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## TERRORISM AS A THREAT TO REGIONAL SECURITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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This article examines the terrorism as the one of the main security threats to Southeast Asia. In this context, studying and analyzing this issue is crucial for creating an effective strategy to combat terrorism and ensure security in Southeast Asia. Examples of attacks and possible threats are given and their impacts on the region and its stability are described.

**Key words:** *security, Southeast Asia, terrorism, organization*

Terrorism has been a persistent problem in Southeast Asia, with several countries in the region being targeted by various terrorist groups. The origins of terrorism in Southeast Asia can be linked to historical, political, and socio-economic factors that have fueled the growth of extremist beliefs and violent actions. This section will explore the underlying causes of terrorism in Southeast Asia, the countries affected by terrorism, and the different terrorist groups and attacks that have impacted the region.

The roots of terrorism in Southeast Asia can be traced back to the colonial era when European powers imposed their rule on the region. This led to resentment and resistance from the local population, resulting in the formation of nationalist groups that used violence as a means to achieve their goals. The struggle for independence and the subsequent formation of new states in the region also gave rise to ethnic and religious tensions, which were exploited by extremist groups to further their agendas.

Another factor that contributed to the rise of terrorism in Southeast Asia is the presence of foreign forces in the region. The Cold War saw the involvement of global superpowers in Southeast Asia, with the United States supporting anti-communist regimes in countries like Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. This led to the formation of communist insurgent groups, such as the Viet Cong and Khmer Rouge, who used terrorist tactics to fight against foreign intervention.

Furthermore, economic disparities and social inequalities have also played a role in fueling terrorism in Southeast Asia. Countries like Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand have significant income disparities between the urban and rural areas, leading to marginalization and radicalization of certain groups. Poverty and lack of opportunities have made these regions fertile ground for extremist ideologies to take root and recruit new members.

Southeast Asia states that suffer from terrorism include Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore. These countries have been targeted by various terroristic organizations, each with its own agenda and motivations. Indonesia has been a frequent target of terrorist attacks, with the most notable being the 2002 Bali bombings, which killed over 200 people. The Philippines has also experienced numerous attacks from groups such as Abu Sayyaf and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which have been fighting for an independent Muslim state in the southern part of the country.

Malaysia has also been a target of terrorist attacks, with the most significant being the 2016 bombing at a nightclub in Kuala Lumpur, which injured eight people. Thailand has been dealing with a long-standing insurgency in its southern provinces, with groups like the Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) and Pattani United Liberation Organization (PULO) carrying out attacks against government forces and civilians. Singapore has not experienced any major terrorist attacks, but it remains vigilant due to its strategic location and status as a global financial hub.

The most prominent terroristic organizations in Southeast Asia include Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), which has been responsible for numerous attacks in Indonesia, including the Bali bombings. The group is linked to Al-Qaeda and has been involved in recruitment, training, and financing of terrorist activities in the region. Another significant organization is Abu Sayyaf, which operates in the Philippines and is known for its kidnappings for ransom and beheadings of hostages. The MILF, which has been fighting for an independent Muslim state in the Philippines, has also carried out attacks against government forces and civilians.

In recent years, there has been a rise in the influence of the Islamic State (IS) in Southeast Asia, with the formation of local groups pledging allegiance to the terrorist organization. These groups include Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) in Indonesia and Maute Group in the Philippines. These groups have carried out attacks in their respective countries, including the 2017 Marawi siege in the Philippines, which lasted for five months and resulted in the displacement of thousands of civilians.

In conclusion, terrorism in Southeast Asia has deep roots that can be traced back to historical, political, and socio-economic factors. The region has been plagued by various terroristic organizations, each with its own agenda and motivations. The states that suffer from terrorism include Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore. It is crucial for these countries to address the root causes of terrorism and work together to combat this ongoing threat to regional stability and security.

Now, let's consider the main active terroristic organizations in Southeast Asia.

**1. Jemaah Islamiyah (JI):** Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) is a militant Islamist organization that aims to create a caliphate in Southeast Asia. The group was responsible for the Bali bombings and has carried out various attacks in Indonesia. JI's main objective is to initiate an Islamic state or regional caliphate in Southeast Asia, focusing on Indonesia as the central location due to its Muslim majority. However, this vision could also extend to Islamic communities in Malaysia, Singapore, the southern Philippines, Brunei, and southern Thailand. The establishment of an Islamic community, known as "Jemaah Islamiyah," is seen as a crucial step towards achieving this long-term goal. Engaging in jihad is considered essential in realizing JI's vision of a pan-Asian state governed by Islamic law.

