.tempo.co, 28 August 2021.

- **Levies on JI divisions and branches.** Every year, the JI treasurer drew up an annual budget and imposed a levy on JI branches and divisions that had to be turned over to the central command. According to the 2018 annual budget drawn up under Para Widjayanto's administration, the levies from the divisions were expected to total Rp.16 billion a year (USD 1.1 million); in fact, they amounted to closer to Rp.12 billion (USD 833,000). Each division had an assigned allocation. The pesantren network (Forum Komunikasi Pondok Pesantren, FKPP) was given a target of contributing Rp.4.2 billion (USD 300,000) to the centre, meaning any funds they raised after that obligation was met could be used as they saw fit. The logistical support division (*tajhiz*) was targeted at Rp.3.9 billion (USD 280,000). The education division (*tarbiyah*) was targeted at Rp. 2.8 billion (USD 200,000). The funds turned over to the central command were used for management costs and personnel salaries, as well as special projects. The funds raised from relatively self-sufficient parts of the organization were used to subsidize others, for example to support the costs of sending cadres to Syria for training, as well as for subsidizing the costs of media activities.
- **Grants from international jihadi organisations.** Al-Qaeda reportedly contributed \$35,000 toward the 2002 Bali bombing and an additional \$50,000 that Noordin Top used for both the first Marriott bombing in 2003 and the Australian embassy bombing in 2004. Para Widjayanto stopped receiving such donations when he took over on the grounds that they only endangered JI. Besides, international jihadi organisations usually expected such grants to be used for terrorist actions and JI after 2007 forbade any such action to be carried out in Indonesia.

To meet the requirements of the central command, divisions were encouraged to fund-raise themselves, and it was this imperative that prompted the Tajhiz division to create groups like Syam Organizer and the distribution of charity boxes in minimarts. For example, the education and training division, known as ADIRA, had its own fund-raising institution called the Pundi Dhuafa. The levy demanded by the centre was generally about 20 per cent of the funds raised locally.

B. How Important Was Online Fund-Raising for JI?

Several of the charities run by JI such as Syam Organizer or One Care were active in online fund-raising but neither succeeded very well in this goal. This can be seen from their own reports. One Care, for example, tried to raise funds to distribute Qur'ans around Indonesia, in a program called "Tebar Sejuta Qur'an untuk Nusantara" through the platform "kitabisa.com", the most popular crowdfunding app in Indonesia. The target was Rp.100 million (USD 7,100), but it was only able to raise Rp.674,153 (USD 45) in 31 donations.¹⁷ Another online campaign was "One Million Food Boxes for Indonesia" (Sejuta Food Box untuk Nusantara). It only managed to raise Rp.227,000 (USD 16) in seventeen donations from a goal of Rp.100 million (USD 7,100).¹⁸ In both cases, the site said it accepted transfers from most major Indonesian banks and credit cards. It also promised reports by email.

Syam Organizer also fell significantly short of its online goals, but it did much better at collecting funds during offline activities such as mass meetings (*tabligh akbar*). In 2016, for example, a program during Ramadhan on behalf of Syria that took place in 31 cities across Indonesia managed to raise Rp.5 billion.¹⁹

17 <https://kitabisa.com/campaign/tebarsejutaquranuntuknusantara>.

18 <https://kitabisa.com/campaign/sejutafoodboxuntuknusantara>.

19 IPAC interview, senior police official, Jakarta, July 2021.

C. *How Will JI Survive Economically After the Wave of Arrests?*

The crackdown on JI, especially since mid-2019, has seriously disrupted its fund-raising activities. Yet, JI retains several important sources of funding. One that it can continue to count on is from the pesantren network FKPP. Police have been very careful not to be seen as targeting pesantrens so the schools may be able to continue to provide economic support. Monthly contributions of members may also continue, and some of the businesses owned or partially owned by JI may continue to operate.