JI originated as a result of the efforts of two radical Muslim clerics, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asir, who provided leadership and organizational skills to the extreme Islamic movement, leading to the emergence of the JI. Prior to the Islamic State terror attacks that began in the mid-2000s Islamic movement that spawned JI. In the years prior to the JI bombing attacks that began in mid-2000, the group's key organizational priorities were

- Recruiting and indoctrinating JI members

- Creating an organizational structure
- Establishing ties with other terrorist and militant Muslim groups, including al Qaeda

Many of those who later became Jemaah Islamiyah terrorists initially joined the group through religious education provided in Songkhla and Paasir in Indonesia or Malaysia. In the 1970s, clerics founded a religious school called Pondok Ngruki near Solo in Central Java that focused on teaching Salafism and a strict interpretation of the Islamic faith. Many of the key JI members captured by authorities after the attacks were linked to the “Ngruki network” and were students, followers or associates of Sungkar and Ba'asir.

JL's organizational structure

### **JJ Bombing Attacks**

One of the key characteristics of JI as a terrorist organization has been its readiness and capability to carry out significant bombing campaigns. Since 2000, JI has executed bombing operations of various complexities targeting a wide range of locations in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Singapore.

The most devastating bombing attack attributed to JI occurred on the Indonesian island of Bali on October 12, 2002. Simultaneously, another bomb was detonated near the U.S. consulate in Sanur, Bali. The JI attack team placed a small bomb in Paddy's Bar and a much larger bomb (50 to 150 kilograms) in a van parked outside the Sari Club. The coordinated detonations during a crowded evening resulted in the deaths of 202 individuals and injuries to over 500 people. To ensure the effectiveness of the large bomb, the JI team equipped it with four separate detonation mechanisms. A third bomb was set off near the U.S. consulate but did not cause any casualties.

There is evidence suggesting that the JI team behind the Bali attacks utilized suicide bombers, marking a significant shift in their operational strategy. This was the first known instance of JI employing suicide bombers. The operation was overseen by an experienced JI field commander, Imam Samudra, who had previous involvement in bombings, including the Christmas Eve attack. The overall leader of the operation was Mukhlas (Ali Gufron), a senior JI member with experience in Afghanistan who handled the financial and logistical aspects of the operation.

Some JI members claimed that their motive was to target the United States and other Western adversaries by attacking a location popular among "white" Westerners. The bomb near the U.S. consulate was intended to link the Bali bombings to the United States. Following the bombing, Indonesian authorities, with assistance from foreign investigators and technical support from Australia, were able to locate and apprehend the leaders of the Bali bombing operations and most of their team members in the subsequent weeks and months.

### **2. Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS):**

The Islamic State, also known as ISIS, ISIL, or Daesh, emerged from the remnants of al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), a local branch of al Qaeda established by Abu Musab al Zarqawi in 2004. After the surge of U.S. troops to Iraq in 2007, it faded into obscurity for several years but began to resurface in 2011. Taking advantage of increasing instability in Iraq and Syria, the group carried out attacks and bolstered its ranks. In 2013, it changed its name to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and launched an offensive on Mosul and Tikrit in June 2014. On June 29, ISIS leader Abu Bakr al Baghdadi declared the establishment of a caliphate stretching from Aleppo in Syria to Diyala in Iraq and renamed the group the Islamic State.

A coalition led by the United States initiated airstrikes against ISIS in Iraq on August 7, 2014, expanding the campaign to Syria the following month. The operation was named "Operation Inherent Resolve" on October 15. Over the next year, the United States conducted over 8,000 airstrikes in Iraq and Syria. ISIS suffered significant losses along Syria's border with Turkey, and by the end of 2015, Iraqi forces had made progress in retaking Ramadi. In Syria, however, ISIS made advances near Aleppo and maintained control over Raqqa and other strongholds.

Throughout 2015, ISIS extended its reach into a network of affiliates in at least eight other countries, leading to attacks beyond the borders of its self-proclaimed caliphate. The group's Egypt affiliate bombed a Russian airplane in October, resulting in 224 fatalities. In November, coordinated attacks in Paris

claimed the lives of 130 individuals and left over 300 injured. Additionally, in June 2016, a gunman with ties to ISIS killed approximately 49 people at a nightclub in Orlando, Florida.

ISIS also claimed responsibility for various attacks in Indonesia, including the 2016 Jakarta bombings that resulted in eight fatalities. By December 2017, the ISIS caliphate had lost 95% of its territory, including Mosul and Raqqa. Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al Abadi declared victory over ISIS in Iraq on December 9, 2017. Despite these losses, ISIS continued to inspire and carry out attacks globally.

In 2018, efforts against ISIS shifted to eastern Syria, where a U.S.-backed coalition known as the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) gradually seized key ISIS positions. President Donald Trump declared ISIS defeated on December 19, 2018, announcing plans to withdraw U.S. troops supporting the SDF in Syria. However, the SDF persisted with their offensive and launched a final siege on ISIS forces in Baghouz in February 2019. Baghouz fell on March 23, 2019, marking the end of the caliphate's territorial claims.

The mass surrender of ISIS fighters and their families highlighted the ongoing challenge of preventing their transformation into an insurgency in Iraq and Syria. The era of ISIS under Baghdadi came to an end on October 26, 2019, with his death during a U.S. raid in northern Syria.

### **ISIS attacks**

One of the biggest ISIS attacks in Southeast Asia was bomb and gun attack in Jakarta.

Up to seven explosions and multiple shootouts occurred in the Indonesian capital in a seemingly coordinated assault attributed to the Islamic State (ISIS). The incidents resulted in the deaths of seven individuals – including a law enforcement officer, a Canadian citizen, and five of the assailants. Seventeen individuals sustained injuries, among them a Dutch national who was severely harmed and had been employed by the United Nations' ecological program.

It took security personnel approximately three hours to bring an end to the standoff near a Starbucks establishment and Sarinah's, Jakarta's most ancient retail outlet, following an exchange of gunfire between a group of around seven extremists and law enforcement officers before they detonated explosives. Subsequent to the initial gun battle, two attackers emerged from a crowd. One brandished a firearm and shot at an officer, while his partner targeted another individual. Both gunmen were swiftly neutralized. Two additional assailants perished after triggering explosions in the Starbucks parking lot. The bodies of hostages and terrorists were scattered on the street.

There are few pro-ISIS organizations that are active in Southeast Asia: Jamaah Ansharut Daulah, Mujahidin Indonesia Timur and Maute Group.

### **3. Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD):**

This is a pro-ISIS group that has been behind a series of suicide bombings in Indonesia, including assaults on churches and a police station in Surabaya in 2018. Jamaah Ansarud Daulah (JAD), the ISIS-supporting coalition established by cleric Aman Abdurrahman in 2014, was in significant decline by early 2021, although the extent of its downfall was not always clear. The issue arose when law enforcement authorities, following counterterrorism operations, frequently labeled any group with pro-ISIS leanings as JAD, even when there was no direct connection to the original coalition. Many online ISIS sympathizers also identified themselves using general terms like ansharud daulah (Islamic State supporters) or ansharul khilafah (caliphate supporters). However, the JAD group responsible for the 2016 Jakarta and 2018 Surabaya attacks had become largely inactive by 2020, with most of its top leaders incarcerated.

### **JAD attacks**

On Sunday, May 13, 2018, three churches in Surabaya (East Java), Indonesia, were targeted by nearly simultaneous suicide bombings, resulting in the deaths of 13 individuals and injuries to 41 others. Indonesian authorities reported that TATP (triacetone triperoxide) was utilized in all three attacks, which were executed by a single family consisting of Dita Oepriarto; his spouse, Puji Kuswati; adolescent sons, Yusuf Fadhil (18) and Firman Halim (15); and young daughters, Fadhila Sari (12) and Famela Rizqita (9). Later that same day, a premature explosion occurred in a residence in Sidarjo (near Surabaya),

involving another family of six, injuring the bomb maker Anton Febrianto and the two younger children, Farisa Putri (11) and Garida Huda Akbar (10), while resulting in the fatalities of his wife, Puspitasari, and the eldest son, Hilda Aulia Rahman (17). Febrianto was subsequently fatally shot by law enforcement. The subsequent day, on Monday, May 14, a family of five rode two motorcycles to the entrance of Surabaya police headquarters where they detonated explosives strapped to themselves. Four of the assailants perished, and three police officers as well as three civilians sustained injuries. The eight-year-old daughter of the suicide bombers, who was not equipped with explosives, was thrown off the motorcycle but survived.