VI. JI'S MILITARY CAPACITY AND RISK OF VIOLENCE

A. *How many men did JI send to Syria and toward what end?*

Between 2012 and 2018, JI managed to get 87 men into Syria for training with different militias. Of these, twelve were killed, 58 returned safely and 16 were believed to be still in Syria as of August 2021. JI stopped sending cadres after six men were arrested in Turkey and deported in December 2017. They were arrested on arrival and subsequently tried. The police investigation into their activities lay the foundation for the wave of arrests that followed.

At the time it stopped its training program, JI was working with HTS (Hayat Tahrir Syam), a splinter of Jabhat an-Nusra that had been the al-Qaeda affiliate in Syria. JI men received training in HTS camps and joined HTS units in operations. But they also worked with other militias, such as Ahrar al-Sham, and briefly, in 2013-14, with the Free Syrian Army (FSA) and ISIS. They decided the FSA was too secular and ISIS too *takfiri*. Indeed, one of the reasons for sending a delegation of eight men to train in the ISIS camp in April 2014 was to get a better picture of ISIS teachings, and the report back confirmed JI's concerns that ISIS's ideology was too extreme.²⁰

B. *What kind of training did JI members receive in Syria?*

The JI cadres received three forms of training. Those who went for only a month or less, such as those who trained with the FSA in 2013 and 2014, got basic instruction in map reading, weapon training and field engineering. Those who went for longer periods of up to two years, such as those who trained with Ahrar al-Sham and HTS, were taught similar skills but to a higher level of capacity, in the expectation that they would return to Indonesia as instructors. The third program was for different kinds of specialized expertise such as sharp shooting, bomb-making, intelligence, combat tactics and medical work.

JI was particularly desirous that its cadre learn sniper skills, because it believed that in the chaos that preceded the final step toward securing political control, it would need to conduct targeted assassinations (*ighthiyalat*). JI has no history of such assassinations. Its aspirations in this regard were reportedly based on a popular book by the late AQAP head Abu Jandal al-Azdi entitled "Encouraging the Heroic Mujahidin to Revive the Practice of Secret Assassinations". The book was translated into Indonesian and posted on extremist websites around 2007.

²⁰ See trial dossier of Budi Trikaryanto alias Haidar, Verdict No.306/Pid.Sus/2020/PN Jkt Timur, 20 July 2020.

C. *What about military training for JI in Indonesia?*

Almost all JI members went through some form of military training in Indonesia. As an organization which considered jihad as the path to political victory, JI required all its members to have a minimal capacity in search-and-rescue (SAR) and use of weapons. Local military training was the responsibility of JI's education and training division, known as ADIRA.

The ADIRA division was responsible for selecting candidates for more advanced military training, particularly those who showed potential to join the program in Close Quarters Combat training (Sasana Qital Qorib, often abbreviated Sasana). This was a year-long program after which participants were expected to have intermediate skills in weaponry, map reading, field engineering and self-defence at close quarters. The aim was to produce cadres who would be attractive to foreign militias like Ahrar al-Sham because they could offer concrete skills. The cadres trained in martial arts, use of large and small bladed weapons and throwing knives. They also received training in hostage-taking,²¹

D. *What is the biggest risk from JI in 2021-22?*

In the near term, the biggest risk from JI is that a splinter group emerges that is dissatisfied with JI's passive response to the police crackdown. There has already been one such case. Imaruddin was the finance manager for JI's human resource division. He was an owner of Samudera Jasa Amanah (SJA), a courier and expediting company operating out of West Java with branches in Bandung, Garut, Solo, Semarang, Yogyakarta, Surabaya and elsewhere. In June 2019, Para Widjayanto and other senior leaders were arrested. Imaruddin was angry that the arrests did not seem to generate any resistance from JI, even though it was the amir himself who had been arrested. He invited his brothers and some employees of SJA to join him in an attack. He then prepared a concept of war based on Stage 3 of Jihad Tamkin – nikayah wal inhak, designed to weaken the enemy by hitting its economic assets. He therefore planned attacks on mainland Chinese investments as well as on Chinese workers in Indonesia, in the hope that these attacks would make the Chinese government send its military to protect its investments, thereby antagonizing the Muslim community and sparking a war. Communications among Imaruddin and his group were detected by police, however, and all were arrested. The same phenomenon of a splinter arising from a disgruntled group impatient with the passivity of the JI leadership, or one emboldened by the success of the Taliban, could happen again.

The bigger danger to Indonesia, though, is from the many autonomous pro-ISIS cells that still exist across the country, whose members consider themselves bound by the oath they swore to the ISIS leader (first al-Baghdadi, then his successor). The oath obligates them to obey instructions to wage war against the enemy in any way they can, especially if they cannot travel to help ISIS in Syria. The bombing in Kabul for which ISIS has claimed responsibility could fire up pro-ISIS groups to make new attempts at attacks.

VII. RESILIENCE, REBUILDING AND REGENERATION IN JI

A. *How does JI rebuild after 200 arrests?*

The crackdown that JI has endured since 2019 is similar to what it experienced after the arrests of its senior leadership in 2007, especially after the arrest of then-amir Zarkasih and then top

²¹ Ibid.

military leader, Abu Dujana. The previous round of arrests was restricted to about a dozen senior officials. This time, the condition is worse as the arrests, bolstered by a strengthened 2018 anti-terrorism law, are close to 200. JI's own leaders believe that it now has to focus on survival.

JI is likely to return to Para Widjayanto's strategy that proved successful after 2007, that is, focusing on dakwah and education. The pesantren network will be particularly important, since this is where important recruitment still takes place, and police will refrain from direct action against the schools. Mass Islamic organisations, including mainstream ones, will also likely object to any overt effort of police to interfere with dakwah, so as long as JI preachers do not directly advocate violence, they may still be able to preside over or serve as discussants in mass meetings.

JI could well change its name for security's sake. Many members arrested in the past three or four years have been charged with membership in a banned organization, since JI was explicitly named as a "banned corporate entity" in a 2008 court ruling. A new name would complicate the legal process, though prosecutors would likely find ways around new obstacles.

B. How do political developments in Indonesia affect JI's ability to rebuild?

As of 2020, Para Widjayanto saw JI's future as being tied to the political activities of like-minded Islamic organizations committed to the application of Islamic law. He saw cooperation with these organisations as essential to any future political victory. In his view, JI was likely to benefit from any effort to strengthen mass Islamic organisations or broaden support for their pro-shari'a agenda. He saw infiltration of local political parties and institutions such as local MUI branches as a desirable tactic. He may also have assumed that if cooperation with other organisations can be strengthened, these organisations might be more willing to protect JI members from the long arm of Detachment 88.

It is not known whether younger leaders of JI share these assumptions. It is possible that they could produce an evaluation and critique of JI strategy that would reverberate within the jihadi community much as *Refleksi Jihad Aceh* did more than a decade ago. The difference was that *Refleksi* was written from the perspective of a self-confident organization, criticizing others for mistakes that led to their weakening. Any critique from JI intellectuals now could well be directed inward, at a JI that became too corporate for its own good or one that tried to apply too many principles from Middle Eastern tracts that were simply not applicable in Indonesia.

VIII. JI REACTIONS TO THE TALIBAN VICTORY

A. How have JI supporters viewed this victory? Does it change their view of the utility of military strategy?

Very little is known about the internal JI reaction to the Taliban victory in Afghanistan but according to police officers who questioned JI detainees, many members have been euphoric over the Taliban's success.²² In their view, it shows the success of the tamkin strategy in moving from the stage of weakness (*marhala idtidlaf*) to power through *jihad fisabilillah*. They say that the Taliban success was due to two factors: by applying shari'a in full, they fulfilled the

22 This information is based on IPAC's interviews with police officers tasked with interrogating JI detainees about their views on the Taliban victory. This provides a preliminary and partial indication of possible JI attitudes but is not an ideal form of data-gathering as there are concerns about the validity of the responses, given that they were likely under duress and that the officers in question might not in all cases have accurately conveyed their responses.

requirement for assistance from Allah for victory: strong faith. They also met the practical conditions for victory (*syarat kauniyah*) such as sufficient human resources, support of the population, appropriate war tactics, adequate weapons and so on. Their success convinced JI members of the validity of the war strategy known as *nikayah wal inhak*, also known as *harbu intizab*, that would gradually weaken the enemy until defeat was inevitable.