These incidents marked the first successful series of bombings inspired by the Islamic State in Indonesia since the January 2016 assault in Jakarta's Thamrin business district, which targeted a traffic police post and a Starbucks café. This also represented Indonesia's initial successful suicide bombing carried out by a female and the first instances of bombings orchestrated by entire families, including their young offspring. TATP, the explosive material utilized in the three church attacks in Surabaya, is the same volatile and intricate high explosive employed in significant assaults in Paris, Brussels, and Manchester between 2015 and 2017. These bombings underscore both an escalation in the capabilities of Islamic State sympathizers in Indonesia and a novel *modus operandi*. Nevertheless, it would be erroneous to assume that this enhanced capability extends throughout Indonesia's pro-Islamic State network and to interpret the involvement of entire families as a complete departure. Likewise, it is inaccurate to view this surge in Islamic State-inspired attacks as solely attributable to returning Indonesian foreign combatants.

**4. Mujahidin Indonesia Timur (MIT):** This is a militant group based in Poso, Sulawesi, and is affiliated with ISIS. It has carried out several attacks in the region, including the beheading of four villagers in 2015

**5. Maute Group:** This is an ISIS-affiliated group that was responsible for the siege of Marawi City in 2017, which resulted in a five-month-long battle with government forces and left over 1,000 dead.

**Conclusion.** In summary, terrorism remains a significant and persistent menace to regional security in Southeast Asia. It has a transnational character and spreads in a number of states of the region. Various terrorist groups, both local and foreign, persist in their activities within the area, presenting difficulties for authorities and societies alike. The intricate socio-political environment of Southeast Asia, marked by its varied ethnic and religious populations, offers fertile soil for radical beliefs to flourish. Measures to combat terrorism should encompass thorough approaches that tackle underlying causes, foster collaboration among regional nations, bolster information-sharing, and fortify anti-terrorism strategies. It is imperative for governments to collaborate closely with international allies to effectively counter the terrorism threat and uphold the tranquility and stability of Southeast Asia.

In addition, the evolving nature of terrorism in Southeast Asia necessitates continuous adaptation and innovation in counterterrorism efforts. As terrorist groups become more sophisticated in their tactics and strategies, it is crucial for governments to remain vigilant and proactive in addressing these threats. Enhancing regional cooperation and coordination, investing in intelligence capabilities, and engaging with communities to prevent radicalization are key components of a comprehensive approach to combating terrorism in Southeast Asia. By working together and staying ahead of the curve, countries in the region can better protect their citizens and maintain peace and security in Southeast Asia.

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## **TURKEY'S TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS INFRASTRUCTURE AND ITS CONNECTION WITH CENTRAL ASIA**

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This article examines the development of Turkey's transport and logistics infrastructure and its connection with Central Asia has significant potential for economic growth, regional integration and the maintenance of peaceful and stable relations between the countries. Various examples of transit routes are given, and their impact on Turkey's interaction with other countries is described.

**Key words:** *logistic, infrastructure, Turkey, Central Asia, transport corridor.*

The Republic of Turkey is distinguished by an important geopolitical position, namely that Turkey is a bridge between Europe and Asia, thereby being a key transport hub providing a link between East and West, as well as between North and South.

Turkish ports on the Mediterranean and Black Seas play a significant role in international trade, providing access to sea routes. In addition, the country has a developed network of road, rail and air transport routes that facilitate the movement of goods and people between continents. Due to its strategic location, Turkey continues to play a major role in the modern global economy.

Turkey is actively developing its logistics industry in order to improve its competitiveness as a transit point and create new opportunities for cooperation with other countries.

Transport and logistics infrastructure plays a key role in facilitating trade and economic ties with Central Asia. The importance of this infrastructure is to ensure the availability of goods and services between the countries of Central Asia and other regions. The efficiency of transport routes helps to reduce the time and cost of cargo delivery, contributing to an increase in trade volumes. At the same time, improving competitiveness with the help of Modern transport and logistics infrastructure increases the importance of Central Asian countries in the global market. It promotes the development of export-import operations, facilitates access to new markets and increases the inflow of investments. Consequently, the transport and logistics infrastructure contributes to strengthening economic ties between the countries of Central Asia and their neighbors. This opens up new opportunities for the development of international cooperation, exchange of experience and technology transfer.

Moreover, the development of transport and logistics infrastructure contributes to stimulating economic growth in the Central Asian region. This is necessary in order to create new jobs, increase production efficiency and improve the quality of life of the population.