If the Taliban decided to forbid al-Qaeda terrorists from using Afghanistan as a base, JI members said they would have no objections. It believes the Taliban need to set a policy that prevents them from being targeted by the US before they have fully established territorial control over Afghanistan. At the same time, they believe that the Taliban need to prioritize the protection of mujahidin and ensure that no fighter who seeks protection is handed over to the enemy.

The police also asked JI prisoners were also asked about their reactions to the possibility that the Taliban would seek good relations with China and Russia, two countries long seen as enemies by JI, both for their Communist origins as well as their policies toward Muslim minorities in areas they control (Chechnya, Xinjiang). They said this was not a problem. The Prophet never forbade cooperation with kafir. In Mecca he had worked with an idolatrous tribe, Bani Khuzaah, against the infidel Quraishi. Some JI members said it would not be possible to manage Afghanistan's economy without assistance. They said the Taliban would need to learn from AQAP's experience in Yemen after it took over three provinces in 2012. It did not have enough funds to govern. For almost a year, AQAP spent some \$200 million for food, electricity and fuel as well as to meet war expenses at a time when its own forces were diminished, hundreds of its own members having died in combat. In the end, the JI men said, AQAP decided to withdraw from the three provinces and return to a guerrilla strategy in the mountains

B. Does this mean that JI will be inspired to take up armed struggle in Indonesia?

No. They believe that JI is a long way from meeting the two conditions that the Taliban fulfilled, and that armed jihad is still not possible in Indonesia. JI knows that lacks sufficient support, human resources and weapons to meet its own goals. JI appears to have no immediate plans to open communications with al-Qaeda, but if it wanted to do so, it would not be difficult. It has cadres abroad that could help, particularly in Syria.

C. How will recent events affect the rivalry between ISIS and JI in Indonesia?

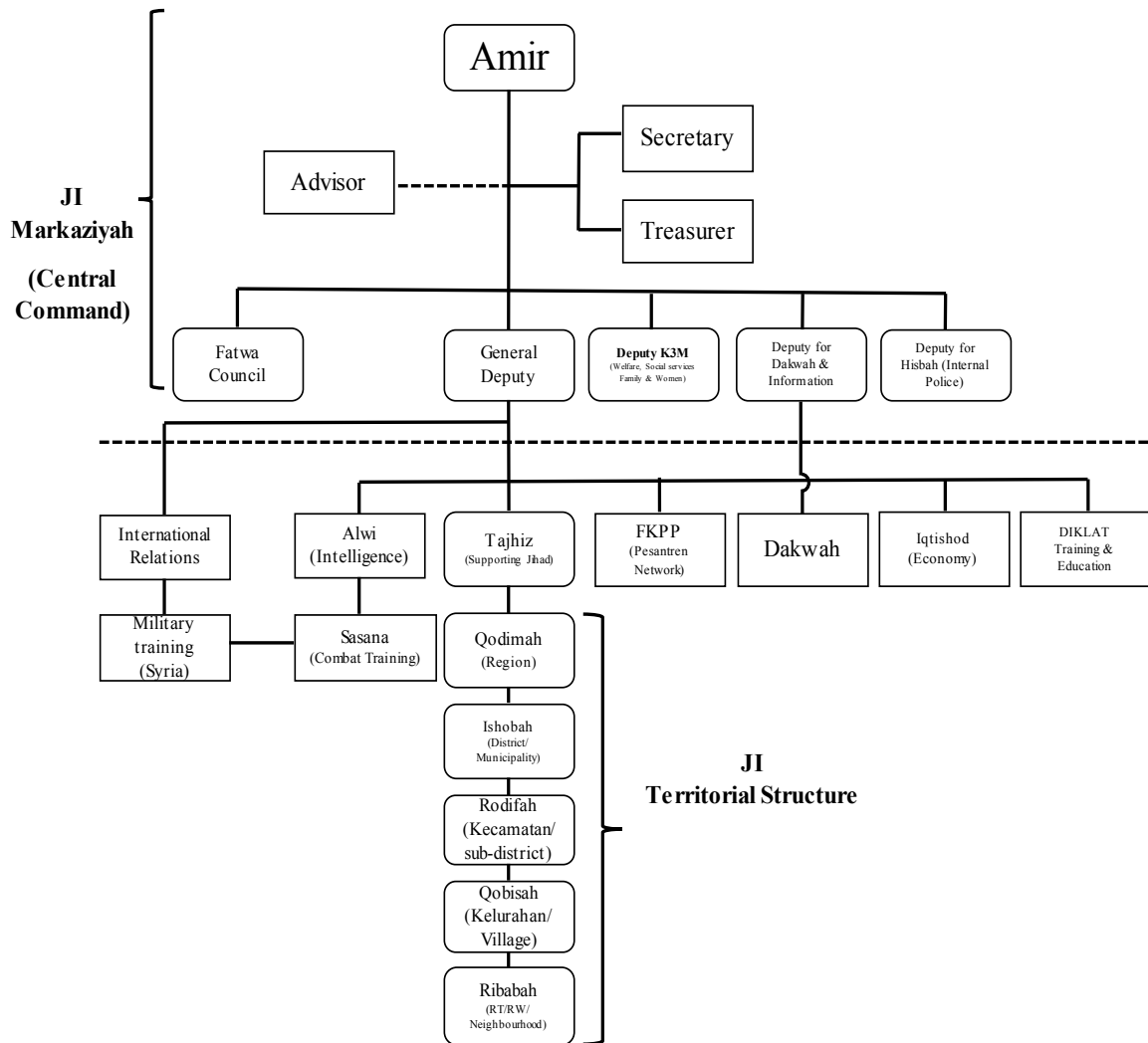
The bombing outside Kabul airport on 26 August 2021 and the ISIS claim of responsibility is likely to inspire ISIS groups to try and mount new attacks in Indonesia. This could lead not to competition between JI and ISIS, which have never been particularly affected by each other's actions, but to intra-ISIS competition to demonstrate that one particular cell can outdo another. For this reason, ISIS cells remain far more dangerous than anything connected to JI.

IX. CONCLUSIONS

JI remains a dangerous organization, even though it has been dramatically weakened since 2019. The return to power of the Taliban will not immediately raise the threat level of terrorism in Southeast Asia, but long-term scenarios are less clear. The most important dynamic to watch in Afghanistan may be relations between ISIS and the Taliban, particularly following the Kabul airport attacks.

JI meanwhile will continue to evolve. There have now been three generations of families linked to JI, especially in West and Central Java and Lampung. Despite the best efforts of Indonesian police and counter-terrorism agency, there may well be a fourth.

Appendix: Structure of Jemaah Islamiyah under Para Widjayanto.



INSTITUTE FOR POLICY ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT (IPAC)

The Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC) was founded in 2013 on the principle that accurate analysis is a critical first step toward preventing violent conflict. Our mission is to explain the dynamics of conflict—why it started, how it changed, what drives it, who benefits—and get that information quickly to people who can use it to bring about positive change.

In areas wracked by violence, accurate analysis of conflict is essential not only to peaceful settlement but also to formulating effective policies on everything from good governance to poverty alleviation. We look at six kinds of conflict: communal, land and resource, electoral, vigilante, extremist and insurgent, understanding that one dispute can take several forms or progress from one form to another. We send experienced analysts with long-established contacts in the area to the site to meet with all parties, review primary written documentation where available, check secondary sources and produce in-depth reports, with policy recommendations or examples of best practices where appropriate.

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